



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**HAWAII'S MEETINGS INDUSTRY READY TO SHINE FOR APEC**

**HONOLULU** – Hawai'i's meetings industry is ready to show the world what makes the Hawaiian Islands such a premier destination for meetings and conventions with the hosting of the 2011 Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Leaders' Meeting (APEC), November 7-13.

"Hosting APEC 2011 is an unprecedented opportunity for the people of Hawai'i," said Mike McCartney, president and CEO of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority. "For one week in November, the eyes of the world will be on Hawai'i. And the world will experience the Aloha Spirit and our famous island hospitality. But more importantly, the world will see that Hawai'i is rich with innovation, business successes and opportunities for investment. The HTA remains committed to working with the Hawai'i Visitors and Convention Bureau and the Hawai'i Convention Center to position our state as a global meetings destination."

APEC is the most important business meetings convention in Hawai'i's history. President Barack Obama will be joined in Honolulu by 20 other heads of state from Pacific Rim nations to address issues of economic growth, trade, and investment.

Up to 20,000 international delegates are expected in Honolulu for APEC to do business, including finance ministers, diplomats, policy-makers, and top CEOs. Honolulu is APEC's first U.S. host site since 1993.

APEC's impact is global, as its 21-member economies account for 40% of the world population, 54% of the world gross domestic product, and 44% of world trade.

John Monahan, president and CEO of the Hawai'i Visitors and Convention Bureau, believes APEC will be a perception-changing conference for Hawai'i's meetings industry. "The world knows Hawai'i as a dream vacation destination, but APEC will show that our islands are an ideal setting for hosting serious business meetings, and especially adept when it comes to gatherings involving international interests," commented Monahan.

Hawai'i's meetings industry has been undergoing extensive preparations for APEC, including property improvements, special training, and accommodating the requirements of various government agencies involved with the hosting of so many leaders and dignitaries at the same time.

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As with every group that meets in the Hawaiian Islands for business, Monahan said, "Our meetings industry is primed to show APEC's delegates the very best of Hawai'i in satisfying all of their demands and logistical needs to successfully get business done."

Hawai'i offers state-of-the-art meeting facilities and world-class accommodations staffed by highly experienced tourism professionals who are the standard-bearers when it comes to hospitality and service. Add in Hawai'i's cultural diversity, the warmth of its Aloha Spirit, and the islands' spectacular natural beauty, and groups conduct business in a rejuvenating meeting environment offered nowhere else in the world.

A focal point for the business of APEC will be the Hawai'i Convention Center, considered the crown jewel of Hawai'i's meetings industry facilities. Located at the entrance to Waikiki, the beautifully designed, five-star Hawai'i Convention Center will host ministerial and business meetings during APEC week, and will also house the media center for the estimated 2,000 journalists coming from around the world.

"Hawai'i is uniquely positioned to serve as a location of shared convenience between North America and Asia, putting us at the crossroads of culture, geography and business," said Joe Davis, SMG general manager of the Hawai'i Convention Center. "Our diversity, industry leadership, world-class facilities, and our genuine Aloha Spirit make Hawai'i an unbeatable place to meet across multiple disciplines."

Guiding Hawai'i's hosting of APEC is the APEC 2011 Hawai'i Host Committee, a blue chip panel from the private and public sector led by Chairman Peter Ho, president and CEO of Bank of Hawai'i, Executive Vice-Chair Timothy Johns, senior vice president of HMSA, Mike McCartney, Dr. Charles Morrison, president of The East-West Center, and Hawai'i Lieutenant Governor Brian Schatz.

Along with showcasing Hawai'i's strengths as a meetings destination, the Host Committee is highlighting other key Hawai'i industry sectors during APEC: sustainability and clean energy, life and health sciences, and earth, ocean and sky sciences.

For more information about APEC 2011 Hawai'i, visit [www.apec2011Hawaii.com](http://www.apec2011Hawaii.com).

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The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) is the state of Hawai'i's tourism agency and was established in 1998 to ensure a successful visitor industry well into the future. Its mission is to strategically manage Hawai'i tourism in a sustainable manner consistent with the state of Hawai'i's economic goals, cultural values, preservation of natural resources, community desires, and visitor industry needs. Under HTA's direction, the Hawai'i Visitors and Convention Bureau provides marketing management services for the state's conventions, meetings and incentives market segment throughout North America, and SMG markets and manages the Hawai'i Convention Center.

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**Special note to media:** The Hawai'i Visitors and Convention Bureau (HVCB) recognizes the use of the 'okina ['] or glottal stop, one of the eight consonants of the (modern) Hawaiian language; and the kahakō [ā] or macron (e.g., in place names of Hawai'i such as Lāna'i). However, HVCB respects the individual use of these markings for names of organizations and businesses.

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For information about hosting corporate meetings and incentives in the Hawaiian Islands, visit HVCB's website at [BusinessAloha.com](http://BusinessAloha.com) or call 1-888-424-2924.

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For more information about the Hawai'i Convention Center, visit [www.hawaiiiconvention.com](http://www.hawaiiiconvention.com) or call (808) 943-3500. For additional information about SMG, visit [www.smgworld.com](http://www.smgworld.com).