

## FOR RELEASE AT WILL

### HAWAII – “THE ULTIMATE GLOBAL GATHERING PLACE”

*“We had our most successful meeting here in Hawai‘i.  
Our attendance numbers went through the roof.”*

Pat Norman  
Director of Meeting Planning  
National Medical Association

**HONOLULU** – In the past few years, Hawai‘i has become more than just a world-class meetings destination – the Islands of Aloha have evolved into a proven winner in value for groups wanting to make the most of their meetings experience.

Despite all the challenges the global meetings industry has faced since 9/11, the sales and servicing of corporate meetings and incentives (CMI) in Hawai‘i has remained a strong focal point for the 50<sup>th</sup> state – and an upward trend that will continue.

“When you consider all the components needed to host a successful business meeting, the combined impact that Hawai‘i offers with its universal appeal and amenities as a destination is unmatched,” said John Monahan, president and CEO of the Hawai‘i Visitors and Convention Bureau (HVCB).

“Hawai‘i has developed an outstanding and hard-earned reputation as a superb business meetings destination. We’re committed to building on that legacy of service,” Monahan noted.

There has never been a better time to hold a business meeting in the islands.

“As much as anything, these past few years have amplified Hawai‘i’s value as a meetings destination. Clients have found that holding meetings in the islands consistently provides a proven return on investment and that we satisfy their objectives while staying within budget,” said Michael Murray, CMP, CMM, CASE, vice president of sales and marketing for HVCB’s CMI division.

“Hawai‘i provides an unforgettable ‘Wow!’ factor, and the prospect of coming here to do business and also enjoy the islands drives attendance, attracts exhibitors, and helps ensure a successful meeting experience. Groups that meet here traditionally score very high in terms of member satisfaction,” Murray added.

### **Convention Hospitality Experts**

Hawai'i provides meeting planners and groups with a highly trained team of destination professionals experienced in convention hospitality that can successfully service groups of any size, ranging from executive board conferences to a citywide convention of 30,000 attendees.

"We have exceptional meeting and accommodation facilities on all six islands, highlighted by the award-winning Hawai'i Convention Center in Waikiki," said Murray. "The bottom line is that Hawai'i has it all when it comes to meetings."

Hawai'i's meetings industry has also benefited from the investment in recent years by the public and private sectors to upgrade the destination on a statewide basis. Waikiki Beach, in particular, has been revitalized with an eye-catching beautification effort, while resort areas on all islands have undergone extensive renovations – including high-tech upgrades – to satisfy the demands of the meetings industry.

Hawai'i has emerged as a worldwide leader in areas of science and technology, which has helped attract global meetings and attendees from throughout the world. These areas of expertise include: health and wellness; advanced medical research; telemedicine; cardiology, stroke, and venous care and research; ocean and earth sciences, astronomy, tropical agriculture; and defense and dual use technology.

### **Outstanding Airlift**

Airlift to Hawai'i has remained strong – and growing – since 9/11, a tribute to the islands' longstanding appeal as a visitor destination. "We're exotic, tropical and have an international flair, but groups are able to enjoy all the comforts, convenience and security of modern American society," Murray noted.

Hawai'i's popularity is reflected in its increasingly growing air service. Domestic carriers added nearly one million seats in total air service to the islands during 2002 and 2003, along with more than 500,000 seats in 2004.

All the major domestic carriers serve Hawai'i and nonstop flights are available from 21 cities in North America, with most arrivals in Honolulu. However, Kaua'i, Maui, and Hawai'i's Big Island also receive direct service from the continental U.S. In addition, nonstop flights arrive from more than 10 major international cities along the Pacific Rim, as well as from several island nations in the South Pacific.

Once in Hawai'i, locally based carriers Aloha Airlines and Hawaiian Airlines each provide approximately 100 daily flights connecting the islands, with supplemental air service also offered by Island Air and Pacific Wings to the state's smaller airports.

### **Exciting Pre- and Post- Activities**

Hawai'i's core strengths as a leisure destination also bolster its viability to host business meetings. The weather year-round is nearly perfect, and pre- and post-meeting activities abound on all islands including world-class spas, 80 championship golf courses, and a multitude of tours and attractions to match anyone's interest.

In addition, Hawai'i's Polynesian heritage and multi-ethnic diversity is showcased in its display of culture and arts throughout the state. Along with world-class museums, a top-flight symphony, opera and theatre, hundreds of festivals are held annually celebrating Hawai'i's culture.

### **Business with Aloha – Only in Hawai'i**

Despite its many attributes, Hawai'i's favorite quality as a meetings destination is the Aloha Spirit and how it shapes life in the islands. It is seen in the friendly people, the personal warmth and openness, and in the tradition of Hawaiian hospitality.

Meeting attendees typically make the most of their stay in the islands. They take care of business but also make time to experience one of the world's most exciting destinations – usually bringing family or guests along for a post-meeting stay.

Murray commented, "Groups and incentives love to come here. Associations consistently see attendance exceed expectations, and we're the number one destination for incentives. The net result is that attendees return home refreshed and reinvigorated.

"Add it all together and it's easy to see why Hawai'i is the 'ultimate global gathering place' for business meetings."

For information about holding meetings in Hawai'i, the Islands of Aloha, visit HVCB's Web site at **MeetHawaii.com** or call the CMI division at 1-888-424-2924.

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