

**TO** Interested Parties

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**RE:** Hawai'i Voters Support for a Tourism Impact Fee

**DATE** February 16, 2023

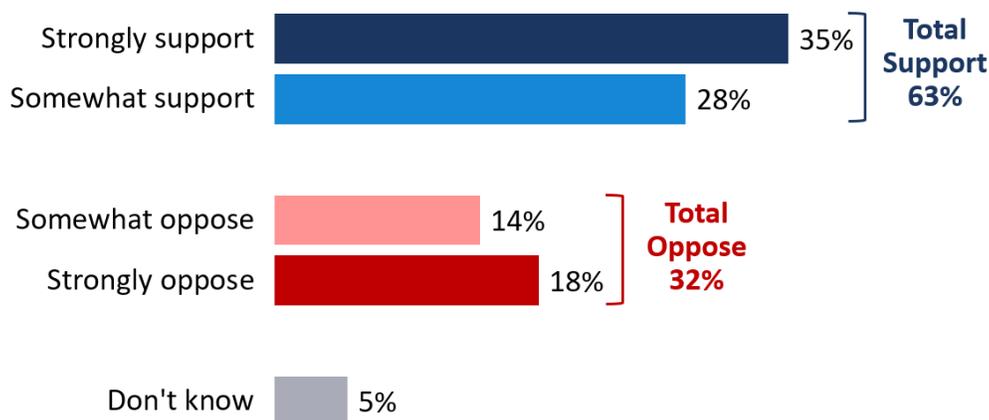
Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates (FM3) recently completed a survey of 864 Hawai'i voters to assess views of a proposed \$50 annual visitor fee to fund conservation in the state.<sup>i</sup> The results show that Hawai'i voters overwhelmingly agree that visitors should pay their fair share to protect the state's environment. More specifically, **three in five support a visitor fee - with broad support across major demographic groups.**

Detailed findings are as follows:

- **Nearly two-thirds of voters support a \$50 per-person annual visitor fee to protect and restore natural and cultural resources impacted by tourism and climate change.** As shown in Figure 1, more than one-third (35%) say they "strongly" support the proposed policy.

**Figure 1: Support for a Tourism Impact Fee Proposal**

*Some people have proposed establishing a \$50 per-person annual fee that visitors would pay to use state and county beaches, parks and trails in Hawai'i. Money raised would be used to protect and restore land, water and wildlife, and cultural resources that are impacted by tourism and climate change in Hawai'i.*



Majority support for the proposal cuts across major partisan, geographic, and demographic lines, including:

- 72% of Democrats, 59% of independents, and 51% of Republicans;
  - 66% of small-town voters, 64% of rural voters, 63% of city voters, and 60% of suburban voters;
  - 61% of Native Hawaiian voters, 66% of Japanese American voters, 66% of Filipino American voters, and 63% of white voters;
  - 66% of women and 61% of men; and
  - 70% of voters ages 18-49, 60% of voters ages 50-64, and 55% of voters 65 and older.
- **Underlying support for this policy is a broadly-shared belief that tourists should help fund conservation.** Nine in ten (88%) agree with the statement "Tourists should pay their fair share to protect and manage natural, cultural, and recreation resources in Hawai'i." A similar proportion (89%) agrees in principle that "Hawai'i should increase its investment in protecting land, water, wildlife and recreational resources."
  - **Voters see a wide range of conservation as high priorities for investment.** As shown in Figure 2, more than seven in ten rate a wide range of projects as "very important" targets for investment from a tourism impact fee - led by protecting and restoring coral reefs.

**Figure 2: Investment Priorities for a Tourism Impact Fee**

*I am going to read you a list of specific projects and services that could be funded with money from the proposed visitor fee. Please tell me how important each one is to you: extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not important*

Potential Project	Extremely/ Very Important
Protecting and restoring coral reefs	77%
Protecting and preserving our beaches and coasts	77%
Removing and controlling invasive species	76%
Restoring wetland and coastal areas and reefs that provide protection against floods and sea-level rise	74%
Restoring wetland and coastal areas and reefs that provide wildlife habitat	73%
Protecting and restoring native species	73%

In conclusion, Hawai'i voters want to see increased investment in conservation, and to that end, **majorities across partisan and demographic lines support a proposed \$50 annual visitor fee to protect and restore tourism-impacted environmental resources.**

<sup>i</sup> **Methodology:** From January 8-19, 2023, FM3 completed 864 online and telephone (landline and wireless) interviews with Hawai'i voters. The margin of sampling error for the study is +/-3.5% at the 95% confidence level; margins of error for population subgroups within the sample will be higher. Due to rounding, not all totals will sum to 100%.