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Date: February 10, 2017

To: Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair, Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Vice-Chair, and members of the Committee on Economic Development, Tourism, and Technology

From: Brent Kakesako, Hawai'i Alliance for Community-Based Economic Development (HACBED)

Re: Support for SB900

Aloha Chair Wakai, Vice-Chair Taniguchi, and Committee Members,

The Hawai'i Alliance for Community-Based Economic Development (HACBED) supports SB900, which would amend the definition of "community-based organization" and the qualifications for community-based economic development grants, and reduce the number of Advisory Council members from twelve to ten.

HACBED was established in 1992 as a nonprofit statewide intermediary to address social, economic, and environmental justice concerns through community-based economic development. It advances its mission with core competencies in the areas of community and organizational capacity building, community and economic development planning, and asset policy development and advocacy. HACBED has historically been intertwined with the CBED Program as many of HACBED's Founders were involved with the creation of the CBED Program and served on the Advisory Council and/or received grants and loans to plan, implement, and enhance their projects in the community.

The passage of SB900 would make three critical and needed amendments that would improve the efficiency and efficacy of the CBED Program:

- *Broaden the Definition of "Community-Based Organization"* – the current definition narrowly defines a CBO as membership-based, which is limiting and does not encompass the range of ways work is done in the community. Removing "membership-based" from the definition of CBO would ensure that a broader array of CBOs furthering economic development in their community would be able to receive support from the CBED Program.
- *Provide Support as Needed Based on the Capacity of the CBO* – it takes a certain level of capacity to obtain grants and loans from any institution or funder. As such, including technical assistance as an option for a grant will ensure startups and grassroots organizations with limited capacity will be able to get assistance from the CBED Program.
- *Increase Opportunities for the Advisory Council to Meet & Work* – currently, it is difficult for Council Members to meet and achieve quorum, which has limited the number of official meetings and the ability to make decisions on grant and loan awards as well as implement improvements to the CBED Program. Decreasing the number of total members but maintaining requirements for statewide representation would allow the

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Council to maintain a needed diversity of viewpoints from across the state, but be able to more regularly make critical decisions and more effectively conduct official business.

Please let me know if you may have any additional questions at (808)550-2661 or bkakesako@hacbed.org.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify,

Brent N. Kakesako
Executive Director