



Written Statement of  
**Robbie Melton**  
Executive Director & CEO  
Hawaii Technology Development Corporation  
before the  
**Senate Committee on Ways and Means**  
Wednesday, April 4, 2018  
10:30 a.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

In consideration of  
**HB2084, HD1, SD1**  
**RELATING TO THE HAWAII TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means,

The Hawaii Technology Development Corporation (HTDC) **supports** HB2084, HD1, SD1 that requires reporting and appropriates funds for HTDC to continue providing outreach and mentorship support to innovative small businesses on the Neighbor Islands.

As part of HTDC's vision to create 80,000 new innovation jobs in Hawaii earning \$80,000 or more by 2030, HTDC launched the Neighbor Island Innovation Initiative (NI3) program in 2016 to provide business assistance to small and early-stage companies engaged in technology, manufacturing, or innovation based products/services on the neighbor islands.

The NI3 program uniquely fills a gap in the available resources of support because the program provides mentorship with experience specific to technology and manufacturing businesses. The program removes time, distance, and money as barriers for entrepreneurs in need of assistance by meeting on their schedule, including nights and weekends, at their place of business, at no cost. The program provides an on-island representative with direct access to HTDC resources including experienced staff, workshops, federal and state grant programs, and relationships with partner agencies.

One example of a success story for the NI3 program is local entrepreneur Bobby Farias, founder of Kunoa Cattle Company on Kauai. Kunoa has been working to provide sustainable, local, quality beef in Hawaii. Our NI3 mentor, Warren Doi, has provided him with ongoing support through multiple evolutions of the business and helped introduce the company founders to financiers, outside investors, and the HTDC matching grant programs. The company has grown in the past year including the acquisition of Hawaii's largest USDA inspected butchery for beef and pork on Oahu and a retail partnership with Times Supermarkets on Oahu and Maui.

Due to budget constraints, HTDC started this program with one mentor on Kauai and one mentor on Hawaii Island. On Hawaii Island, the program met with 35 prospects providing ongoing mentorship to 9 companies and 2 entrepreneurs. On Kauai, the program met with 55 prospects

providing ongoing mentorship to 16 companies and 4 entrepreneurs. Together the companies in the program have reported an economic impact of over \$6,000,000. HTDC has conducted showcase days on each island for economic development stakeholders to meet with select companies. In addition, the program has been an integral partner to other economic development efforts including starting the Business Plan Competition on Hawaii Island and Kilauea Ag Park development on Kauai.

HTDC has been funding the program with reserves from the HTDC special fund. HTDC does not have funding to continue the program beyond this year and will be forced to end the program. With proper funding, the program can contract additional mentors to provide support in Maui and a dedicated mentor for East Hawaii Island. In the 2017 HTDC economic impact survey, 25 Kauai and Hawaii island companies reported 304 jobs in the state, \$29 million in total revenue generating \$50 million in total economic impact.

We support this initiative as long as it does not replace our priorities requested in the Executive Budget. HTDC respectfully requests correction of the defective effective date. Thank you for the opportunity to offer these comments.

Harry Kim  
Mayor



Wil Okabe  
Managing Director

Barbara J. Kossow  
Deputy Managing Director

County of Hawai'i  
Office of the Mayor

25 Aupuni Street, Suite 2603 • Hilo, Hawai'i 96720 • (808) 961-8211 • Fax (808) 961-6553  
KONA: 74-5044 Ane Keohokālole Hwy., Bldg C • Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740  
(808) 323-4444 • Fax (808) 323-4440

April 2, 2018

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Committee on Ways and Means  
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 211  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice-Chair  
Committee on Ways and Means  
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 211  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice-Chair Keith-Agaran, and Committee Members:

**Re: HB 2084, HD 1, SD 1 Relating to the Hawai'i Technology Development Corporation**  
**Hearing Date: 04/04/2018 – 10:30 am; Conference Room 211**

The County of Hawai'i supports House Bill 2084, HD 1, SD 1. I have received glowing reports about the Neighbor Island Initiative (NI3) as it relates to Hawai'i Island, and very much would like it to continue.

Respectfully submitted,

Harry Kim  
Mayor, County of Hawai'i

**HB-2084-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/2/2018 11:40:02 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/4/2018 10:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ron Whitmore	Testifying for Dept of Research & Development, Hawaii County	Support	No

Comments:

Once again, the County of Hawai'i is offering strong support for House Bill 2084.

Businesses in Hawai'i County have greatly benefited from the services provided by the HTDC Neighbor Island Mentor, who fills a critical gap in the County's entrepreneurial development ecosystem. He provides expert guidance in scaling enterprises, he links anyone who contacts him with the resources they need, and he collaborates actively with a growing network of small business and entrepreneurial support organizations, including the County of Hawai'i's Department of Research and Development.

The HTDC and its NI3 program are valued partners in Hawai'i County's business development efforts and should receive continued State support.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Written Statement of  
**Tom Leonard**  
Owner  
TeleVoice 2000  
before the  
**Senate Committee on Ways and Means**  
Wednesday, April 4, 2018  
10:30 a.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

In consideration of  
**HB2084, HD1, SD1**  
**RELATING TO THE HAWAII TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means,

TeleVoice 2000 **supports** HB2084, HD1, SD1 that requires reporting and appropriates funds for HTDC to continue providing outreach and mentorship support to innovative small businesses on the Neighbor Islands.

TV2K supplies technology consulting services mainly to the customer service industry. I've spent over 50 years working in technology companies. In that time, I've worked as a technologist, manager, executive and owner of 4 businesses. I've also worked as a management consultant to large and small businesses, with a focus on leveraging technology to improve their bottom line.

I am now semi-retired and able to use the experience I've gained to support developing companies on the Big Island. Under the auspices of HTDC's NI3 program, I've been able to act as a business mentor to over 30 start-up and established businesses. More often than not, my "clients" need to work through business issues where I can act as a sounding board conditioned by my own real world business experiences.

The Neighbor Island Initiative (NI3) program uniquely fills a gap in the available resources of support because the program provides mentorship with experience specific to technology and manufacturing businesses. The program also provides an on-island representative with direct access to many State resources.

We respectfully request correction of the defective effective date. Thank you for the opportunity to offer these comments.



# Chamber of Commerce HAWAII

*The Voice of Business*

**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Wednesday, April 4, 2018 at 10:30 A.M.  
Conference Room 211, State Capitol**

**RE: HOUSE BILL 2084 HD1 SD1 RELATING TO THE HAWAII TECHNOLOGY  
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee:

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber") **supports** HB 2084 HD1 SD1, which requires reporting and appropriates funds for the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation (HTDC) to continue providing outreach and mentorship support to innovative small businesses on the neighbor islands.

The Chamber is Hawaii's leading statewide business advocacy organization, representing about 2,000+ businesses. Approximately 80% of our members are small businesses with less than 20 employees. As the "Voice of Business" in Hawaii, the organization works on behalf of members and the entire business community to improve the state's economic climate and to foster positive action on issues of common concern.

Since 2016, Neighbor Island Innovative Initiative (NI3) program has provided neighbor island small and early-stage companies engaged in technology, manufacturing, or innovation based products and services with business assistance through experience-specific mentorship and access to HTDC's resources. As such, this program has eliminated many of the barriers that are difficult for entrepreneurs to overcome in developing a sustainable and successful business. Our community needs more initiatives like the NI3 program to support innovation and entrepreneurship across the State.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**HB-2084-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/2/2018 10:26:58 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/4/2018 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	Testifying for Oahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i	Support	No

Comments:

To the Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair; the Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice-Chair and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means:

Good afternoon. My name is Melodie Aduja. I serve as Chair of the Oahu County Committee ("OCC") Legislative Priorities Committee of the Democratic Party of Hawaii. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on **HB2084 HD1 SD1**, regarding Hawaii Technology Development Corporation; Neighbor Island Small Business; Innovation; and an appropriation.

The OCC Legislative Priorities Committee is in favor of **HB2084 HD1 SD1** and support its passage.

**HB2084 HD1 SD1** is in accord with the Platform of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i ("DPH"), 2016, as it requires HTDC to report on outreach and mentorship assistance to neighbor island innovative small businesses; and appropriates funds for the neighbor island innovation initiative program, effective 7/1/2112.

Specifically, the DPH Platform provides that "[w]e recognize that the responsible use and development of technology in all its manifestations offers immense potential for our community, government, including institutions of higher education and business sectors. We encourage synergistic research, development, commercialization and education programs to promote technological proficiency and innovation. In particular, we support Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) initiatives in our public, private and charter schools as these prepare the next generation to address the needs of our state. We also support programs that facilitate incubator, i.e., start-up, opportunities for new and promising technologies, and encourage the local retention of our intellectual resources." (Platform of the DPH, P. 3, Lines 149-156 (2016)).

Given that **HB2084 HD1 SD1** requires HTDC to report on outreach and mentorship assistance to neighbor island innovative small businesses; and appropriates

funds for the neighbor island innovation initiative program, effective 7/1/2112, it is the position of the OCC Legislative Priorities Committee to support this measure.

Thank you very much for your kind consideration.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Melodie Aduja

Melodie Aduja, Chair, OCC Legislative Priorities Committee

Email: [legislativepriorities@gmail.com](mailto:legislativepriorities@gmail.com), Tel.: (808) 258-8889

**HB-2084-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/2/2018 12:46:09 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/4/2018 10:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Sarah Toole	Individual	Comments	No

Comments:

**My name is Sarah Toole, my address is 1128 Ala Napunani St. 96818, and I am a political science student at UH Manoa.**

**I appreciate the movement to make sure a potentially too powerful business will be held accountable for their promises by the government. Thank you.**