



**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS,
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**

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Statement of
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LATE TESTIMONY

Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
AND TAXATION**

Tuesday, January 29, 2008
1:15 P.M.
State Capitol, Conference Room 224

in consideration of
SB 2158
**RELATING TO MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR SMALL BUSINESS
DEVELOPMENT**

Chair Fukunaga, Vice-Chair Espero and Committee members:

The department supports the concept behind SB2158. There have been many good ideas introduced this legislative session that support the State's economic development goals. We hope the legislature will see fit to support, pass and fund these ideas, together with priorities of the Executive's Supplemental Budget.

Small businesses represent a very important part of our island economy. Studies indicate that small businesses, particularly those with four or fewer employees, are the primary creators of new jobs in an economy. These small businesses, in many instances, become an economy's leading innovators and primary exporters. Job creation, innovation, and exporting are critical to building and sustaining a healthy and growing economy.

Established in 1990, the Hawaii Small Business Development Center Network is the only statewide small business technical assistance provider. With five service centers on four major islands, the centers help Hawaii's small business ventures succeed and expand. It accomplishes this through quality consulting, business training and advocacy efforts.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer these comments.



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Economic Development and Taxation
Tuesday, January 29, 2008 at 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 224**

RE: SENATE BILL NO. 2158 RELATING TO MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Chair Fukunga, Vice Chair Espero and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jim Tollefson and I am the President and CEO of The Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii ("The Chamber"). I am here to state The Chamber's support to Senate Bill No. 2158, relating to Making an Appropriation for Small Business Development.

The Chamber is the largest business organization in Hawaii, representing over 1100 businesses. Approximately 80% of our members are small businesses with less than 20 employees. 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.

This measure appropriates funds to support the statewide economic development program of the Hawaii Small Business Development Center Network (SBDCN) hosted by the University of Hawaii at Hilo.

Small businesses represent a majority of all employers in the United States, including the State of Hawaii. This measure will continue to support a program that assists small businesses to obtain the aid they need, which in turn, will contribute to small business development and spur job growth in our economy. The SBDCN serves as a valuable catalyst for small businesses, especially for start-up companies that need basic information, services, and counseling that otherwise would be difficult to obtain with limited resources.

For these reasons, the Chamber respectfully requests that this measure be passed for further consideration.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to submit written testimony.