



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

**NEIL ABERCROMBIE**  
GOVERNOR

**RICHARD C. LIM**  
DIRECTOR

**MARY ALICE EVANS**  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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Statement of  
**Richard C. Lim**  
**Director**  
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism  
before the  
**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND BUSINESS**  
Tuesday, March 18, 2014  
9:00 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 312

in consideration of  
**SB 718, SD 2**  
**RELATING TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.**

Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Ward, and Members of the House Committee on Economic Development and Business.

The Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) supports SB 718, SD 2, legislation appropriating funds for the HI Growth Initiative.

Hawaii's established industries are maturing. There is a strategic need to develop new growth sectors for the State's economy. DBEDT's mission is to nurture a Hawaii economy that embraces innovation and is globally competitive, thus providing high-wage job opportunities for all of Hawaii's citizens.

SB 718, SD 2, will provide continued funding for the HI Growth Initiative, a successful economic development program that is developing new growth sectors of our economy by encouraging entrepreneurs to start businesses and attracting private capital investment to Hawaii. This measure will help DBEDT to execute its current economic growth strategy that is centered on the Broadband, HI Growth, and Clean Energy Initiatives. These efforts collectively are creating the infrastructure needed to attract innovative and globally-focused entrepreneurs and businesses, while allowing them to succeed in Hawaii.

DBEDT defers to the Hawaii Strategic Development Corporation, the expending agency, for specific recommendations on this legislation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Economic Development & Business  
Tuesday, March 18, 2014 at 9:00 a.m.

by  
Vassilis L. Syrmos  
Vice President for Research and Innovation, University of Hawai'i

### SB 718 SD2 – RELATING TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Ward, and Members of the House Committee on Economic Development and Business:

I respectfully submit testimony in support of SB 718 SD2 appropriating funds to the Hawai'i Strategic Development Corporation (HSDC) for the HI Growth Initiative. This funding is necessary to continue the HI Growth Initiative, which has helped to catalyze an ecosystem that provides the building blocks for high-growth businesses to grow and scale in Hawai'i. HI Growth is supporting the Research and Innovation Initiative at the University of Hawai'i (UH), which is an important initiative to significantly increase UH's economic contribution to the state.

Thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to submit testimony on this matter.



Chamber of Commerce HAWAII  
*The Voice of Business*

**Testimony to the House Committee on Economic Development and Business  
Tuesday, March 18, 2014 at 9:00 A.M.  
Conference Room 312, State Capitol**

**RE: SENATE BILL 718 SD2 RELATING TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Ward, and Members of the Committee:

The Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii ("The Chamber") **supports** SB 718 SD2, which appropriates funds to the Hawaii Strategic Development Corporation to establish the HI Growth Initiative, an investment program to develop an ecosystem to support high-growth entrepreneurial companies in the State.

The Chamber is the largest business organization in Hawaii, representing over 1,000 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.

The funding provided in SB 718 SD2 is needed to continue the HI Growth Initiative, which has helped catalyze an ecosystem that provides the building blocks for high-growth business to grow and scale in Hawaii. The HI Growth Initiative is seeking to support startups in the fashion and value added agricultural industries, which are key manufacturing sectors of the state's economy that the Chamber supports.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



HAWAII  
STRATEGIC  
DEVELOPMENT  
CORPORATION

Written Statement of  
**KARL FOOKS**  
President

Hawaii Strategic Development Corporation  
Before the  
**COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & BUSINESS**

**March 18, 2014**  
**9:00 AM**  
**State Capitol, Conference Room 312**

In consideration of  
**SB 718 SD 2 RELATING TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Ward, and Members of the Committee on Economic Development & Business:

The Hawaii Strategic Development Corporation (HSDC) respectfully submits testimony in **strong support** of SB718 SD2, legislation appropriating funds to the Hawaii Strategic Development Corporation for the HI Growth Initiative.

Conservative budgeting principles must still include ways to grow our economy if we are to increase tax revenues in the future. If we desire our economy to be resilient during difficult economic periods, we must continue to invest in new engines of economic growth. This is a long-term effort that needs to be pursued consistently.

The HI Growth Initiative, passed by the legislature last session, has been successful in stimulating growth of new businesses that create high-wage job opportunities in growth sectors important to our State. This effort has been widely supported by both federal government funds and private sector investment as evidenced by the 8:1 match on the State's investments achieved by the program to date.

Blue Startups, Hawaii's first accelerator, was established and has so far launched fifteen companies together raising over \$3 million in follow on funding; mbloom Fund, a \$10 million seed stage software fund based in Maui, was capitalized; the Connect and Network (CAN) program was launched to support efforts that connect Hawaii entrepreneurs with investors, such as through the annual VC Summit conference and Startup Weekend events; and "Startup Paradise" was launched to brand Hawaii as an innovation hub. The community truly has a lot to be proud of.

The HI Growth Initiative has begun to transform Hawaii into a place that welcomes innovative activity by energizing our entrepreneurs and attracting investors from around the world who are investing alongside the HI Growth Initiative. More importantly, the businesses supported by the HI Growth Initiative are creating high-wage job opportunities for Hawaii residents.

HSDC respectfully recommends that references to the previous fiscal year be deleted from the proposed legislation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Written Statement of  
**ROBBIE MELTON**  
**Executive Director & CEO**  
High Technology Development Corporation  
before the  
**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON**  
**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & BUSINESS**

Tuesday, March 18, 2014  
9:00 a.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 312  
In consideration of

**SB 718 SD2 RELATING TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.**

Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Ward, and Members of the Committee on Economic Development and Business.

The High Technology Development Corporation (HTDC) respectfully submits testimony in **strong support** for SB 718 SD2 relating to Economic Development, making an appropriation to the Hawaii Strategic Development Corporation (HSDC) for the HI Growth Initiative.

The HI Growth Initiative, passed by the legislature last session, has been successful in stimulating growth of new businesses that create high-wage job opportunities in growth sectors important to our State. The initiative reflects a shared vision between HTDC and HSDC not only on the critical needs of the tech entrepreneurial community but also the holistic approach it takes to nurture an innovation ecosystem. Further, it follows the nation's best practices and has been a rallying point for the multiple industry groups that comprise the innovation and entrepreneurial community in Hawaii.

Supporting innovation helps keep our established industries competitive and leads our drive for a sustainable economy. It also provides good job opportunities to keep the talented workforce in Hawaii. To continue the momentum of the HI Growth Initiative, HTDC suggests it is essential to provide the \$6 million appropriation included in the Administration's budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer these comments.

## ward2-Robin

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**From:** Chenoa Farnsworth <chenoa@bluestartups.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 15, 2014 3:26 PM  
**To:** edbtestimony  
**Subject:** SB718 SD2

Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Ward, and Members of the House Committee on Economic Development and Business:

I respectfully submit testimony in support of SB718 SD2 appropriating funds to the Hawaii Strategic Development Corporation for the HI Growth Initiative. This funding is needed to continue the HI Growth Initiative, which has helped to catalyze an ecosystem that provides the building blocks for high-growth businesses to grow and scale in Hawaii. This is important for the future of our economy to help stimulate high wage job growth to reverse the brain drain and bring our kamaaina back home to work in Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

--

Chenoa Farnsworth  
Managing Director  
Blue Startups  
55 Merchant St., 17th Floor  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

[www.bluestartups.com](http://www.bluestartups.com)



TO: Chair Tsuji  
Vice Chair Ward  
Members of the House Committee on Economic Development and Business

March 15, 2014

FROM: David L. Cunningham  
Global Virtual Studio  
75-5660 Kopiko St  
C7 #140  
Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i 96740

**RE: SB718 SD2 – Appropriating funds to the Hawai'i Strategic Development Corporation (HSDC) for the HI Growth Initiative**

Dear Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Ward, and Members of the House Committee on Economic Development and Business,

I respectfully submit testimony in support of SB718 SD2 appropriating funds to the Hawai'i Strategic Development Corporation (HSDC) for the HI Growth Initiative. This funding is needed to continue the HI Growth Initiative, which has helped to catalyze an ecosystem that provides the building blocks for high-growth businesses to grow and scale in Hawaii. The HI Growth Initiative is supporting a new business accelerator, based in Kailua Kona, for the digital media industry. This is important for the future of our economy to help stimulate high wage job growth to reverse the brain drain and bring our kama'aina back home to work in Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. L. Cunningham".

David L. Cunningham  
Founder & Director,  
Global Virtual Studio  
[officeofdlc@globalvirtualstudio.com](mailto:officeofdlc@globalvirtualstudio.com)  
[www.globalvirtualstudio.com](http://www.globalvirtualstudio.com)  
Office: +1-808-365-9871

## ward2-Robin

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**From:** Nick Bicanic <nick@mbloom.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 15, 2014 6:34 PM  
**To:** edbtestimony  
**Subject:** Re: HI Growth testimony request

To the Honorable Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Ward, and Members of the House Committee on Economic Development and Business:

I respectfully submit testimony **in support of SB718 SD2** appropriating funds to the Hawaii Strategic Development Corporation for the HI Growth Initiative. This funding is needed to continue the HI Growth Initiative, which has helped to catalyze an ecosystem that provides the building blocks for high-growth businesses to grow and scale in Hawaii.

The HI Growth Initiative is supporting Hawaii's first early stage technology fund, a \$10 million fund based in Kahului, Maui. This is important for the future of the state's economy to help stimulate high wage job growth and reverse the brain drain. Technology is an extremely appealing sector for many smart people around the world and without a strong technology core in the state of Hawaii we will continue losing our best and brightest kamaaina to technology opportunities elsewhere in the mainland.

Nick Bicanic

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



## ward2-Robin

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**From:** Warren Doi <warren.doi@pichtr.org>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 16, 2014 5:08 AM  
**To:** edbtestimony  
**Subject:** My Personal Support

Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Ward, and Members of the Committee on Economic Development and Business:

I respectfully submit testimony in strong support of SB718 SD2 appropriating funds to the Hawaii Strategic Development Corporation for the HI Growth Initiative. This funding is needed to continue the HI Growth Initiative, which has helped to catalyze an ecosystem that provides the building blocks for high-growth businesses to grow and scale in Hawaii. It is important for the future of our economy to help stimulate high wage job growth to reverse the brain drain and bring our kamaaina back home to work in Hawaii.

My grandfather was a farmer on the Big Island, and I went away to college to develop my skills and ability to make an impact. Through my education and personal development, I discovered my passion for innovation. I certainly had the belief that I could do anything that I wanted, that my potential was only limited by my imagination.

I started my career as a management consultant with [Ernst & Young](#) before I ignited my entrepreneurial spirit to build companies. I was fortunate enough to start my first business in the Silicon Valley where I was able to experience a thriving ecosystem of capital and entrepreneurial programs. I came back to Hawaii because of my family and founded a car-sharing platform called [GreenCar Hawaii](#). We successfully started an innovative model; however, we were unable to attract new capital to finance our growth. We were forced to sell the company to a San Francisco outfit who took our platform to the mainland (please see recent [news article](#))

The HI Growth Initiative is just starting to produce results. If these accelerator programs and investment capital funds were in place, our locally grown car-share innovation might have stayed in Hawaii. Please continue the HI Growth Initiative so that future entrepreneurs can prosper and thrive here at home.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Aloha,

Warren Doi  
[\(808\) 651-6950](tel:(808)651-6950)

## ward2-Robin

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**From:** Melissa White <melissa@hawaiifashionmonth.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 16, 2014 7:11 AM  
**To:** edbtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of the HI Growth Initiative

Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Ward, and Members of the Committee on Economic Development and Business:

I respectfully submit testimony in strong support of SB718 SD2 appropriating funds to the Hawaii Strategic Development Corporation for the HI Growth Initiative. This funding is needed to continue the HI Growth Initiative, which has helped to catalyze an ecosystem that provides the building blocks for high-growth businesses to grow and scale in Hawaii. It is important for the future of our economy to help stimulate high wage job growth to reverse the brain drain and bring our kamaaina back home to work in Hawaii.

As the organization representing Hawaii's growing fashion industry, with more than 4,000 fashion professionals and supporters in our network, we can attest that this funding is crucial to help close the gaps in the fashion industry so that we can grow international visibility and demand for Made in Hawaii fashion. Many professionals in our industry are constrained by limits of manufacturing and access to capital, and the programs that we are exploring in collaboration with DBEDT and the HI growth initiative would enable some of those gaps to close and allow Hawaii's fashion talent to rise to the international stage.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Melissa White, Co-founder and Partner  
Hawaii Fashion Incubator  
[808.226.1480](tel:808.226.1480)  
[www.hawaiifashion.org](http://www.hawaiifashion.org)

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- \* Follow us on Instagram @hawaiifashionmonth
- \* [Follow us on Twitter](#) @Hifashionmonth

## ward2-Robin

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**From:** Rob Bertholf <rob@bertholf.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 16, 2014 7:40 AM  
**To:** edbtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of the HI Growth Initiative

Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Ward, and Members of the Committee on Economic Development and Business:

I respectfully submit testimony in strong support of SB718 SD2 appropriating funds to the Hawaii Strategic Development Corporation for the HI Growth Initiative. This funding is needed to continue the HI Growth Initiative, which has helped to catalyze an ecosystem that provides the building blocks for high-growth businesses to grow and scale in Hawaii. It is important for the future of our economy to help stimulate high wage job growth to reverse the brain drain and bring our kamaaina back home to work in Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Rob Bertholf  
1212 Nuuanu ave #1303  
Honolulu HI 96817

**ward2-Robin**

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**From:** Danton Wong <DWong@chunkerr.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 16, 2014 8:19 AM  
**To:** edbtestimony  
**Cc:** Lauren M Primiano (Lauren.M.Primiano@dbedt.hawaii.gov); Karl Fooks; Maxine Yonemura  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of the HI Growth Initiative

Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Ward, and Members of the Committee on Economic Development and Business:

I respectfully submit testimony in strong support of SB718 SD2 appropriating funds to the Hawaii Strategic Development Corporation for the HI Growth Initiative. This funding is needed to continue the HI Growth Initiative, which has helped to catalyze an ecosystem that provides the building blocks for high-growth businesses to grow and scale in Hawaii. It is important for the future of our economy to help stimulate high wage job growth to reverse the brain drain and bring our kamaaina back home to work in Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Danton S. Wong  
Attorney at Law  
Direct: 808-528-8234  
Direct Fax: 808-664-8611  
[dwong@chunkerr.com](mailto:dwong@chunkerr.com)



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## ward2-Robin

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**From:** Anthony Marzi <anthonymarzi@hawaiiitechworks.org>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 16, 2014 10:30 AM  
**To:** edbtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of the HI Growth Initiative

Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Ward, and Members of the Committee on Economic Development and Business:

I respectfully submit testimony in strong support of SB718 SD2 appropriating funds to the Hawaii Strategic Development Corporation for the HI Growth Initiative. This funding is needed to continue the HI Growth Initiative, which has helped to catalyze an ecosystem that provides the building blocks for high-growth businesses to grow and scale in Hawaii. It is important for the future of our economy to help stimulate high wage job growth to reverse the brain drain and bring our kamaaina back home to work in Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Regards,

Anthony Marzi  
President and  
Founder, Hawaii TechWorks  
[www.HawaiiTechWorks.org](http://www.HawaiiTechWorks.org)  
47 Rainbow Drive, Hilo, HI

**ward2-Robin**

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**From:** Philip Bossert <phil@orientech.us>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 16, 2014 12:35 PM  
**To:** edbtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of the HI Growth Initiative

Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Ward, and Members of the Committee on Economic Development and Business:

I am writing in strong support of SB718 SD2 which appropriates funds to the Hawaii Strategic Development Corporation for the HI Growth Initiative.

This funding is needed to continue the HI Growth Initiative, which has helped to catalyze an ecosystem that provides the building blocks for high- growth businesses to grow and scale in Hawaii. It is important for the future of our economy to help stimulate high wage job growth to reverse the brain drain and bring our kamaaina back home to work in Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Philip Bossert



Dr. Philip J. Bossert • Senior Consultant  
Orientech LLC • [phil@orientech.us](mailto:phil@orientech.us)  
P.O. Box 4497 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96812  
Tel: (808) 203-9097 • Fax: (253) 669-9439

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*Your life begins at the edge of your comfort zone.*

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## ward2-Robin

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**From:** russelcheng@gmail.com on behalf of Russel Cheng <russel@devleague.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 16, 2014 11:05 PM  
**To:** edbtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of the HI Growth Initiative

Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Ward, and Members of the House Committee on Economic Development and Business:

I respectfully submit testimony in support of SB718 SD2 appropriating funds to the Hawaii Strategic Development Corporation for the HI Growth Initiative. This funding is needed to continue the HI Growth Initiative, which has helped to catalyze an ecosystem that provides the building blocks for high-growth businesses to grow and scale in Hawaii. The startup community has been energized allowing us to launch Founder Institute Honolulu chapter, an entrepreneurial development program that help incorporate five companies in 2013 and DevLeague, Hawaii's first coding academy for workforce professional development in the high-demand, high-wage and high-growth software industry. It is important for the future of our economy to help stimulate high wage job growth to reverse the brain drain and bring our kama'aina back home to work in Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Best regards,

Russel Cheng

Co-founder and Director

Dev League

+

Co-director

Founder Institute Honolulu Chapter

# Testimony in Support of SB718, HI Growth Initiative



To: House Committee on Economic Development and Business:

Dear Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Ward, and Members of the House Committee,

This letter is to provide my support for SB718 regarding the HI Growth Initiative which appropriates funds to the Hawaii Strategic Development Corporation for the HI Growth Initiative.

This funding is needed to continue the HI Growth Initiative which has helped to catalyze an ecosystem that provides the building blocks for high-growth business to grow and scale in Hawaii. This is important for the future of our economy to help stimulate high wage job growth to reverse the brain drain and bring our Kama'aina back home to work in Hawaii.

My company, TeraSys Technologies, has been in business for over 6 years, and has built a strong portfolio of advanced wireless technologies for government customers. However, what has eluded us so far is the ability to translate these technologies into highly profitable products. High profit margin products are the foundation for a sustainable business model because it eliminates the need to rely on research grants to fund new product development. I am fully committed to creating a high-growth business, and have reinvested over \$100,000 of the profits from my company into the creation of commercial products.

The HI Growth Initiative fulfills two valuable roles, providing both community infrastructure and investment financing. The community infrastructure is important because most startup companies will lack some of the requisite experience in one area or another. The cumulative experience required to successfully start and grow a business is daunting because it draws on a wide spread of skills from legal, accounting, and human resources. The accelerator programs supported by HSDC are critical in providing the community network of experienced mentors who have successfully created high growth exits.

Financing is always an important piece to sustain any business, and the HI Growth Initiatives' investment financing portfolio provides the shot-in-the-arm financing needed to translate hard work into business success.

As the sole founder of TeraSys, and as a yon-sei myself in the state, I am proud of what TeraSys and others like us have been able to accomplish with our limited resources. I am committed to making TeraSys a success and have put my money where my mouth is through internal investments, and will continue to do so. I am confident that with the continued support of HSDC and the HI Growth Initiative that Hawaii will soon start to reap the benefits of a diversified economic base with exciting, globally relevant products developed in Hawaii.

Mahalo Nui Loa,

Kevin Miyashiro  
President

Digitally signed by Kevin Miyashiro:AO109690000132483F4D070000E350  
DN: c=US, o=U.S. Government, ou=ECA,  
ou=IdenTrust, ou=TERASYS TECHNOLOGIES LLC,  
cn=Kevin  
Miyashiro:AO109690000132483F4D070000E350  
Date: 2014.03.16 22:40:44 -10'00'



## ward2-Robin

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**From:** Bryan Butteling <bryan@nellamediaigroup.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 16, 2014 10:28 PM  
**To:** edbtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of the HI Growth Initiative

Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Ward, and Members of the Committee on Economic Development and Business:

I respectfully submit testimony in strong support of the \$6 million appropriation to the Hawaii Strategic Development Corporation requested in the budget. This funding is needed to continue the HI Growth Initiative, which has helped to catalyze an ecosystem that provides the building blocks for high-growth business to grow and scale in Hawaii.

For example the HI Growth Initiative has supported and monetarily sponsored a non-profit event called Startup Weekend that is hosted bi-annually in Honolulu. Startup Weekend is a 3- day event that focuses on empowering, encouraging and educating inspiring entrepreneurs to take their business ideas and bring them to market. We have had five successful events over the last 3 years, which has lead to the creation of seven companies four of which have received private seed funding. There has been so much positive success that we are currently planning on holding an event in 2014 on Maui.

While the future of our startup / entrepreneurial ecosystem isn't predicated on the HI Growth Initiative, it is needed as a additional support system that will assist in our overall effort as a community to build and add to our State Economy. The more organizations we have in our corner (especially government supported) the better off we are to help stimulate high wage job growth and reverse the brain drain and bring our kamaaina back home to work and live in Hawaii. It is time to stop competing with each other on a local scale and start building Hawaii as a whole towards a more competitive economy that is home to companies that compete on a global scale. We are building this ecosystem and would be humbled and appreciate any support from the government.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Kind Regards,

Bryan Butteling  
Account Executive /  
Business Development  
NMG//Nella Media Group  
(808) 281-5419  
36 N. Hotel St., Suite A  
Honolulu, HI 96817  
[bryan@nellamediaigroup.com](mailto:bryan@nellamediaigroup.com)

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**Testimony to the House Committee on Economic Development & Business**

**Tuesday, March 18, 2014**

**9:00 a.m.**

**Conference Room 312**

**RE: RELATING TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – SENATE BILL 718 SD2**

Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Ward, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Gary Kai and I am the Executive Director of the Hawaii Business Roundtable. The Hawaii Business Roundtable fully supports Senate Bill 718 SD2 which appropriates funds to the Hawaii Strategic Development Corporation to continue the HI Growth Initiative, an investment program to develop an ecosystem to support high-growth entrepreneurial companies in the State.

The leaders of the Hawaii Business Roundtable recognize the need to grow our research and innovation economy. The Roundtable has worked to work with the University of Hawaii and other agencies, including the Hawaii Strategic Development Corporation, to support the Research and Innovation Initiative of the University of Hawaii and the growth of our Innovation sector. The goal of the initiative is to grow the sector of the economy which is vital to the future of our community and the future of our children.

The work of the Hawaii Strategic Development Corporation has been an integral part of creating an ecosystem that provides the building blocks for high-growth business to grow and scale in Hawaii through the HI Growth Initiative. Additional funding is needed to continue the HI Growth Initiative. We applaud the work that Hawaii Strategic Development Corporation has been done and we look forward to continuing to support its efforts. We fully support the request for additional funding.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify.

Gary K. Kai, Executive Director  
Hawaii Business Roundtable



Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Ward, and Members of the House Committee on Economic Development and Business:

I, Allison Izu Song (Co-Founder of the Cut Collective), respectfully submit testimony in support of SB718 SD2 appropriating funds to the Hawaii Strategic Development Corporation for the HI Growth Initiative. This funding is needed to continue the HI Growth Initiative, which has helped to catalyze an ecosystem that provides the building blocks for high-growth businesses to grow and scale in Hawaii.

The HI Growth Initiative is supporting entrepreneurs, like myself, in Hawaii's fashion industry by developing the resources needed to build their businesses. It is important for the future of our economy to help stimulate high wage job growth to reverse the brain drain and bring our kama'aina back home to work in Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Aloha and Mahalo,



T E N  
T O M O R R O W

Written Statement of

**Summer Shiigi**  
**Owner**  
**Ten Tomorrow**

before the

**House Committee on Economic Development and Business**

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Tuesday March 18, 2014  
9:00 A.M.

**HI Growth Initiative, SB718**

Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Ward, and Members of the House Committee on Economic Development and Business:

Ten Tomorrow respectfully submit testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of the HI Growth Initiative, SB718.

I respectfully submit testimony in support of SB718 SD2 appropriating funds to the Hawaii Strategic Development Corporation for the HI Growth Initiative. This funding is needed to continue the HI Growth Initiative, which has helped to catalyze an ecosystem that provides the building blocks for high-growth businesses to grow and scale in Hawaii. The HI Growth Initiative is supporting entrepreneurs in Hawaii's fashion industry by developing the resources needed to build their businesses. It is important for the future of our economy to help stimulate high wage job growth to reverse the brain drain and bring our kamaaina back home to work in Hawaii.

I believe in the program(s) that the HI Growth Initiative is working to solidify for the fashion industry. They have helped my company with networking events, and key contacts. I am especially excited about their upcoming accelerator program they are focusing on and what it will accomplish for the fashion industry as a whole. Their vision to keep designers in Hawaii and uplift an industry that can create jobs, showcase talent, improve made-in-Hawaii products, and increase retail presence (possibly on a global scale) is something I am passionate about. I am a local fashion designer. HI Growth has been invaluable to the development of my new business venture by connecting me directly with other business professionals, potential clientele, and mentors within the industry.

My company has grown from 1 employee to 2 employees and 100% revenue growth.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony on this bill.

## ward2-Robin

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**From:** Bradley Punu <bradpunu@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 17, 2014 9:23 AM  
**To:** edbtestimony  
**Cc:** Brad Punu  
**Subject:** HI Growth Initiative, SB718

Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Ward, and Members of the House Committee on Economic Development and Business:

I respectfully submit testimony in support of SB718 SD2 appropriating funds to the Hawaii Strategic Development Corporation for the HI Growth Initiative. This funding is needed to continue the HI Growth Initiative, which has helped to catalyze an ecosystem that provides the building blocks for high-growth businesses to grow and scale in Hawaii. The entrepreneurial ecosystem in Hawaii helps to support the efforts of the Energy Excelerator, based in Honolulu, and one of the nation's premier business accelerators for the clean energy industry. It is important for the future of our economy to help stimulate high wage job growth to reverse the brain drain and bring our kamaaina back home to work in Hawaii.

I am a perfect example of this. I was away for 15 years in Asia always wondering if there would ever be the opportunity to return. Never before have I felt such energy and attention being devoted to the entrepreneurial sector especially in renewable energy and clean technology. Having returned to Hawaii last year, I am proud to be a part of the Energy Excelerator and doing what I can to help this along but we need all the support we can get.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & BUSINESS  
March 18, 2014, 9:00 A.M.  
(Testimony is 1 page long)

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB718

Aloha Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Ward and Members of the Committee:

The Energy Excelerator, a startup program dedicated to helping solve energy challenges, starting in Hawaii, respectfully submits testimony in strong support of SB 718, legislation appropriating funds to the Hawaii Strategic Development Corporation (HSDC) for the HI Growth Initiative. HSDC provides invaluable resources to the innovation ecosystem and encourages high-growth businesses to grow and scale in Hawaii.

The Energy Excelerator is a program of the non-profit organization PICHTR, the Pacific International Center for High Technology Research. We strongly support SB 718 for four main reasons:

- 1) State investment is a catalytic economic development activity. The Energy Excelerator has provided about \$7M to companies to date, and these companies have raised \$40M in follow-on funding and generated over \$15M in revenue. State support through SB 718 would further leverage the significant federal clean energy innovation investment in the islands and show that Hawaii is committed to the long-term development of our entrepreneurial ecosystem.
- 2) Innovation companies create high quality jobs in a knowledge-based economy. For example, Energy Excelerator companies have created over 400 jobs, and provided work experience to numerous interns in the clean energy sector.
- 3) Money spent by innovation companies directly supports the trades. With a portion of awarded funding going to general contractors, electricians, carpenters, engineers, and other trades, the innovation economy supports not only high-tech jobs but also our local construction base.
- 4) Support for groundbreaking innovation elevates Hawaii's image across the U.S. and the Asia-Pacific. Hawaii's economic conditions and need to produce energy locally enable the state to attract top-tier clean energy technologies for testing. Efforts such as the Energy Excelerator do not succeed in isolation; they require an ecosystem of broad community involvement, strong mentor and investor networks, and the availability of capital – in short, the kinds of efforts proposed by SB 718.

We strongly support SB 718 and urge you to pass this bill. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

## ward2-Robin

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**From:** Assumpta Rapoza <Assumpta\_Rapoza@hmsa.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 17, 2014 3:01 PM  
**To:** edbtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of the HI Growth Initiative

Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Ward, and Members of the Committee on Economic Development and Business:

I respectfully submit testimony in strong support of SB718 SD2 appropriating funds to the Hawaii Strategic Development Corporation for the HI Growth Initiative. This funding is needed to continue the HI Growth Initiative, which has helped to catalyze an ecosystem that provides the building blocks for high-growth businesses to grow and scale in Hawaii. It is important for the future of our economy to help stimulate high wage job growth to reverse the brain drain and bring our kamaaina back home to work in Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Assumpta Rapoza

HTDC Chair

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An update from your friends at HMSA: Your well-being is important. That's why we made HMSA Well-Being Connect even better than before, with health coaching, key strategies, personalized tips, and interactive online tools to help you improve your well-being. Try it! Find HMSA Well-Being Connect at [hmsa.com](http://hmsa.com) in My Account.

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## ward2-Robin

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**From:** Meli James <meli@bluestartups.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 17, 2014 3:53 PM  
**To:** edbtestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony in Support of the HI Growth Initiative

Chair Tsuji, Vice Chair Ward, and Members of the Committee on Economic Development and Business:

I respectfully submit testimony in strong support of SB718 SD2 appropriating funds to the Hawaii Strategic Development Corporation for the HI Growth Initiative. This funding is needed to continue the HI Growth Initiative, which has helped to catalyze an ecosystem that provides the building blocks for high-growth businesses to grow and scale in Hawaii. It is important for the future of our economy to help stimulate high wage job growth to reverse the brain drain and bring our kamaaina back home to work in Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Meli James  
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