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Statement of  
**LUIS P. SALAVERIA**  
**Director**  
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism  
before the  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS**

Friday, March 31, 2017  
9:30a.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

in consideration of  
**HB 1559, HD1, SD1**  
**RELATING TO FOOD SAFETY.**

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Dela Cruz, and Members of the Committee.

The Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) supports the intent of HB 1559, HD1, SD1, which appropriates funds to address the FDA's industry guidance on the use of color additives in sea salt products so long as it does not displace Administration priorities.

DBEDT has not previously worked with the FDA on such a complex issue, and will require it to seek professional and knowledgeable assistance. Therefore, funding in the sum of \$150,000, as specified in the bill is necessary to undertake this task.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



# Chamber of Commerce HAWAII

*The Voice of Business*

**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Friday, March 31, 2017 at 9:30 A.M.  
Conference Room 211, State Capitol**

**RE: HOUSE BILL 1559 HD1 SD1 RELATING TO FOOD SAFETY**

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Dela Cruz, and Members of the Committee:

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber") **supports** HB 1559 HD1, which appropriates funds to DBEDT in each of fiscal years 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 to provide guidance and support regarding the FDA's industry guidance on the use of color additives, as applied to sea salt products cultivated or produced in Hawaii.

The Chamber is Hawaii's leading statewide business advocacy organization, representing about 1,600+ 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.

Hawaiian sea salt is a well-known and popular product of Hawaii that is sold and used by both local residents and people abroad. Recent FDA guidelines regarding red and black Hawaiian sea salt have had such impact, financially, on Hawaiian sea salt distributors due to the cost of testing that they are required to bear.

Currently, additives used to color red Hawaiian salt -- red alae or Hawaiian red volcanic clay -- and black Hawaiian salt -- a pharmaceutical quality activated charcoal -- are not officially on the list of FDA-approved color additives. The FDA is willing to consider approving these additives, but they must pass systematic application submission and related testing by third party consultants, which can cost around \$50,000 or more, and take 6 months to a year for complete processing and approval by the FDA.

Having DBEDT's involvement in testing color additives for Hawaiian sea salt products, as is being proposed in this bill, will relieve local small businesses from bearing the burden of the testing costs and allow them to continue to focus on growing their business and creating a thriving market for Hawaiian sea salt products globally.

For these reasons, we support this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.