

Statement of
Duke Hartman, P.E.
Vice President, Business Development
Makai Ocean Engineering, Inc.
before the
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Wednesday, April 4, 2018
10:30 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 211
In consideration of
HB2556 HD1 SD1
RELATING TO INNOVATION BUSINESS

LATE

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

Makai Ocean Engineering, Inc. **STRONGLY SUPPORTS HB2556 HD1 SD1** that establishes the research and development program in the Hawaii technology development corporation.

Makai is a locally-owned and operated technology company based in Hawai'i for over 44 years. We are currently performing R&D on a variety of exciting ocean technology projects, including autonomous underwater vehicles, ocean thermal energy conversion (OTEC) and seawater air conditioning (SWAC) systems, submarine and subsea cable systems, and a Department of Energy project to grow and harvest macroalgae (limu) offshore in Hawaiian waters to produce a renewable biofuel alternative for transportation.

Makai has been successful in bringing in tens of millions of dollars in R&D funds from federal and international sponsors to Hawai'i, helping to stem the tide of "brain drain" of talented kama'aina kids going to the mainland. On a personal note, I am a Kahuku High School and University of Hawaii College of Engineering graduate who was ready to leave Hawaii for an engineering job on the mainland before Makai offered me a job. And Makai is not unique among Hawaii technology companies in their success. There is a tech community here that has made a strong economic impact in terms of high paying jobs, and demonstrated success in commercializing federal R&D, which has increased taxable revenue for the state, and brought home kama'aina scientists and engineers to stay.

This bill would enhance the ability of Hawaii companies like Makai to outshine mainland peers in competitive federal R&D projects, bring home R&D dollars that greatly exceed the initial investment, and create a critical mass and a truly vibrant industry of innovative R&D companies in Hawaii. It would expand and diversify Hawaii's economy, and enable our tech industry to support high-paying, highly-skilled professional jobs for our keiki here at home.

This is why we **STRONGLY SUPPORTS HB2556 HD1 SD1**. Thank you for the opportunity to offer these comments.

HB-2556-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2018 10:47:02 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Susan Matsuura	Individual	Support	No

Comments: