

February 9, 2018

Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair
Senator Brian Taniguchi, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Economic Development, Tourism, and Technology
Conference Room 414
Hawai'i State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813
RE: Testimony on SB 2902 – RELATING TO TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT

Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Taniguchi and Members of the Committee:

My name is Christine Sakuda and I serve as the executive director of Transform Hawai'i Government (THG), a coalition of organizations and individuals who believe in improving government services for every Hawaii resident on every island. THG strongly supports SB 2902, Relating to Technology Development, which Appropriates funds for grants to participants in software application challenges so that the proofs of concept created during the challenges can be developed into prototypes suitable for local and state government. Appropriates funds. Requires matching funds.

These challenges, such as the Hawaii Annual Code Challenge and the Agricultural code challenge known as the AGathon, engage the technology development community and state government agencies in collaborative efforts to develop innovative solutions to an array of issues facing our state. Application challenges are intended to generate proofs of concepts, but not complete or even prototype products. Without additional resources, the fruition of these proofs of concepts and their potential benefits cannot be realized.

The appropriation provided by this measure bridges the existing gap between a proof of concept, a prototype and a commercial product. Moreover, it not only creates a pathway for the development of civic technology but also enables the teams themselves to evolve into startup businesses. Accordingly, these challenges, when coupled with the appropriation provided by this measure, further both business and workforce development in our state.

THG also supports the provisions regarding the use of funds for the identified purposes and the prescribed leveraging of matching funds to extend the impact of this appropriation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide THG's input on this important bill.