



DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

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Statement of
MIKE MCCARTNEY
Director
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM

Friday, April 9, 2021
3:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 224
and Videoconference

in consideration of
GM 666
**Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Community-Based Economic
Development Advisory Council, Gubernatorial Nominee, TEENA RASMUSSEN,
for a term to expire 06-30-2023.**

Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Misalucha and members of the Committee. The Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) strongly supports GM 666, which submits for consideration and confirmation to the Community-Based Economic Development (CBED) Advisory Council, Gubernatorial Nominee, **Ms. Teena Rasmussen**, for a term to expire 06-30-2023.

The CBED Program was created by the Legislature for the purpose of establishing a program of technical assistance and financial assistance for community-based organizations to assist in the establishment and development of community-based enterprises in the State. Among other duties, the CBED Advisory Council makes recommendations to the department regarding the appropriateness of proposed activity or enterprise, and the department then has the final authority to approve or disapprove loan and grant applications for assistance.

Teena Rasmussen served as the Director of the Office of Economic Development for the County of Maui for eight years. During her tenure, she oversaw an \$80 million portfolio of economic development grants, accomplished projects in energy, film, agriculture, tourism, workforce development, and business development.

Under her leadership, the Made In Maui County Festival, the Maui Energy Conference, the Hawaii Small Business Conference and the Molokai Business Conference were founded. Teena successfully led the County of Maui in participating in international events such as the Goyang International Horticulture Show in Goyang, South Korea; the Philadelphia Flower Show

in Philadelphia, PA; and the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Conference in Honolulu in 2011.

Teena and her husband founded and operated a diversified agriculture company, Paradise Flower Farms, Inc., on the island of Maui. Over its 35-year history, the company grew to become the largest lei flower farm in Hawai'i, spanning 50 acres and employing 33 people. It serviced the Hawaii market and shipped fresh flower lei throughout the mainland US and Canada. She and her husband sold the business in 2015.

During her 40+ years as a resident of Maui, Teena has generously given her time to nonprofits and education-based institutions, as well as dedicated a great deal of her expertise to business and industry advocacy.

Teena served on the University of Hawaii Board of Regents for four years in which she chaired the Community College Committee and was the UH representative to the national American Association of Community College Trustees from 2010-2012.

Teena has been a long-time member of the Maui County Farm Bureau, the Hawai'i Tropical Flower Council, and the Hawai'i Floral and Nursery Association, and was inducted into the American Academy of Floriculture (AAF) for Lifetime Achievement in 2008.

Teena served on the Small Business Administration Advisory Council for 10 years, the Governor's Small Business Advisory Council for 3 years, was Vice-Chair of the Maui County Salary Commission, and served as the Mayor's representative on the Maui Economic Development Board for 8 years.

Her service to the Tri-Agency Board of Aloha House, Maui Youth and Family Services, and Malama Family Recovery spanned 10 years through 2017, and she chaired their signature fundraiser "Growing Dreams" for 7 years.

Ms. Rasmussen's depth of understanding about all sectors of industry in Hawai'i's economy has been achieved through decades of interaction through her public and private sector experiences and collaboration with a network of community partners engaged in the work of economic development and advocacy. The experience, skills, and commitment Ms. Rasmussen brings to the CBED Program and CBED Advisory Council will prove invaluable to our State, Department and our communities.

We humbly ask for your favorable consideration and confirmation of **Ms. Teena Rasmussen** to the CBED Advisory Council.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.