

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



JAMES J. NAKATANI
Executive Director

STATE OF HAWAII
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
235 S. Beretania Street, Room 205
Honolulu, HI 96813
Phone: (808) 586-0186 Fax: (808) 586-0189

**TESTIMONY OF JAMES J. NAKATANI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

**BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND
ENVIRONMENT**

Wednesday, April 5, 2023
1:00 PM
Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

**GM 585 - Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of
Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation, Gubernatorial
Nominee, JAYSON WATTS, for a term to expire 06-30-2025**

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards and Members of the Committee:

The Agribusiness Development Corporation (“ADC”) **supports** GM 585, relating to the consideration and confirmation of Mr. Jayson Watts’ appointment to the ADC Board of Directors.

Mr. Watts currently sits on Maui County Farm Bureau Board serves as Director of External Affairs and Strategic Initiatives at Mahi Pono, LLC. Prior to joining Mahi Pono, Mr. Watts served as special assistant to the Director of the Hawaii Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, and as senior advisor to Hawaii Lieutenant Governors Doug Chin and Shan Tsutsui.

ADC believes Mr. Watts executive experience will be instrumental in helping keep Hawaii’s agriculture industry moving forward. Furthermore, ADC is

confident he has the experience and skills required to serve on the Board and respectfully ask for your consideration and support of his nomination

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

DEREK S.K. KAWAKAMI, MAYOR

MICHAEL A. DAHLIG, MANAGING DIRECTOR



Testimony of
Michael A. Dahilig
Managing Director, County of Kaua'i

Before the
Senate Committee on Agriculture and the Environment
April 5, 2023 at 1:00 PM
Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

In consideration of
GM 585 – Jayson Watts
Gubernatorial Nominee for
Member, Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation

Honorable Chair Gabbard, Honorable Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Committee:

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **STRONG SUPPORT** of Mr. Jayson Watts' nomination the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation. As a nominee, he is well qualified to fulfill this responsibility given his professional and life experiences, his temperament, and desire to serve. I was very pleased with the Governor Green's vote of confidence in his skills with this nomination.

I have known Mr. Watts in various community capacities for over a decade, particularly with his work in government, the legislature, and now in private industry as a leader in agriculture on Maui. I can attest to his cooperative and collaborative style, intellect, and good character. His experience in understanding how Hawai'i works from these areas of expertise makes his unique skill set in land management, government, and rural issues an asset to this critical department that is entrusted with managing our agricultural land assets.

Personally, I consider Mr. Watts a friend. Given our age, our paths have crossed in many professional settings that go beyond what I can count. Not many individuals have the diversity of his experiences, and while he may come across as well-mannered and professional, he also has a side to him that doesn't take himself too seriously. His candor and humor make him a perfect fit to communicate with people from all walks of life.

The Department and the State will undoubtedly be enriched by his service on the ADC board. I have confidence in Mr. Watts' ability to make sound and deliberative choices in the management of our state's agricultural resources, and respectfully ask this honorable committee to **ADVISE AND CONSENT** to his nomination. Mahalo for your consideration.



March 30, 2023

TO: The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

FROM: Debbie Cabebe, Chief Executive Officer
Maui Economic Opportunity

SUBJECT: Governor's Message No: 585
Nomination of Jayson Watts to the Board of Directors
of the Agribusiness Development Corporation, term to expire 6-30-25
Hearing: Wednesday, April 5, 1 p.m.

Chair Gabbard and Members of the Committee,

My name is Debbie Cabebe from Maui Economic Opportunity. I am writing in support of Jayson Watts' nomination to the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

Mr. Watts' professional resume makes him uniquely qualified to hold a directorship on the Agribusiness Development Corporation, whose mission is "to provide leadership and advocacy for the conversion of agribusiness into a dynamic growth industry through the use of financial and other tools."

He currently serves as director of external affairs and strategic initiatives for Mahi Pono, a 41,000 acre diversified agricultural company on Maui. His role is to oversee the company's 100-acre community farm and agriculture park and occupational/Environmental Health and Safety program.

While serving in the lieutenant governor's office, Mr. Watts helped create and manage the 'Aina Pono Hawai'i State Farm to School Program to increase the purchase and consumption of local agriculture in Hawai'i schools.

MEO has worked closely with Mr. Watts and Mahi Pono on heat and pesticide safety training/certification and employment and educational support of farmworkers through the agency's National Farmworker Jobs Program and other services.

Should you have additional questions, I can be reached at (808) 243-4300 or at debbie.cabebe@meoinc.org. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Debbie Cabebe, SHRM-SCP
Chief Executive Officer

The Promise of Community Action

Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.





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Coalition for a
Tobacco-Free Hawai'i

Community Health
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COVID-19 Response

Hawai'i Drug & Alcohol Free
Coalitions

Hawai'i Farm to School Hui

Hawai'i Oral Health Coalition

Hawai'i Public Health Training Hui

Healthy Eating + Active Living

Kūpuna Collective

Date: April 2, 2023

To: Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senator Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Re: Support GM585 Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the
Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation to
Expire June 30, 2025

Hrg: Wednesday, April 5, at 1:00 PM

The Hawai'i Public Health Instituteⁱ (HIPHI) is in **Support of GM585**, Submitting for consideration and confirmation **Jayson Watts** to the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation to Expire June 30, 2025.

Since 2000, Jayson Watts has served our state in various roles. He first began his public service journey in the office of Congresswoman Patsy T. Mink. From there he has continued to dedicate his career to the betterment of the people of Hawai'i. In 2003, he began his career within our state government. He has served in a capacity of rolls. He is deeply knowledgeable in regard to the legislative system, the way to navigate it, and how to effectively engage with legislators, staff, and advocates having served in the Senate for seven years.

Following his time in the legislative branch, Jayson Watts spent five years in the administrative branch. Four of those years as advisor to the lieutenant governor followed by one year as a special assistant to the Director of the Hawai'i State Department of Labor and Industrial Relations. He has developed a deep understanding of the way in which government works and how to move an idea from a policy to a function. This skill is unique. There are very few individuals who can actually make a concept work in the day to day.

One of his most notable projects was successfully moving the 'Āina Pono Hawai'i State Farm to School Program forward. This accomplishment was achieved through developing relationships with farmers, school staff, school leaders, and Department of Education Administration to ensure a \$108M food budget was utilized appropriately to achieve programmatic goals. Through his work with the agricultural component of that role, he developed a deep understanding of farms, farming, and farmers.

That role springboarded him to make the successful transition to Director of External Affairs & Strategic Initiatives for the Mahi Pono, LLC, a 41,000 acre diversified agricultural company on Maui Island. Here Mr. Watts has been working to build a more sustainable Hawai'i, seeking to always put the 'āina first because that is where success is rooted.

Having known Jayson Watts for 20 years both professionally and personally, I know that he will serve the people of Hawai'i tirelessly. He is dedicated to the land and the people, and he strives to make the best choices to advance the initiatives and policies so both flourish.

Jayson Watts will continue to serve our state with this dedication, and for these reasons, HIPHI supports Mr. Watts for this term as a member of the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peggy Mierzwa". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Peggy Mierzwa
Director of Policy & Advocacy

¹ Hawai'i Public Health Institute is a hub for building healthy communities, providing issue-based advocacy, education, and technical assistance through partnerships with government, academia, foundations, business, and community-based organizations.



1050 Bishop St. PMB 235 | Honolulu, HI 96813
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TO: Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senator Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Vice Chair

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: April 5, 2023
TIME: 1pm
PLACE: Via Videoconference

RE: GM585 Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation, Gubernatorial Nominee, JAYSON WATTS, for a term to expire 06-30-2025.

Position: Support

The Hawaii Food Industry Association is comprised of two hundred member companies representing retailers, suppliers, producers, and distributors of food and beverage related products in the State of Hawaii.

HFIA is in support of this measure and knows that Jayson Watts would be an asset to the Agribusiness Development Corporation as a Board Member. As Director of External Affairs and Strategic Initiatives at Mahi Pono Jayson has helped the farm make real progress on important goals to increase local food production. The food grown at Mahi Pono on Maui is not only meant for Hawaii consumers but also for Hawaii manufacturers, who can use it to create value added products. This in turn creates jobs and further integrates local agriculture into our local food systems and diversifies the local economy.

Jayson's commitment to local agriculture and food production is also evidenced by Mahi Pono's sponsorship of the Made in Hawaii Festival. Jayson has worked with the Festival to create this partnership that enables the Festival itself and empowers local manufacturers, many of which are using local agricultural products.

Jayson brings valuable first hand agriculture and business knowledge to this position. We urge the Committee to vote yes and we thank you for the opportunity to testify.



Email: communications@ulupono.com

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT
Wednesday, April 5, 2023 — 1:00 p.m.

UluPono Initiative strongly supports GM 585, Submitting for Consideration and Confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Jayson Watts, for a Term to Expire 6-30-2025.

Dear Chair Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

My name is Micah Munekata, and I am the Director of Government Affairs at UluPono Initiative. We are a Hawai'i-focused impact investment firm that strives to improve the quality of life throughout the islands by helping our communities become more resilient and self-sufficient through locally produced food, renewable energy and clean transportation choices, and better management of freshwater resources.

UluPono strongly supports GM 585, which submits for consideration and confirmation Jayson Watts to the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC).

Jayson Watts has hands-on experience in the local agricultural industry as the Director of External Affairs & Strategic Initiatives at Mahi Pono on the island of Maui. Mr. Watts has an extensive resume across local government, working with various state departments/agencies and Hawai'i lawmakers. His active role in the ag community is further accentuated with his roles on multiple boards, including the Maui County Farm Bureau and Hawai'i Food Industry Association. Mr. Watts will continue to be an important voice on the ADC Board, providing a much-needed perspective to the agency tasked with diversifying our local agricultural industry.

UluPono humbly asks this committee and the Legislature for their support of the nomination of Jayson Watts to the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata
Director of Government Affairs

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

April 5, 2023

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

TESTIMONY ON GM 585

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation, gubernatorial nominee, JAYSON WATTS, for a term to expire 06-30-2025

Conference Room 224 & Videoconference
1:00 PM

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawai'i's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau strongly supports the confirmation of Jayson Watts to the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

HFB has had the opportunity to work with Mr. Watts while he served as a Senior Advisor to Lieutenant Governor Shan Tsutsui, as the Special Assistant to the Director at Hawai'i State Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR), and in his current capacity as Mahi Pono's Director of External Affairs & Strategic Initiatives. We have found him to be exceptionally qualified, dedicated, honest, and fair in his handling of many complicated agricultural issues.

As an agricultural-based organization, HFB appreciates Mr. Watts' experience and support for all agriculture and his commitment to addressing the many important agricultural issues facing Hawai'i's farming community. As the Senior Advisor to Lieutenant Governor Shan Tsutsui, Mr. Watts helped spearhead the 'Aina Pono Hawai'i State Farm to School Program which helped develop a pathway for including local produce and protein in school meals in Hawai'i. He assisted the DLIR Agriculture Workforce Advisory Board during his tenure as the Special Assistant to the Director at DLIR and currently oversees Mahi Pono's 100-acre community farm and agriculture park and assists senior leadership with developing sustainable program goals, executing

comprehensive media and public policy advocacy, and manage relations before key county, state, and federal decision-makers.

Mr. Watts' experience is complemented by a strong work ethic and dedication that will undoubtedly combine to provide positive leadership for Agribusiness Development Corporation.

Please accept our strong support for the nomination of Mr. Jayson Watts to the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation.



SanHi

GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES

A LIMITED LIABILITY LAW PARTNERSHIP

DATE: April 5, 2023

TO: Senator Mike Gabbard
Chair, Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Submitted Via Capitol Website

FROM: C. Mike Kido

RE: **GM 585 - Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of Agribusiness Development Corporation, Gubernatorial Nominee, JAYSON WATTS, for a term to expire on 06/30/2025. Hearing Date: Wednesday, April 5, 2023 at 1:00 p.m. Conference Room: 225**

Dear Chair Gabbard, Vice-Chair Richards, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment:

This testimony is in strong support of Jayson Watts as a qualified and dedicated member of the community and to serve as a member of the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC) for the term specified.

Aside from the extensive and varied work experience that Mr. Watts brings to fulfill his service to the ADC Board, I can personally attest to his commitment and dedication in fostering and promoting Hawaii's agriculture industry in his endeavors to enhance the availability of local grown food products into our Department of Education public school menu.

I believe that this kind of dedication and commitment is what will enhance his participation to the mission of the ADC. Please confirm Mr. Jayson Watts to the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

Mahalo for your consideration and affirmative vote.

LARRY JEFTS FARMS, LLC
PO BOX 27
KUNIA, HAWAII 96759
(808) 688-2892
GM585, Jayson Watts

Gubernatorial Nominee to the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC)

Senate AEN Hearing – 1:00 pm
Room 224
Wednesday, April 5, 2023

Testimony By: Larry Jeffs
Position: Support

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Senate AEN Committee:

I am Larry Jeffs, owner and operator of Larry Jeffs Farms, LLC. We have more than 42 years of Hawaii farm experience on Molokai and Oahu. Our family farms grow about 1 million pounds weekly of import replacement produce. I am a volunteer director and chair of the West Oahu Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). I have been an officer of the Hawaii Farm Bureau for many years.

ADC's purpose, established by HRS163-D, is to provide leadership for developing, financing, improving, or enhancing agribusiness enterprises to increase local production for local consumption and reduce reliance on imported agricultural products. One of ADC's challenges is conserving and converting arable lands and their associated infrastructure to new production uses.

Jayson Watts is no stranger to agriculture. He is Mahi Pono's Director of External Affairs and Strategic Initiatives. He is a volunteer Board Director of the Maui County Farm Bureau. In 2018, while Senior Advisor to Lt. Governor Shan Tsutsui, he created and managed the State's Aina Pono Hawaii State Farm to School Program to increase the purchase and consumption of local agriculture in schools. Mr. Watts brings an agricultural stakeholder perspective to ADC, which is always an asset.

Your favorable consideration of Mr. Watt's nomination to the ADC Board of Directors is appreciated. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



April 4, 2023

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senator Tim Richards, III, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Agriculture & Environment

RE: Governor's Message No. 585
Hearing date: March 5, 2023 at 1:00 pm

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards and members of the committee,

It is my pleasure to submit testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of GM 585 for confirmation of Jayson Watts to the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation ("ADC").

Since 2019, Jayson has worked in a leadership position for Mahi Pono on Maui assisting with the implementation of many of the objectives for which ADC was formed. Specifically, Jayson manages Mahi Pono's 100-acre community farm and agriculture park and occupational/Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) program helping to provide strategic direction for the long-term sustainability and improvements needed to help the farm thrive. He also ensures compliance with state and federal laws and regulations, and works with key county, state, and federal policymakers to make sure agriculture initiatives are fulfilled.

Jayson has a firm commitment to public service, through his experience at the federal level as well as with the state executive and legislative branches, has provided him with opportunities to develop a wealth of knowledge in agriculture and government operations in Hawaii. These qualities will be invaluable in supporting the growth, diversification, and resiliency of Hawaii's agriculture economy. For these reasons I urge you to confirm Jayson Watts to the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Kim Yoshimoto



Imanaka Asato
A LIMITED LIABILITY LAW COMPANY

April 4, 2023

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senator Herbert M. Richards, III, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Agriculture
& Environment
Thirty-Second State Legislature
Regular Session of 2023

**RE: Governor's Message No. 585 - Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation, Gubernatorial Nominee, JAYSON WATTS, for a term to expire 06-30-2025
Hearing date: April 5, 2023 at 1:00 pm**

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards and members of the committee,

Mahalo for allowing me to submit testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of GM 585 for confirmation of Jayson Watts to the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation ("ADC"). The agency was formed to help provide direction and facilitate the transition of Hawaii's agriculture business from primarily pineapple and sugar to a more diverse crop base.

Since 2019, Jayson has worked for Mahi Pono in Maui providing leadership and implementation of many of the objectives for which ADC was formed. Specifically, Jayson manages Mahi Pono's 100-acre community farm and agriculture park and occupational/Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) program helping to provide strategic direction for the long-term sustainability and improvements needed to help the farm thrive. He also ensures compliance with state and federal laws and regulations, and works with key county, state, and federal policymakers to make sure agriculture initiatives are fulfilled.

Jayson has a firm commitment to public service and has always demonstrated a wealth of knowledge in agriculture and government operations in Hawaii. These qualities will be invaluable in supporting the growth, diversification, and resiliency of Hawaii's agriculture economy. For these reasons I urge you to confirm Jayson Watts to the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Michael L. Iosua

GM-585

Submitted on: 3/31/2023 4:13:26 PM

Testimony for AEN on 4/5/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christen Lee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Committee,

I strongly support the confirmation of Jayson Watts to the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation. I had the pleasure of working with Mr. Watts at the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations where he served as the Special Assistant to the Director and coordinated departmental initiatives, including workforce development ones. Mr. Watts is now the Director of External Affairs and Strategic Initiatives at Mahi Pono and remains passionate and knowledgeable about agriculture and workforce development. Mr. Watts is committed to increasing our local agriculture and developing workforce initiatives to encourage future farmers. His knowledge and experiences will make him an invaluable member of the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of Mr. Watts.

GM-585

Submitted on: 3/31/2023 8:57:18 PM

Testimony for AEN on 4/5/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lon Paresa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support brother Jayson Watts for a seat on the Board of Directors of the Ag Development Corps. Aloha.



GORDON M. ARAKAKI

Attorney at Law, LLLC
94-1176 Polinahe Place
Waipahu, Hawaii 96797
Cell: (808) 542-1542
E-mail: gordonarakaki@hawaiiantel.net

Hearing Date: Wednesday, April 5, 2023

Time: 1:00 PM

Place: Senate Conference Room 224

The Honorable Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair

The Honorable Senator Herbert M. “Tim” Richards III, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Subject: **GM 585** – Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation, Gubernatorial Nominee, **Jayson Watts**, for a term to expire 06-30-2025.

Dear Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and members of the Committee:

I strongly and whole-heartedly support the confirmation of **Jayson Watts** to the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation (“ADC”).

Over the past sixteen years, I have gotten to know Jayson both professionally and personally. We first met in 2007, when he served as the Senate Sergeant at Arms and I served as the Ways and Means Chief of Staff/Committee Clerk, and have kept in touch ever since.

I particularly remember Jayson’s time working for Lt. Gov. Shan Tsutsui, when Jayson took point on the State’s ‘Aina Pono Hawaii State Farm to School Program to increase the purchase and consumption of local agriculture in Hawaii schools. His responsibilities included reforming the Hawaii State Department of Education’s School Food Services Branch budget and educating/retraining over 1,000 cafeteria employees statewide. To do this, the Lt. Gov.’s office and Jayson brought in national award-winning Chef Greg Champion (founder of Beyond Green Partners) to start the ‘Aina Pono Program with a pilot project at Kohala Elementary School that succeeded beyond expectations. Based on that success, the Program quickly expanded to Mililani High School, where it was also hugely successful. Through all of this, Jayson was instrumental in helping Chef Champion understand local cultures and navigate State bureaucracy.

The wide-ranging set of skills that Jayson demonstrated in working with Chef Champion to achieve the successes of the Aina Pono Program are ideal—necessary, I think—for the ADC Board as it works to carry out the ADC’s multi-faceted mission. Jayson has the ability to see and shape a big picture vision of a program, while at the same time having the attention to details and, most importantly, the ability to motivate the people who will turn those visions into reality.

Personally and professionally, I cannot think of anyone better to help carry out the mission of the ADC “to provide leadership and advocacy for the conversion of agribusiness into a dynamic growth industry through the use of financial and other tools.”

I have practiced as an attorney in both the private and public sectors, served as the Chief of Staff/Committee Clerk of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means, and been one of the primary drafters of Hawaii’s condominium law (as the Real Estate Commission’s Condominium Law Recodification Attorney), among other things, and I believe that Jayson Watts is a most deserving and well-qualified candidate for appointment to the ADC Board of Directors. I respectfully urge the Senate to confirm his nomination.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me directly by phone at (808) 542-1542 or by e-mail at gordonarakaki@hawaiiantel.net.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Gordon M. Arakaki

GM-585

Submitted on: 4/2/2023 4:04:20 PM

Testimony for AEN on 4/5/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Teena Rasmussen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to express my support for Jayson Watts to be appointed to the Agribusiness Development Corporation. Jayson has the perfect combination of agribusiness and government experience. He is very aware of the complexities of all that ADC manages and how important its land and water resources are to the farmers it serves. I believe he will be an asset to the board. I urge you to approve his appointment.

Sincerely,

Teena Rasmussen

GM-585

Submitted on: 4/2/2023 7:52:23 PM

Testimony for AEN on 4/5/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
VINCENT MINA	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

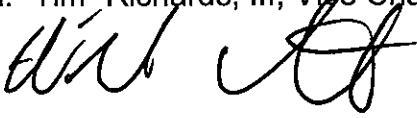
Comments:

Aloha Senator Gabbard and committee, My name is Vincent Mina, I am a farmer who makes his living at farming. I met and worked with Jayson Watts when I was President of Hawaii Farmers Union United and was inspired by his cooperative and collaborative spirit within the agricultural sector. He has a very engaging style that works well in a board of director position, and does not shy away from doing the trench work necessary to develop and implement strategic initiatives. Its been a pleasure to get to know and work alongside Jayson. With my being a sitting board member on the state board of agriculture, its refreshing to know that Jayson is up for this appointment and if confirmed will be an invaluable addition to the ADC. I whole heartedly endorse Jayson Watts and Mahalo to Governor Green for submitting his appointment.

April 5, 2023
Conference Rm 224

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

TO: Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senator Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Vice Chair

FROM: William Kunstman 

RE: GM 585 Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation, Gubernatorial Nominee, JAYSON WATTS

I am writing to testify in **STRONG SUPPORT** of Mr. Watts to serve on the Board of Directors for the Agribusiness Development Corporation. I have known and worked with Mr. Watts for nearly fifteen years in his capacities in the Hawaii State Senate, the Lieutenant Governor's Office, as a co-worker in the Director's Office of the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR), and as Director of External Affairs & Strategic Initiatives for Mahi Pono.

Mr. Watts is a very talented, intelligent person with a sophisticated understanding of the laws, issues, and stakeholders involved in matters of crucial importance in Hawaii. His leadership and contribution in his capacity at Mahi Poni coupled with his current, exemplary service as a Board member of the Agribusiness Development Corporation make him an excellent candidate to continue serving as a board member.

Considering his personal qualities, professional experience, and demonstrated commitment to agricultural diversification, I urge the committee to recommend advise and consent to Mr. Watt's confirmation as a member of the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Governor's Message 585.

GM-585

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 10:22:28 AM

Testimony for AEN on 4/5/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Danny Cup Choy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha - I am writing in strong support of Jayson Watts and his confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation. I have known Jayson for many years and believe he is uniquely qualified for this role. His years of experience as a leader in state government and local agriculture, all while being devoted to community service, makes him an ideal appointment to the ADC. Jayson has high integrity, strong character, and will serve the state well in this role.

GM-585

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 11:13:07 AM

Testimony for AEN on 4/5/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sandie Wong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support the nomination of Jayson Watts. I have worked with Jayson in the past and he is smart and hardworking, thus, would be a good addition to the Board. Thank you.

GM-585

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 11:25:13 AM

Testimony for AEN on 4/5/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ken H Kakesako	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and members of the committee,

My name is Ken Kakesako and I am writing in strong support of GM 585, submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors for the Agribusiness Development Corporation, Gubernatorial Nominee, Jayson Watts, for a term to expire 06-30-2025.

Mr. Watts has extensive experience in state and federal government, having served under Congresswoman Patsy T. Mink, and then as the Assistant Senate Sergeant at Arms at the State Capitol, and later in the Office of Lieutenant Governor Shan Tsutsui. Compounded with his recent experience as the Director of External Affairs & Strategic Initiatives at Mahi Pono, LLC, Mr. Watts has the right mixture of public and private sector experience that will provide a unique perspective as a board member for the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

Personally, I have had the privilege of working with Mr. Watts through my role as the Deputy to the Chairperson at the Hawaii State Department of Agriculture. I was able to see his ability to promote a collaborative work environment as he helped to pull together various stakeholder groups in order to move the state forward with its farm to school initiatives. His understanding of agricultural issues and the logistics of state government helped in facilitating the creation of the `Aina Pono Hawaii State Farm to School Program.

For the reasons stated above, I believe Mr. Watts would be an excellent addition to the Board of Directors for the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Date: 04/05/2023
Time: 01:00 PM
Location: CR 224 & VIDEOCONFERENCE
Committee: Agriculture & Environment

Person Testifying: Sharlene Wong, SNS, Program Administrator

Title of Hearing: GM 585 Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation, Gubernatorial Nominee, JAYSON WATTS, for a term to expire 06-30-2025.

Position: Support of Nominee

As a stakeholder of Child Nutrition Programs in Hawaii, I support the appointment of Jayson Watts to the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

In my professional capacity, I have had the opportunity to work with Mr. Watts on various Farm to School projects to increase the use of local products on the school meal plate. During our collaborations, I found Mr. Watts to be a forward-thinking advocate and partner willing to assist my office in meeting goals for our numerous Team Nutrition grants. He has provided his expertise on strategies to bring farmers and other stakeholders to the table to increase local foods in schools. If he is appointed to the Agribusiness Development Corporation, the hope is that he will continue to assist my office in meeting the goals of USDA and Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack.

Mr. Watts was instrumental in the “Aina Pono” initiative to pilot local food at Mililani and Kohala schools. In the Lt. Governor’s office, he worked with the public relations company hired to promote the local food pilot; as well as, the Department of Education (DOE) School Food Service Branch (SFSB). The result of the pilot revealed that it is feasible to increase the amount of local food used on the school meal plate with staff training and minimal equipment investment. Through Mr. Watts’s leadership, the groundwork was established to increase the use of local food in schools by working with multiple stakeholders. This jumpstarted the Legislative requirement that by 2030 30% of the food on the school meal plate must be local at the DOE.

Based on his enthusiasm for promoting Hawaii agriculture and sustainability, I believe he will be an asset to the Agribusiness Development Corporation. Mr. Watts’s knowledge of agribusiness and his varied experience with the State government will ensure that future Agribusiness ventures will have a high likelihood of success. Mr. Watts’s background at Mahi Pono has provided him with a strong perspective on the importance of agricultural sustainability. He is a supporter of the State’s farmers and his experience demonstrates he will facilitate the expansion of their operations building a stronger agricultural foundation in

Hawaii. The Agribusiness Development Corporation would be very fortunate to have a highly qualified individual like Mr. Watts serving as a member.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of Mr. Jayson Watts for the Agribusiness Development Corporation. If you have any questions regarding my testimony please feel free to contact me at sharleneyle@gmail.com or (203) 676-6326.

GM-585

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 12:41:54 PM

Testimony for AEN on 4/5/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elmer Kaai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Jayson will be a great addition, bringing will a wealth of experience and knowledge of the private and public sections. I urge the committee to Advise and Consent this nominee.

GM-585

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 1:55:04 PM

Testimony for AEN on 4/5/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jimmy Gomes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in total support of GM585 Jason Watts for HDOA Board. He is a very strong advocate for our Ag Industry. He is also has been doing a great job in his capacity at Mahi Pono.



Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair
Senator Herbert "Tim" Richards, III, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Testimony in SUPPORT of GM 585

Wednesday, April 5, at 1:00 PM
Conference Room 224

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of GM 585, consideration, and confirmation of Jayson Watts to the Agribusiness Development Corporation ("ADC") board of directors.

I have known Jayson for the better part of two decades. Jayson's professional experiences provides him with more than enough qualifications to join ADC's board of directors.

But in my humble opinion, Jayson's growing up on Maui in the early 1980s will probably lend ADC and the board its most value. Both sugar cane and pineapple production were very much a part of the everyday fabric of life on Maui in the 1980s. Having witnessed his home island transition through losing two major agricultural giants who fed families for generations will give a unique depth of perspective to both ADC's operations and the board's responsibilities to fulfill its mission.

Having worked with Jayson professionally and knowing him as a friend for all these years, I know for sure that Jayson is passionate about any subject he engages, and what drives that passion is that his home, his family, friends, and community are the beneficiaries of the hard work.

I am honored to provide this testimony in strong support of Jayson Watts to the Agribusiness Development Corporation's board of directors.

Adrian K. Kamali'i
President & Chief Consultant
Pae 'Āina Communications

GM-585

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 7:11:19 PM

Testimony for AEN on 4/5/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rufino Dan Magliba	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Person Testifying: Rufino Dan Magliba, Waimanalo, Hawaii Resident

Title of Hearing: GM 585 Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of

Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation, Gubernatorial

Nominee, JAYSON WATTS, for a term to expire 06-30-2025.

Position: Support of Nominee

Aloha,

I am writing to express my full support for the appointment of Jayson Watts to the Agribusiness Development Corporation. As a passionate advocate for the cultural, economic, political, and community development of all people in Hawaii, I believe that Mr. Watts is the ideal candidate for this position.

With over two decades of experience serving our state in various roles, Jayson Watts has demonstrated his deep commitment to the betterment of the people of Hawaii. He began his public service journey in the office of Congresswoman Patsy T. Mink and has since served in a variety of capacities within our state government. Mr. Watts is deeply knowledgeable about the legislative system and has effectively engaged with legislators, staff, and advocates during his seven years of service in the Senate.

Furthermore, Mr. Watts has spent five years in the administrative branch, serving as an advisor to the lieutenant governor and a special assistant to the Director of the Hawaii State Department of Labor and Industrial Relations. He has developed a deep understanding of the way in which government works and how to move an idea from policy to function. One of Mr. Watts' most notable projects was successfully moving the 'Aina Pono Hawaii State Farm to School Program forward, which achieved its goals through his work with farmers, school staff, school leaders, and the Department of Education Administration. This accomplishment speaks to his unique skill set in making a concept work in the day-to-day operations.

Mr. Watts' current position as Director of External Affairs & Strategic Initiatives for the Mahi Pono, LLC, a 41,000-acre diversified agricultural company on Maui Island, has further cemented

his understanding of the importance of putting the land first in building a more sustainable Hawaii.

Having known Mr. Watts for over a decade, I can attest to his tireless dedication to the land and the people of Hawaii. He is always striving to make the best choices to advance initiatives and policies that will benefit both. For these reasons, I strongly support Mr. Watts for this term as a member of the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

Thank you for considering my letter of support.

Mahalo,

Rufino Dan Magliba

Waimanalo, Hawaii Resident

GM-585

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 10:10:02 PM

Testimony for AEN on 4/5/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tim Carson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I respectfully submit the below testimony in the strongest possible support for Jayson Watt's appointment to the ADC Board of Directors.

I have known Jayson for almost 23 years when we were both staffers for US Representative Patsy T. Mink in Washington DC. During our working years together, Jayson not only thrived in a very high-pressure environment where the stakes we're high (and with an extremely demanding and exacting boss), but he also impressed me with his ability to put in the work in order to learn whatever new issue was put in front of him in order to provide advice to the Congresswoman.

Since those days, I'm continued to be impressed by Jayson's ability to develop deep, meaningful relationships with just about everyone he comes into contact with. By making these relationships, he's able to give people on all sides of the issue the freedom to make their arguments and know that he'll listen, consider all sides, and then make up his mind based on all of the facts.

Jayson has spent the vast majority of his career in public service where his only goal was to make the State of Hawaii a better place. His service record speaks for itself. This appointment to the ADC Board will allow him to get back to his passion of serving the State of Hawaii in an official capacity.

I'm extremely proud to continue to call him my friend. The ADC Board and the State would be lucky to have him and I ask you to please support his nomination.

Mahalo,

Tim Carson

President & CEO

SMS Hawaii

TESTIMONY OF SCOTT T. MURAKAMI
BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

In consideration of GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE 585

Wednesday, April 5, 2023
1:00PM, Conference Room 224

SUBMITTING FOR CONSIDERATION AND CONFIRMATION TO THE AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION, GUBERNATORIAL NOMINEE, JAYSON WATTS, FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 06-30-2025.

Chair Gabbard, Vice-Chair Richards, and members of the Committee:

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify on Governor's Message 585 regarding the appointment of Mr. Jayson Watts to the Agribusiness Development Corporation. I **STRONGLY SUPPORT** his nomination.

During my tenure as Hawaii's 21st Director of the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, I had the honor of working directly with Mr. Watts in his capacity as the Special Assistant to the Director. His duties were extremely varied including, but not limited to legislative, budgetary, direct program support, and internal division reorganizations to optimize staffing to increase the DLIR's ability to serve as Hawaii's economic safety net and improve the department's service to our community. His duties frequently required direct contact with legislative staff, legislators, as well as staff of Hawaii's congressional delegation. Mr. Watts completed all assignments with a high degree of accuracy and timeliness providing invaluable contributions to myself and the entire DLIR Leadership Team.

Mr. Watts is a highly insightful, smart, conscientious, and collaborative professional who believes in and practices lifelong learning. He is dedicated to serving and improving our community as demonstrated through his service on the boards of the Maui County Farm Bureau, the University of Hawaii Alumni Association, the Maui United Way, Hawaii Food Industry Association, and the U.S. Department of Commerce Hawaii-Pacific Export Council.

Mr. Watts is clearly an accomplished, effective professional and dedicated servant leader. But what I find most admirable is Jayson's willingness to sacrifice and put family first. When his family needed him most, he returned to Maui placing their needs above his own. He is a good person, a compassionate and empathetic leader who I have no doubt will contribute tremendously to the future of agriculture in Hawaii and our global community.

I **WHOLEHEARTEDLY SUPPORT** the nomination of Mr. Jayson Watts to serve on the Agribusiness Development Corporation. Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify.

April 4, 2023

The Honorable Mike Gabbard
Chairman
Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Hawai'i State Senate, Room 201
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

The Honorable Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III
Vice Chairman
Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Hawai'i State Senate, Room 202
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Subject: Mr. Jayson Watts, Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice-Chair Richards, and Senators Awa, DeCoite, Rhoads:

Thank you for the opportunity to express our strong support for Mr. Jayson Watts to serve on the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

The University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resource's GoFarm Hawai'i (GFH) program, previously the Agribusiness Incubator Program, has been providing business technical assistance throughout the state since 2003. The program has provided one-on-one business technical assistance for over 400 small and mid-sized businesses (including underserved and socially disadvantaged farmers) throughout the state. GFH also provides beginning farmer training and currently has six training sites throughout the state, all of which are in rural areas. The program has graduated over 500 individuals from its training program, many of which have started small farms or are working in the agricultural/food system.

As leaders of the GoFarm Hawai'i program, we have worked with Mr. Watts on several projects since 2020. Initially, GoFarm Hawai'i and Mahi Pono (with Mr. Watts as the primary contact) collaborated to support new community farmers through education and technical assistance. We are currently working with Mr. Watts and Mahi Pono to increase farmer education and land opportunities on the island of Maui. Through our work together, we have experienced the following:

- Mr. Watts has developed a strong local network and is able to bring various groups together for collaboration.
- He has engaged directly with many local farmers to understand the business needs and obstacles faced by Hawai'i's producers of all sizes. He understands the needs of both large and small producers and looks for ways to support all scales of farming in order to elevate the agricultural industry. This is essential as the state works to scale our existing producers and develop the next generation of farmers.

We have found that land access is one of the main obstacles for new and scaling farmers. Considering ADC's land portfolio, there is opportunity to increase land access to support producers of all scales. Hawai'i's producers (both small and large) need a leader and advocate that will facilitate development and growth of the industry. They need someone who understands the value and unique needs of producers across the agricultural spectrum and can bring a fresh and creative perspective, as well as an individual who has experience with land management and government requirements. We believe that Jayson can fill this role and fully support his nomination.

Mahalo,
Janel Yamamoto



Director, GoFarm Hawai'i
janelyamamoto@gmail.com
Personal Endorsement

Laura Ediger



Associate Director, GoFarm Hawai'i
laura.ediger@gmail.com
Personal Endorsement

GM-585

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 10:40:10 AM

Testimony for AEN on 4/5/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Denise Yamaguchi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

April 4, 2023

Senator Mike Gabbard

Chair

Senator Herbert Richards, III

Vice Chair

Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment:

I am writing in support of Jayson Watts who has been nominated by Governor Josh Green for the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC). I have known Jayson for the past 10 years and met him when he worked as the Senior Advisor to the former Lieutenant Governor Shan Tsutsui (LG). Because of the LG's commitment to local agriculture, I worked with Jayson on a number of agricultural initiatives, including the 'Āina Pono program which pushed for more local produce in our public schools. As the current Director of External Affairs and Strategic Initiatives for Mahi Pono, the largest agricultural operation in the State of Hawai'i, Jayson has worked in the operations and community to help Mahi Pono as it transitions from large sugarcane fields to diversified agriculture. More importantly, Jayson has also been instrumental in creating opportunities and helping our small local farmers succeed.

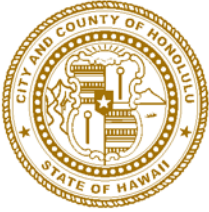
Jayson's experience working in policy in various roles at the state and federal level, as well as in the agricultural industry, make him an ideal candidate for a board position for ADC. He is even-tempered in nature and a good listener, strategist, and collaborator. He is well-liked by many and in my dealings with him, he has demonstrated strong character, ethics and leadership. Jayson is also a collaborator, always looking for other ways in which organizations and people can find synergy and opportunities to work together.

Based on his work history, commitment to public service, education, and most importantly his passion to contribute, I wholeheartedly support Jayson Watts for the ADC Board. Should you

have questions or need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me, 808-386-2538.

Mahalo,

Denise Yamaguchi



CITY COUNCIL
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
530 SOUTH KING STREET, ROOM 202
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-3065
TELEPHONE: (808) 768-5010 • FAX: (808) 768-5011

AUGIE TULBA

Councilmember District 9
*Waipahu, West Loch, Iroquois Point,
Ewa Villages & Portions of Ewa Beach*
Telephone: (808) 768-5009
Email: atulba@honolulu.gov

April 4, 2023

Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Wednesday, April 5, 2023
1:00 PM

Subject: In **Support of GM585**, Submitting for consideration and confirmation **Jayson Watts** to the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation to Expire June 30, 2025.

Chair Gabbard, Vice-Chair Richards, and members of the Committee,

I am grateful for the opportunity to support the nomination of Mr. Jayson Watts to the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

I met Mr. Watts in 2015, while working at the office of then Lieutenant Governor, Shan Tsutsui. During this time, Mr. Watts and I worked on the 'Aina Pono Hawaii State Farm to School Program. This program was key in bringing more of our local produce into Hawaii's schools for consumption. This project also allowed Mr. Watts to cultivate a vast understanding of our local farmers and farming practices; knowledge that has helped him as he continues to advocate on their behalf.

Mr. Watts is an individual who is passionate about Hawaii's agriculture and its future. His expertise in this field makes him a great asset for the Agribusiness Development Corporation, and I urge you to support this nomination.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Augie Tulba".

Augie Tulba, Honolulu Councilmember District 9

GM-585

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 12:25:49 PM

Testimony for AEN on 4/5/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aya Leslie	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Senator Mike Gabbard

Chair

Senator Herbert Richards, III

Vice Chair

Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment:

I am writing in support of Jayson Watts who is has been nominated by Governor Josh Green for the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC). I have known Jayson for the past five years and had the pleasure of meeting him through Mahi Pono. As the current Director of External Affairs and Strategic Initiatives for Mahi Pono, Jayson has worked in the operations and community to help Mahi Pono as it transitions from large sugarcane fields to diversified agriculture. More importantly, Jayson has been instrumental in creating opportunities and helping Hawaii's small local farmers succeed. He is well-liked by many, and demonstrates strong character, ethics and leadership. I wholeheartedly support Jayson Watts for the ADC Board. Please let me know if you have any questions, 858-201-8512. Thank you for the consideration.

Sincerely,
Aya Leslie

GM-585

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 12:35:41 PM

Testimony for AEN on 4/5/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jonathan Ching	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Committee Members:

My name is Jonathan Ching, and I am offering testimony in my individual capacity, in STRONG SUPPORT of GM 585.

I have personally known Mr. Watts for almost 20 years, since working our time for former Lt. Gov and State Senator Shan Tsutsui. I have always known Jayson has had his heart in public service, especially the island of Maui, where he is from. I believe Mr. Watts' experience serving for the late Congresswoman Patsy Mink help shaped him in being an astute, diplomatic, and compassionate professional.

Mr. Watts' current role as Director of External Affairs and Strategic Initiatives with Mahi Pono, LLC, plus his experience leading 'Aina Pono Hawaii State Farm to School Program with the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, have prepared him to be a valued member of the Agribusiness Development Corporation, whose mission is to provide leadership and advocacy for the conversion of agribusiness into a dynamic growth industry.

I humbly ask the Committee to recommend the Senate of the State of Hawaii to advise and consent to Mr. Watt's appointment to the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

Statement of
DANE K. WICKER

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

Wednesday, April 5, 2023, 1:00pm
State Capitol, Conference Room 224
& Videoconference

In consideration of **GM585**
Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the
Agribusiness Development Corporation, Gubernatorial Nominee, JAYSON
WATTS, for a term to expire 06-30-2025.

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Committee.

I **strongly support** GM585, submitting for consideration and confirmation to the board of directors of the agribusiness development corporation, gubernatorial nominee, Jayson Watts, for a term to expire 06-30-2025.

Mr. Watts has been dedicated to serving our community for nearly 20 years. His experience has grown tremendously since his start as a Congressional Intern and Staff Assistant with the Office of Congresswoman Patsy T. Mink. He proved himself with his professionalism and applying his knowledge to become the Legislative Director shortly after. The Legislative Director managed the Majority Caucus Leader's legislative agenda and leadership assignments, daily. He also oversaw projects, planning, budgeting and execution.

In 2007, Mr. Watts was appointed by the Hawaii State Senate as Assistant Sergeant at Arms, which had him overseeing the management of many essential duties of the Senate, under the supervision of the Senate President. From there, he became the Senior Advisor to the Lieutenant Governor and coordinated and managed the Lieutenant Governor's statewide strategic initiatives. Mr. Watts oversaw a very successful program, Aina Pono Hawaii State Farm to School Program. Which increased the purchase and consumption of local agriculture in Hawaii schools and reformed the HODOE School Food Services Branch. Also, he oversaw the state's

Testimony of Dane K. Wicker
GM585
April 5, 2023
Page 2

Resources for Enrichment, Athletics, Culture, and Health Initiative that initiated high-quality after-school programming in HIDOE middle and intermediate schools.

During Mr. Watts' time in the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, as a Special Assistant to the Director, he was responsible for the essentials of Hawaii's labor force. All of his experience lead him to where his now at Mahi Pono LLC as Director of External Affairs and Strategic Initiatives.

I strongly support Mr. Watts due to his knowledge with legislature, public and private sector and agriculture. I believe Mr. Watts is a great asset to our community, he is very qualified and extremely capable to serve on the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



SanHi

GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES

A LIMITED LIABILITY LAW PARTNERSHIP

DATE: April 5, 2023

TO: Senator Mike Gabbard
Chair, Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Submitted Via Capitol Website

FROM: Jena Matila

RE: **GM 585 - Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of Agribusiness Development Corporation, Gubernatorial Nominee, JAYSON WATTS, for a term to expire on 06/30/2025. Hearing Date: Wednesday, April 5, 2023 at 1:00 p.m. Conference Room: 225**

Dear Chair Gabbard, Vice-Chair Richards, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment:

Thank you for the opportunity to support the nomination of Jayson Watts to serve as a member of the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC) for the term specified.

I have known and worked with Jayson in various capacities for over a decade and have no doubt that his extensive government experience combined with his current role as the Director of External Affairs and Strategic Initiatives at Mahi Pono would make him a valuable asset to the ADC. Jayson consistently goes above and beyond to ensure the success of the initiatives he undertakes and I have no doubt his comprehensive knowledge of both government and local agriculture will serve the ADC charter well.

I respectfully ask for your favorable consideration of the nominee and thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Lisa Shozuya
lisashozuya@gmail.com

April 4, 2023

The Honorable Mike Gabbard
Chairman
Committee on Agriculture and Environment
Hawaii State Senate, Room 201
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Aloha Chair Gabbard!

I am writing to you in support of Jayson Watts for consideration and confirmation to the Board or Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

Jayson's consistent and growing knowledge of agribusiness in Hawaii will most certainly be a valuable asset to this Board but more importantly to the State of Hawaii.

The growing excitement of developing more ideas and support around growing, raising, creating, processing, and distributing food from Hawaii within Hawaii and from Hawaii beyond Hawaii is of increasing interest to new generations. Jayson is perfect for this Board appointment because he already understands the agribusiness community and wants it to grow and flourish. I feel his fresh, innovative ideas, communication and listening skills marinated with concrete experience within state government can help this Board to assure successful outcomes for all.

Jayson is very professional, easy to get along with, is a great leader, and is someone you can always count on to go the extra mile.

I SUPPORT JAYSON WATTS TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE AGRIBUSINESS CORPORATION FOR A TERM TO EXPIRE 06-30-2025.

Thank you for your consideration and for allowing me to submit my support for Jayson.

With gratitude and Aloha to you and your committee for all that you do for our beautiful Hawaii.

Mahalo,

Lisa Shozuya

GM-585

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 6:08:38 PM

Testimony for AEN on 4/5/2023 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melissa Unemori Hampe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I have known Mr. Watts since our years working on Capitol Hill for the Hawaii Congressional Delegation. I believe that his extensive experiences at the federal and state levels, as well as in private industry, will serve the Agribusiness Development Corporation well. His current leadership role serving as Director of External Affairs and Strategic Initiative for a major diversified agricultural company on Maui will provide unique perspectives through which he can advise the affairs of the ADC. I respectfully support his appointment to the ADC.