



**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS,
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**
KA 'OIHANA HO'OMOHALA PĀ'OIHANA, 'IMI WAIWAI
A HO'OMĀKA'IKA'I

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

Thursday, April 11, 2024
Time 1:00PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

In consideration of
GM671
**RELATING TO THE HAWAII COMMUNITY-BASED ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
TECHNICAL AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.**

Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai and members of the Committee. The Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) supports **GM671** which confirms Jennifer Wilkinson to serve on the Community-Based Economic Development (CBED) Advisory Council.

The mission of the CBED program is to develop viable, sustainable ventures and invest in community-based development projects that serve local needs and are compatible with the vision, character, and cultural values of their communities. The CBED Advisory Council reviews financing requests and makes recommendations on the awarding of loans and grants, subject to the final approval of the DBEDT Director.

With a strong financial background of having worked for credit unions since 2009 and her experience in providing funds to community organizations, Ms. Wilkinson will be able to provide insights and fiscal guidance to the Advisory Council and CBED programs.

As a Hawai`i Island resident, Ms. Wilkinson's goals align with the CBED program, and she brings a unique perspective and skill set that will complement CBED's diverse Advisory Council of community leaders.

We are honored to submit this testimony in support of Jennifer Wilkinson's nomination to the CBED Advisory Council.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

GM-671

Submitted on: 4/2/2024 1:46:12 PM

Testimony for EET on 4/11/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Hall	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi, President, and Members of the Senate
Thirty-Second Legislature,

I am writing to offer my enthusiastic endorsement for Jennifer Wilkenson as a prospective member of the Community-Based Economic Development Advisory Council. Throughout my professional interactions with Ms. Wilkenson, I have consistently witnessed an unparalleled dedication to excellence, a tireless work ethic, and an innate ability to lead with remarkable effectiveness.

One of her most admirable qualities is her unwavering commitment to achieving results. Regardless of the challenges she faces, she approaches every task with a determined and solution oriented mindset, consistently delivering outcomes that exceed expectations. Her ability to navigate complex issues and find innovative solutions sets her apart as a leader in our community.

In addition to her remarkable professionalism, Jennifer Wilkenson possesses a profound understanding of our community needs, dynamics and economic development principles. Her strategic insights and forward-thinking approach have been instrumental in driving positive change and fostering sustainable growth within our community for the last several years. She inspires those around her to strive for excellence and creates a collaborative environment conducive to creating workable solutions to complex issues. Her ability to motivate and empower others is truly commendable and has resulted in a deeper connectivity for the Ohana on our Island.

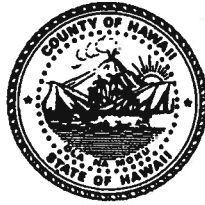
Jennifer Wilkenson will make an invaluable addition to the Community-Based Economic Development Advisory Council. Her unique blend of professionalism, hard work ethic, and leadership qualities makes her exceptionally well-suited to contribute meaningfully to the council's challenging objectives and initiatives and I am confident that she will exceed all expectations and make significant and long lasting contributions to the Community-Based Economic Development Advisory Council.

Respectfully and with Aloha,
Lisa Hall

Mitchell D. Roth
Mayor

Deanna Sako
Managing Director

Robert H. Command
Deputy Managing Director



Gerald A. Takase
Director

County of Hawai'i

Department of Liquor Control

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April 3, 2024

Senator Lynn DeCoite, Chair
Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair
Committee on Energy, Economic Development
And Tourism
State Capitol, Room 329
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee:


Subject: GM671
Gubernatorial Nominee Jennifer Wilkinson

I am writing in support of Jennifer Wilkinson to serve as a member of the Community-Based Economic Development (CBED) Advisory Council. I have known Jennifer for approximately 2 and a half years in her capacity as a Commissioner on the County of Hawai'i Liquor Commission. First, let me say as a department that relies on volunteers such as Jennifer to help fill our ranks as Commissioners, I greatly appreciate those that are willing to donate their time and talent to help fill these volunteer bodies.

As to Jennifer's qualifications to serve, Jennifer has her law degree and uses it well to assist her in her preparation, the quality of her questions, and the consideration she gives to each item of business that is brought before the Commission. Needless to say, she is prepared for each meeting and her questions and comments help immensely with the deliberations before the Liquor Commission. I am sure she will bring these same qualities to the CBED advisory council and provide much insight into that body.

Based on these attributes and qualities, I give Jennifer my highest recommendation and support.

Sincerely,


GERALD TAKASE
Director

GT:de

GM-671

Submitted on: 4/1/2024 4:55:52 PM

Testimony for EET on 4/11/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jill Paulin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair and Committee Members,

I have had the pleasure of working with Jennifer Wilkinson over the last year. She is professional, thoughtful and forward-thinking. I believe she will be an asset to any committee or commission she serves on.

Best,

Jill Paulin

GM-671

Submitted on: 4/1/2024 8:16:34 PM

Testimony for EET on 4/11/2024 1:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair DeCoite and Members:

I strongly support GM 671 Jennifer Wilkinson for confirmation to the Community-Based Economic Development Advisory Council.

I have had the pleasure of working with Jennifer on Hawaii community issues and believe that she fits the position. She has extensive experience working with and producing positive results that promote economic development. She has a wealth of work experience and a strong educational background that will add depth to the Advisory Council.

She continues to give back to the community on the Big Island, by working with various different groups on housing and other issues. She listens and has many great ideas on how to improve our economic base. She always steps up and provides her expertise for the betterment of our community.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify. Please support and confirm Jennifer Wilkinson.

Mahalo,

Kelly

GM-671

Submitted on: 4/2/2024 1:05:43 PM

Testimony for EET on 4/11/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sylvia Dahlby	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha! I support Jennifer Wilkinson 100% to bring some fresh perspective to the Economic Development Advisory Council. We need people like her to speak up for local small business owners and private property rights. Mahalo.

GM-671

Submitted on: 4/2/2024 2:40:34 PM

Testimony for EET on 4/11/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laura Roberts	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha! Without hesitation I recommend Jennifer Wilkinson for this position. She is professional, prompt, has great leadership skills, interpersonal skills, and a great work ethic.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Laura Roberts

GM-671

Submitted on: 4/2/2024 3:57:04 PM

Testimony for EET on 4/11/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Becky Jacobs	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support the nomination of Jennifer Wilkinson for the Community-Based Economic Development Advisory Council. Jennifer is professional and hard-working and has strong leadership skills with a "get it done" approach.

GM-671

Submitted on: 4/3/2024 6:16:37 AM

Testimony for EET on 4/11/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William minikel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

After being scapegoated and steamrolled since the Lahaina fire, it would be fair to have STR's being represented in discussions. The unequal application of taxes against STR's v Hotels is just one area that needs to be more equitable.

mahalo

GM-671

Submitted on: 4/4/2024 12:15:57 PM

Testimony for EET on 4/11/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Heidi Winslow	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I would like to express my support for Jennifer Wilkinson to be a member of the economic development advisory board. Jennifer is hard working, honest and extremely ethical. She will make an excellent addition to this board and deserves a seat at the table.

GM-671

Submitted on: 4/4/2024 9:47:07 PM

Testimony for EET on 4/11/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lance Owens	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I wanted to submit testimony in support of Jennifer Wilkinson.

Having served on the leadership team of a local organization of approximately 900 members, Jennifer came into the spotlight with her leadership skills in the local Government Affairs Committee (GAC). Her knowledge, understanding of the facts, and legal background propelled her to the forefront of our 2024 GAC Chair selection. As I progressed into state leadership roles, I attended the 2023 Hawai'i State Association of Counties Conference (HSAC) on Kauai. Jennifer was there in the capacity of the local West Hawai'i Association of REALTORS GAC Chair. We had the opportunity to meet with the different county leaders, attend many breakout sessions and learn from the event. We went home and shared ideas with our local members, and establish relationships with our government leaders, from the Mayor to our Council Members.

I hold her knowledge and ability to set aside personal agendas for the greater cause in high regard.

Sincerely Lance Owens.

GM-671

Submitted on: 4/5/2024 5:27:57 AM

Testimony for EET on 4/11/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gloria Squitiro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I wholeheartedly nominate Jennifer Wilkinson to the Community-Based Economic Development Advisory Council.

Jennifer is a tireless, and most times, unpaid volunteer who supports not only the aina, but the people who have a deep love for it.

She is level-headed, diplomatic, kind and acts for the good of the whole.

My husband was once a mayor of a large city, and he would have been lucky to have Ms. Wilkinson on one of his boards.

April 11, 2024

The Honorable Lynn DeCoite, Chair

Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism
State Capitol, Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

RE: GM 671 - Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Community-Based Economic Development Advisory Council, Gubernatorial Nominee, JENNIFER WILKINSON, for a term to expire 06-30-2028.

HEARING: Thursday, April 11, 2024, at 1:00 p.m.

Aloha Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Lyndsey Garcia and I **support** GM 671, submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Community-Based Economic Development Advisory Council, Gubernatorial Nominee, JENNIFER WILKINSON, for a term to expire 06-30-2028.

I had the honor of collaborating with Jennifer Wilkinson, who has exhibited great leadership qualities and a commitment to community service.

In her extensive professional journey, Ms. Wilkinson has a wealth of experience, particularly in the realm of financial institutions. As the former Chief Lending Officer of San Mateo Credit Union, she spearheaded innovative initiatives and played a pivotal role in crafting cutting-edge products and sales strategies. Her understanding of the industry landscape and fostering a culture of innovation make her an ideal candidate for the Community-Based Economic Development ("CBED") Advisory Council.

Moreover, Ms. Wilkinson has a proven track record in empowering and mentoring staff, dealing with changes strategically, and providing meaningful services based on membership and community needs. As the CBED helps develop viable economic projects in line with the community, her wealth of experience underscores her suitability for this role, which needs vision, strategic insight, and a deep commitment to the community and economic development.

For the foregoing reasons, I support the confirmation of Jennifer Wilkinson to the CBED Advisory Council.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

GM-671

Submitted on: 4/6/2024 8:15:42 PM

Testimony for EET on 4/11/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Somtida Salim	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear EET committee members,

I am writing to express my full support for the nomination and appointment of Ms. Jennifer Wilkinson to the Community-Based Economic Development Advisory Council.

I have known Ms. Wilkinson since November 2022 when we became colleagues in our community service volunteer project concerning legislative amendment proposals of the County of Hawaii. Our work together analyzes and interprets legalese language and the impact of the legislative proposals to make it more understandable and more accessible to the island residents so that they can advocate for themselves more appropriately.

Over the last year and a half that I have worked with her, Ms. Wilkinson has consistently demonstrated her genuine desire to be of service to the island community she calls home - not only in one capacity at a time, but in many different capacities at a time. Her work ethics and integrity are exemplary. She is a thorough researcher of facts and data and has keen and disciplined analytical skills to form data-driven, evidence-based arguments, conclusions, and solutions. She is impressively organized with information, records, data, references, etc. She is dependable - always delivers what she says she would, always punctual. She is an active listener. Her intelligence and thoughtfulness, combined with the J.D. and MBA degrees and very extensive professional experiences in finance makes Ms. Wilkinson a most valuable professional talent in any organization. I trust her. I enjoy working with her immensely. I also have deep respect for her character - honest, kind, personable, and wanting to do the right thing.

I can say with complete confidence that the State of Hawaii has received a great fortune because Jennifer Wilkinson wants to serve.

Respectfully,

Somtida A Salim

Hawaii County resident, M.S. in Public Communications, M.A. in Education, and a Fulbright Scholar.

April 8, 2024

To the Hawaii Senate,

I am writing to express my strong support for the nomination of Jennifer Wilkinson to the Community-Based Economic Development Advisory Council. My name is Donna Vaillancourt, and I have had the privilege of working with Jennifer in two capacities, both of which have given me great insight into her exceptional skills and dedication.

First, as a board member for the San Mateo Credit Union (Redwood City, California), I had the opportunity to witness Jennifer's remarkable contributions as the Senior Vice President and Chief Lending Officer. Her expertise in mortgage operations, trouble debt restructure workouts, and risk management was evident from the start. Jennifer's combination of intelligence, fearlessness, articulateness, and curiosity played a pivotal role in the credit union's success. Under her guidance, we were able to create a new business lending line, enhance our mortgage lending business, and effectively roll out the PPP lending program. Furthermore, Jennifer played a crucial role in scaling up our mortgage secondary market activities, demonstrating her adaptability and strategic mindset.

Additionally, I had the privilege of working with Jennifer during my role as a County employee for the County of San Mateo (Redwood City, California), specifically in the Covid recovery efforts. During the challenging times of the pandemic, we partnered with the San Mateo Credit Union to help us set up systems and processes to qualify small businesses for grant funds and to disburse the funds as expeditiously as possible. Jennifer's contributions to these efforts cannot be overstated.

Jennifer played a crucial role on our team, collaborating with the county executive's office, county attorney, and the San Mateo County Economic Development Association. Her insights and technical knowledge were instrumental in the development and execution of impactful programs that aimed to support our community during these challenging times. Jennifer has a remarkable gift for envisioning possibilities and approaching challenges with empathy for those we serve. She championed the need for us to balance the eligibility documentation and technical requirements of the application process with the capacity of our businesses to comply with the aspiration to eliminate as many barriers as possible.

Her leadership skills were evident as she consistently demonstrated the ability to turn ideas into action. One aspect that truly stood out was Jennifer's extraordinary dedication to our mission. She tirelessly worked around the clock, ensuring that systems were set up, processes were operational, and payments were approved and delivered to the grantees as quickly as possible.

Her unwavering commitment inspired the same level of dedication in her team, they were all a pleasure to work with.

Jennifer Wilkinson's commitment to community-based economic development and her exceptional qualities, including her expertise, empathy and leadership, make her an ideal candidate for the Community-Based Economic Development Advisory Council. Her ability to envision innovative solutions and her dedication to serving the community will undoubtedly contribute significantly to the council's goals.

I wholeheartedly endorse Jennifer Wilkinson's nomination and urge the Hawaii Senate to consider her for this important position.

Sincerely,

Donna Vaillancourt

County of San Mateo, Human Resources Director (ret.)

San Mateo Credit Union Board Member (2002-2022)

15 Pilot Circle

Redwood City, CA 94065

GM-671

Submitted on: 4/8/2024 2:06:13 PM

Testimony for EET on 4/11/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Martina Wing	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To whom it may concern, I met Mrs. JENNIFER WILKINSON a few years ago as a community organizer of Kailua-Kona. In her professional and personal capacity, she has never disappointed me, and I wholeheartedly support her nomination.

Sincerley,
Martina Wing

GM-671

Submitted on: 4/9/2024 7:09:33 PM

Testimony for EET on 4/11/2024 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
K. Piltz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Honorable Lynn DeCoite, Chair and Committee Members:

RE: GM671 Jennifer Wilkinson for consideration and confirmation to the Community-Based Economic Development Advisory Council, for a term to expire 06-30-2028

I stand in strong support of the nomination of Jennifer Wilkinson to the Community-Based Economic Development Advisory Council.

Jennifer has a very strong financial and legal background that I believe will help the Advisory Council assist the State and communities throughout the state with economic development. She is very focused and understands what it takes to grow and develop businesses. Jennifer also understands her community, volunteering her time in many public service efforts.

I believe she will be a great addition to the Advisory Council and ask that you support her nomination and confirmation to the Community-Based Economic Development Advisory Board.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.