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May 15, 2009

Evan Leong  
Greater Good Inc.

To: Council Member Nestor Garcia, Budget Chair

Subject: Special Budget Committee Meeting  
Monday May 18, 2009 regarding  
Bill 15 Executive Operating Budget, CD1

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Council Member Nestor Garcia, Budget Chair, I want to thank you for this opportunity to address the issues on the OED budget and Bill 15 CD1

In order to promote and sustain the growth and development of the Honolulu organizations and communities, it is necessary to retain all funds requested for OED in the administration's original FY 2010 budget.

The OED plays a vital role in the organization and leadership of both private and public sectors, through their development projects and special programs. Through the OED leadership, the Honolulu Month in Chinatown (Chinese New Year) celebrations held since 2006 have always been fun-filled and memorable. In addition, these events bring in much needed customers to the Chinatown and downtown businesses. Since the OED took the lead in these events, attendance at some of the events increased by an estimated 30%, year over year. OED brought together the resources of both sectors to make these events successful.

The role that OED plays during these economically challenging times is very vital in sustaining the development of all levels of business, private and public.

If the allotted OED funds initially included are not retained in the FY 2010 budget, OED may not be able to provide necessary services needed to fund its programs. With these in view, I strongly urge you to support the retention of the original OED budget plan.

Councilman Garcia, thank you for your consideration of this opinion.

Sincerely,

Evan Leong  
Chief Executive Officer  
Greater Good Inc.