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Aloha Council Member Nestor Garcia, Budget Chair

My name is Ed Korybski and I am the Executive Director of the Honolulu Culture & Arts District Association, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the revitalization of downtown/Chinatown. Downtown/Chinatown has improved immensely in the last four years and the Office of Economic Development (OED) has been a tremendous partner in our efforts. OED has:

- Helped secure federal funding from the National Park Service to initiate a "Preserve America" heritage tourism project,
- Helped initiate a project to renovate the facades of historic buildings on Hotel Street.
- Funded and supported stage street festivals on Nuuanu Ave.

OED is the most accessible body of the city administration and facilitates discussions both between different city departments and between different constituencies of the Chinatown community. During these economically challenging times, it is even more important to ensure public/private partnerships between the city and non-profits and small businesses to leverage available resources. It is essential to retain all funds requested for OED in the administrations FY2010 budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this written testimony.

Sincerely,

Ed Korybski

Ed Korybski
Executive Director
Honolulu Culture & Arts District
1041 Nu'uuanu Ave, Suite A
Honolulu, HI 96817
p. 808.398.7990
f. 808.550.0724

www.artsdistricthonolulu.com