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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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STATE OF HAWAII  
STATE CAPITOL  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

Council Member Nestor Garcia  
Budget Committee  
City Council, City & County of Honolulu  
530 South King Street, Suite 202  
Honolulu, HI 96813

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**Re: Testimony in Support of Office of Economic Development's Inclusion in  
Bill 15, Executive Operating Budget**

Dear Chairperson Garcia:

I write in **strong support** of the Office of Economic Development (OED) and request that all funds for the OED be maintained as requested in the administration's FY2010 budget. The OED has been extremely important to communities throughout Honolulu in stimulating small businesses and building community by bringing together businesses, non-profits, and individual residents and volunteers.

As a representative of urban Honolulu, I have worked with the OED for 2 years and it was this City agency that had the vision to reach into the urban setting and assist the Makiki community with its first Rediscover Makiki: Sunset in the Park.

Through this joint effort, the OED brought together over 20 small businesses, 10 corporations, and more than 15 non-profit organizations and 10 state and county agencies to: (1) raise awareness about the vital role of City parks and programs as well as the services provided by businesses, non-profits and other government agencies; (2) collaborate and put together a quality community recreational and educational event that highlighted business and government's efforts to achieve energy self-sufficiency and address urban issues; and (3) raise funds for the operations of the Makiki Library, an all-volunteer organization that provides valuable programs to thousands of residents in Makiki. Without the central convening power of the OED, this kind of collaboration could never have occurred.

During these challenging fiscal times, it is critical to ensure private-public partnerships continue such as those fostered by the OED between the City, non-profit organizations, and small businesses. The OED is uniquely situated to assist and convene all these entities to leverage available resources within our local economy. Thank you for this opportunity to provide this written testimony in support of the Office of Economic Development.

Sincerely,

Della Au Belatti  
State Representative, District 25  
State Capitol, Room 331  
Honolulu, HI 96813

MISC. COM. 996

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