



Hawai'i Technology Development Corporation

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Written Statement of
Sandi Kanemori
Interim Executive Director
Hawaii Technology Development Corporation
before the
House Committee On Finance
Tuesday, April 1, 2025
2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference
In consideration of
SB989 SD1 HD1
RELATING TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee.

The Hawai'i Technology Development Corporation (HTDC) supports **SB989 SD1 HD1** that appropriates funds to the Hawai'i Technology Development Corporation to assist small business with technology enablement.

HTDC was established in 1983 with the mission of supporting and fostering innovation and driving economic development in Hawai'i. HTDC has a proven track record of supporting technology-driven initiatives across various industries in Hawai'i.

HTDC will follow the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii – 2030 BLUEPRINT FOR HAWAII as the starting baseline to understand technology gaps Hawaii companies are currently facing. This comprehensive plan will identify pivotal areas for improvement and growth for local Hawaii businesses.

HTDC will use funds to create new HTDC foundational programs to support small businesses with access to modern digital platforms and advanced technology tools to help optimize operations, reduce costs, and become globally competitive in a global market. HTDC will also support local businesses supporting Hawai'i's tourism sector to leverage and use technology tools like ecommerce and virtual services to reduce operation cost and increase sales.

HTDC believes this new initiative will positive economic development value for the State. Thank you for the opportunity to offer these comments



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April 1, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TESTIMONY ON SB 989, SD1, HD1
RELATING TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Conference Room 308 & Videoconference
2:00 PM

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Takenouchi, 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 supports SB 989, SD1, HD1, which appropriates funds to the Hawai'i Technology Development Corporation (HTDC) to assist small businesses with technology enablement. This measure is an important step toward enhancing the economic sustainability of Hawai'i's small businesses, including those in agriculture and agritourism, by providing them with the tools needed to compete in today's digital marketplace.

Hawai'i's agritourism industry plays a vital role in diversifying farm revenue, strengthening the connection between consumers and local agriculture, and promoting sustainable economic development in rural communities. Many of our farm and ranch members operate agritourism activities—such as farm tours, farm stands, tasting experiences, and educational programs—that contribute directly to the state's tourism economy. Access to technology, including online booking platforms, digital marketing tools, and e-commerce solutions, is essential to their success.

HFB appreciates the Legislature's commitment to supporting small businesses through technology investment. This bill will help support and grow Hawai'i's agricultural industry while contributing to the broader economy.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important matter.



**Testimony to the House Committee on Finance
Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair**

**Tuesday, April 1, 2025, at 2:00PM
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference**

RE: SB989 SD1 HD1 Relating to Economic Development

Aloha e Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Sherry Menor, President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber"). The Chamber supports Senate Bill 989 SD1 HD1 (SB989 SD1 HD1), which appropriates funds to the Hawai'i Technology Development Corporation to assist small businesses with technology enablement and develop project management software to simplify the facilitated application process for small businesses. Requires a report to the Legislature.

SB989 SD1 HD1 aligns with our 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii: An Economic Action Plan, specifically under the policy pillar for Small Business. This bill promotes policies that drive economic growth, enhance workforce opportunities, and improve the quality of life for Hawaii's residents.

Hawaii's small businesses require robust technological capabilities to remain viable in an increasingly digital marketplace, yet they often encounter costly delays—both from inadequate digital infrastructure and from cumbersome permitting processes overseen by state agencies. By leveraging tools like booking platforms, online marketing, data analytics, and virtual work systems, small enterprises can reach broader markets, optimize operations, and boost visitor experiences.

This measure allocates funds for technology enablement, as well as the development of project management software that streamlines permit applications, under the guidance of the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation—an entity with a proven track record in promoting innovation and economic diversification. By easing the path to digital adoption and reducing regulatory hurdles, the legislation enhances local entrepreneurship, fuels job growth, and strengthens Hawaii's economic foundation. The Chamber supports this legislation as it fosters the competitiveness and long-term sustainability of small businesses throughout the State.

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii is the state's leading business advocacy organization, dedicated to improving Hawaii's economy and securing Hawaii's future for growth and opportunity. Our mission is to foster a vibrant economic climate. As such, we support initiatives and policies that align with the 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii that create opportunities to strengthen overall competitiveness, improve the quantity and skills of available workforce, diversify the economy, and build greater local wealth.

We respectfully ask to pass Senate Bill 989 Senate Draft 1 House Draft 1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



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Joe Carter, Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii, *Advisor*

Eddie Asato, Pint Size Hawaii, *Advisor*

Gary Okimoto, Safeway, *Immediate Past Chair*

TO: Committee on Finance

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: March 31, 2025

TIME: 2pm

RE: SB989 SD1 HD1 Relating to Economic Development

Position: Support

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

HFIA is in support of this measure. As the measure notes HTDC has successfully facilitated numerous projects funded by the State and ensured effective use of state resources with a proven track record of fostering innovation and economic diversification through state-funded initiatives, demonstrating expertise in administering grants, supporting start-ups, promoting public-private partnerships, empowering local businesses, and driving economic progress. HTDC's expertise spans a wide range of industries, enabling the effective implementation of cutting-edge technologies tailored to Hawaii's unique challenges and opportunities. HTDC is the ideal partner to assist small businesses with technology enablement and ensure that our local businesses have the technological resources they need to grow and thrive.

We encourage the Committee to pass this measure and we thank you for the opportunity to testify.



MAUI

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

VOICE OF BUSINESS

HEARING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM 308
Tuesday, April 1, 2025 AT 2:00 P.M.

To The Honorable Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
The Honorable Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Finance

SUPPORT SB989 SD1 HD1 RELATING TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Maui Chamber of Commerce wholeheartedly **SUPPORTS SB989 SD1 HD1** which appropriates funds to the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation to assist small businesses, including those related to the tourism sector, with technology enablement and develop project management software to simplify the facilitated application process for small businesses.

The Chamber agrees that the tourism sector, a cornerstone of the state's economy, is highly seasonal and vulnerable to global economic shifts, natural disasters, and pandemics. These factors leave small businesses with inconsistent revenue streams and heightened risks. These compounded pressures have forced many small enterprises to operate with razor-thin margins, making resilience and adaptability essential for survival.

Furthermore, we agree that technology adoption is crucial for small businesses in Hawai'i, particularly those in the tourism sector, to overcome these challenges and remain competitive in an increasingly digital marketplace. Leveraging digital tools such as booking systems, online marketing platforms, and data analytics can help reduce costs, expand market reach, and enhance customer attraction and retention while improving the overall visitor experience. Technology also mitigates the risks of geographic isolation by enabling remote work, virtual services, and e-commerce opportunities.

Supporting small businesses in adopting technology ensures their ability to innovate and adapt, strengthening their resilience and contributing to the long-term economic sustainability of Hawai'i's communities.

For these reasons we **SUPPORT SB989 SD1 HD1**.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.



March 31, 2025

RE: Support for SB 989 SD1 HD1 – Relating to Economic Development

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance,

Founded in 1968, the Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce works to enhance the quality of life for our community through a strong, sustainable economy on Hawai'i Island. Representing 460 businesses and organizations, our mission is to provide leadership and advocacy for a successful business environment in West Hawai'i.

We **strongly support** SB 989 SD1 HD1, which appropriates funds to the Hawai'i Technology Development Corporation to assist small businesses with technology enablement.

Small businesses are the backbone of our economy, and technology adoption is essential for their growth and competitiveness in an increasingly digital world. By investing in technology improvements, this bill will empower small businesses—including those in the visitor industry—to optimize operations, expand their reach through digital marketing, and enhance customer engagement. Supporting innovation at this level strengthens not only individual businesses but also the long-term economic sustainability of our communities.

We urge you to vote in favor of SB 989 SD1 HD1, which would support Hawai'i's small businesses, foster entrepreneurship, and drive economic resilience.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Wendy J. Laros". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Wendy" being more prominent.

Wendy J. Laros, President and CEO
Kona-Kohala Chamber of Commerce

SB-989-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 6:26:37 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/1/2025 2:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Glen Kagamida | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Any idea to support small businesses is worth doing. Mahalo!