

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
Governor

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
Lt. Governor



**JAMES J. NAKATANI**  
Executive Director

STATE OF HAWAII  
**AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

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TESTIMONY OF JAMES J. NAKATANI  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND  
ENVIRONMENT

Wednesday, April 5, 2023  
1:00 PM

Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

**GM 586 - Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of  
Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation, Gubernatorial  
Nominee, KAREN SEDDON, for a term to expire 06-30-2023**

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards and Members of the Committee:

The Agribusiness Development Corporation (“ADC”) **supports** GM 586, relating to the consideration and confirmation of Ms. Karen Seddon’s appointment to the ADC Board of Directors.

Ms. Seddon currently sits as the Regional Vice President of Hawaii at EAH Housing. She has decades of real estate and affordable housing experience and has previously served as the Executive Director of the Hawaii Housing and Finance Development Corporation.

ADC believes Ms. Seddon’s extensive development experience will be instrumental in helping keep Hawaii’s agriculture industry moving forward. Furthermore, ADC is confident she has the experience and skills required to

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serve on the Board and respectfully ask for your consideration and support of her nomination

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.



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April 5, 2023

HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

**TESTIMONY ON GM 586**

Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation, Gubernatorial Nominee, KAREN SEDDON, for a term to expire 06-30-2025

Conference Room 224 & Videoconference  
1:00 PM

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, 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 strongly supports the confirmation of Karen Seddon to the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation.**

Ms. Seddon's extensive development background and experience have been invaluable to ADC as they continue to partner with farmers, ranchers, and aquaculture groups to optimize the use of selected high-value lands, water systems, and infrastructure for commercial agricultural use for the economic, environmental, and social benefit of the people of Hawai'i.

Ms. Seddon's broad development experience in both the private and public sectors will undoubtedly continue to provide positive leadership for the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

HFB respectfully requests your strong support of Karen Seddon's confirmation to continue to serve on the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

LARRY JEFTS FARMS, LLC  
PO BOX 27  
KUNIA, HAWAII 96759  
(808) 688-2892

GM586 and GM587, Karen Seddon

Gubernatorial Nominee to the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC)

Senate AEN Hearing – 1:00 pm  
Room 224  
Wednesday, April 5, 2023

Testimony By: Larry Jeffs  
Position: Support

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Richards, and Members of the Senate AEN Committee:

I am Larry Jeffs, owner and operator of Larry Jeffs Farms, LLC. We have more than 42 years of Hawaii farm experience on Molokai and Oahu. Our family farms grow about 1 million pounds weekly of import replacement produce. I am a volunteer director and chair of the West Oahu Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD). I have been an officer of the Hawaii Farm Bureau for many years.

ADC's purpose, established by HRS163-D, is to provide leadership for developing, financing, improving, or enhancing agribusiness enterprises to increase local production for local consumption and reduce reliance on imported agricultural products. One of ADC's challenges is conserving and converting arable lands and their associated infrastructure to new production uses.

Karen Seddon's professional background is in planning, designing, financing, and constructing various community development projects. In addition, she served as DR Horton's Director of Land Management. These experiences indicate that Ms. Seddon is a strategic, long-range planner and manager who can execute projects. These skills will serve ADC well as it plans for and oversees its land acquisitions and infrastructure projects.

Your favorable consideration of Ms. Seddon's nomination to the ADC Board of Directors is appreciated. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

**GM-586**

Submitted on: 3/31/2023 1:41:25 PM

Testimony for AEN on 4/5/2023 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Questor Lau	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It is my privilege to express my ***strong support*** for the confirmation of Karen Seddon to the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

Karen is a highly effective leader with experience in the private sector; specifically, construction and affordable housing development. In the public sector, Karen previously served as the Executive Director of HHFDC. As Regional Vice President for EAH Housing, a non-profit organization, Karen secured grants and low-interest loans that will provide training opportunities to prepare the next generation to build affordable housing.

I have had the privilege of working and collaborating with Karen Seddon over the past 5+ years and am continuously inspired by her vision, dedication, and work ethic.

I respectfully request the Committee's favorable consideration in confirming Karen Seddon for the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation.

**GM-586**

Submitted on: 3/31/2023 3:45:57 PM

Testimony for AEN on 4/5/2023 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Miki Lee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment:

I am writing to support the confirmation of Karen Seddon to continue serving as an Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC) board member. It is critical to have knowledgeable and committed individuals on the ADC board working in concert to promote the growth and sustainability of agriculture in the State of Hawaii.

I have had the pleasure of working with Karen over several years and can wholeheartedly attest to her integrity, work ethic, passion, and dedication to the well-being of our community, as evidenced by her work in developing affordable housing. She has a collaborative and inclusive approach to problem-solving and is always willing to lend her expertise to help others.

I am confident that Karen Seddon will continue to be a valuable board member for the Agribusiness Development Corporation. I encourage you to support her confirmation.

Respectfully,

Miki Lee

**GM-586**

Submitted on: 4/1/2023 4:10:40 PM

Testimony for AEN on 4/5/2023 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ann Bouslog	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I was lucky to meet Karen Seddon professionally about 10 years ago. I have always been impressed by the integrity, thoughtfulness, and community-mindedness she brings to all she takes on. I am writing now to express my strong support for Karen to continue to serve as a member of the Agribusiness Development Corporation board.

Karen has been an active participant in the monthly board meetings since July 2020 and has served on the Policy and Procedure Committee, the Executive Director Evaluation Committee, and the Whitmore Food Hub RFP Evaluation Committee, along with attending Native Hawaiian Law Training, yearly Ethics Training, and filing Financial Disclosure Statements each year.

In addition to her professional qualifications in both private and public organizations, Karen has a reputation for being a fair and effective leader who is willing to listen to different perspectives and work collaboratively to find solutions. She is always willing to lend her expertise to help others.

I urge you to consider her nomination and give her your full support.

Mahalo for considering this testimony. Ann Bouslog

**GM-586**

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 10:03:59 AM

Testimony for AEN on 4/5/2023 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Emily Lee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment,

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony in strong **SUPPORT** of *GM 586* – *Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation*, Gubernatorial Nominee, KAREN SEDDON, for a term to expire on 06-30-2023.

Since December 2021, I have the privilege of working with Karen, and I can personally attest to her tireless work ethic, her passion for the industry, and her dedication to improving best practices. Best of all, she has a rare talent of taking a collaborative and inclusive approach to problem-solving and is always willing to lend her expertise to help others.

For these reasons, Karen will continue to be an invaluable member on the Board of Directors of the Agribusiness Development Corporation. I urge you to please consider her nomination and give her your full support.

Sincerely,

Emily Lee