



**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS,
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**

KA 'OIHANA HO'OMOHALA PĀ'OIHANA, 'IMI WAIWAI
A HO'OMĀKA'IKA'I

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT DIVISION

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR

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Statement of
DENNIS T. LING
Administrator

Business Development and Support Division
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM**

Tuesday, April 6, 2026
1:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

In consideration of
GM608

**Submitting in consideration of confirmation to the
Community-Based Economic Development Advisory Council,
Gubernatorial Nominee, WILLIAM SMITH, for a term to expire 06-30-2029.**

Chair Decoite, Vice Chair Wakai and members of the Committee. The Business Development and Support Division (BDSD) of the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) supports **GM608** submits for consideration and confirmation Mr. William T. Smith to serve on the Community-Based Economic Development (CBED) Advisory Council.

The CBED Program is committed to fostering sustainable community-driven initiatives and strengthening local economic opportunities aligned with Hawai'i's values. The Advisory Council plays a central role in reviewing financing requests and guiding program decisions that advance community-based economic development statewide.

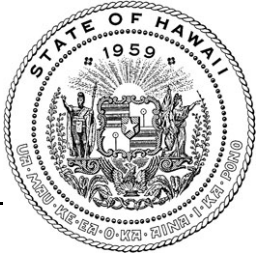
Mr. Smith brings extensive professional experience in business leadership, financial services, and organizational development. His background includes executive and managerial roles in various financial institutions and his current service supporting small businesses through the Kauai Small Business Development Center. His broad

understanding of business operations, economic challenges, and community engagement will contribute meaningfully to the Advisory Council's work.

Mr. Smith's commitment to community service and his understanding of Hawai'i's diverse economic landscape make him well suited for this role. His diverse expertise and long-standing service to the business community will provide valuable perspective as CBED continues its efforts to strengthen locally driven economic growth.

BDSB respectfully requests your favorable consideration and confirmation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



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Statement of
James Kunane Tokioka
Director
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

Tuesday, April 7, 2026
1:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

In consideration of
GM608
Submitting for consideration and confirmation to the
Community-Based Economic Development Advisory Council,
Gubernatorial Nominee, **WILLIAM SMITH**, for a term to expire **06-30-2029**.

Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee:

I **support** GM608 which submits for consideration and confirmation Mr. William T. Smith to serve on the Community-Based Economic Development (CBED) Advisory Council.

The mission of the CBED Program is to develop viable, sustainable ventures, and invest in community-based development projects that serve local needs and are compatible with the vision, character, and cultural values of their communities. The CBED Advisory Council reviews financing requests and makes recommendations on the awarding of loans and grants, subject to the final approval of the DBEDT Director.

Mr. Smith has held key managerial and executive roles at leading financial institutions, including SunBank of Tampa Bay, First Union National Bank, Bank of America, American Management Systems, and Kauai Federal Credit Union. His extensive expertise in business operations, lending, financial analysis, relationship management, and strategic planning provides him with a comprehensive understanding of the financial landscape —making him an exceptional asset to the CBED Advisory Council.

Currently serving as Director of the Kua'i Small Business Development Center, Mr. Smith advises both aspiring and established entrepreneurs on critical areas such as business start-up, integration of emerging technologies like artificial intelligence, business financing, and strategic and financial planning. His hands-on experience offers

DBEDT Testimony

GM608

April 7, 2026

Page 2 of 2

unique insight into the challenges and opportunities faced by small businesses. Mr. Smith's unwavering commitment to supporting Kaua'i's small business community aligns seamlessly with CBED's mission and vision. By joining the Advisory Council, he brings invaluable expertise that will help advance the success and sustainability of small businesses across Hawai'i.

I am honored to submit this testimony in support of William T. Smith's nomination to the CBED Advisory Council and humbly ask for your favorable consideration and confirmation.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.