

BILL011(24)
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 217

BUDGET (BUD)

BUDGET (BUD) Meeting

Meeting Date: May 13, 2024 @ 09:00 AM

Support: 1

Oppose: 0

I wish to comment: 0

Name: Matthew Johnson	Email: matthew@pacificgatewaycenter.org	Zip: 96819
Representing: Pacific Gateway Center	Position: Support	Submitted: May 10, 2024 @ 11:58 AM



PACIFIC GATEWAY CENTER

May 10, 2024

Office of the City Clerk
Attention: Information Section
530 South King Street, Room 100
Honolulu, HI 96813

Hearing Date: May 13, 2024 Budget Committee Hearing

Written Testimony in SUPPORT \$300,000 for two full-time positions in the Office of Economic Revitalization

Dear Honolulu City Council Members,

I am writing on behalf of Pacific Gateway Center (PGC) in support of two positions for Immigrant Services in the Office of Economic Revitalization.

PGC is a community-based non-profit organization whose mission is to empower immigrants, refugees, and the disadvantaged towards self-sufficiency. Through funding by the State of Hawai'i, Pacific Gateway Center has been designated the Immigrant Resource Center (IRC) for O'ahu (which we share with Parents & Children Together), Maui, Moloka'i, Lana'i, and Kauai. Inherent in this role is our commitment to alleviate multi-faceted barriers of the foreign-born to rebuilding their lives in Hawaii. Our direct interaction with the displaced and uprooted requires a continuum of care that is the responsibility of our city and county and state to ensure the well-being of all Hawai'i's residents. As of 2021, 27.5% of Urban Honolulu residents were born outside the country, or approximately 96,800 residents. We must pay particular attention to the limited-English proficient of our City and County as we have learned crises, disasters, and pandemics do not discriminate.

In order to deliver effective services to our immigrant population who have demonstrated their contributions to our city in socio-economic and cultural ways, non-profits need support to ensure adequate and proper services are provided. Our 51-year history servicing the foreign-born in Hawaii underscores our first-hand knowledge for the need for dedicated employees in our public agencies who will support areas such as delivery of immigrant services to ensure effective integration into our community.

I strongly urge you to include in the budget funds to support immigrant services for the City and County of Honolulu. I can be reached at matthew@pacificgatewaycenter.org at (808) 851-7010. Thank you for your support and consideration.

With best regards,

Matthew B Johnson

Matthew Johnson
Executive Director