

- Good morning, Representatives and Committee members. I thank you for having us this morning. I am very happy to be here before you.
- My name is Lawrence Gerard (L.G.) Almeda. I am the Secretary of the Commission and the Chair of the Business Development Committee.
- By trade, I am a shareholder at Brinks Hofer Gilson & Lione, a national law firm that specializes in Intellectual Property. I also chair the firm's nanotechnology practice team.
- During the Commission's first meeting on October 9th, the Commissioners voted to create the Business Development Committee along with three other committees, Workforce Development Committee, Social and Civic Services Committee, and Community Development Committee.
- One purpose of the creation of these committees is to help achieve the Commission's goals set forth in House Bill 6172 and the Commission's mission which is "To advance the full and equal participation of Asian Pacific Americans in the building of a greater Michigan."
- During our next meeting, each of the committees will set forth their goals and strategies on serving the State along with its Asian Pacific American community.
- Prior to this hearing, I spoke with Chairman Clemente and I believe I understand some topics of interest involving today's hearing including tying Michigan's economy and resources with the global economy.
- Although the Business Development Committee has still to deliberate and determine its goals and strategies in our next meeting, I as Chair can provide some ideas on how the Business Development Committee and the Commission itself for that matter could help the State in tying its economy and resources with the global economy.
- One goal of the Business Development Committee that I envision is to help explore ways to promote trade with Asia and foreign investment into Michigan from Asia.

- The Business Development Committee could serve the State by being a bridge and perhaps one of its antennas or “eyes and ears” regarding Asian investment into Michigan.
- I also believe that this would mainly be achieved by the relationships and trust that our Commissioners carry within the Asian Pacific American community and throughout Asia.
- For example, many of our Commissioners, including myself, have established and are continuing to establish relationships with businesses in Asia.
- Equally if not more importantly, we are also aware of a many individuals and organizations who have these relationships throughout Asia. In Asia, these relationships and trusts are so important and paramount in successful business development.
- The Commission’s Business Development Committee could assist the State in building and/or strengthening these relationships and trust for State Committees and officials like yourselves.
- For example, just last month I was traveling in China (Beijing and Hong Kong) on business.
- I wanted to visit a high-level manager at a company I had met in Michigan a month prior. I was not able reach this person, so I called my friend Jerry, a Chinese-American originally from Beijing, who now resides in Madison Heights. I knew Jerry had a strong business relationship with this person.
- On my behalf, Jerry made a quick phone call to her. In a matter of minutes, I received a call from *her*, inviting me to *her* office for a visit. About 30 minutes later, I was sitting in her office with her and two of her managers.
- Of course, I would not have received a call, let alone an invitation to her office, had Jerry not had a strong relationship and trust with this person. In Asia, these are both crucially important.

- For starters, I believe this would be a great help to the State.
- Thank you very much for your time and interest. I look forward to working with all of you in the near future.