

JAN 28 2026

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE HAWAII FILM STUDIO.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the film industry in
2 Hawaii is vital to maintaining a diversified economy for the
3 state. A vibrant, growing film industry has been effective over
4 the past five decades in stimulating Hawaii's economy, creating
5 quality, well-paying jobs for our residents, and is the perfect
6 example of a clean, diversified industry that supports and
7 protects Hawaii's fragile natural environment, uplifts our
8 community and provides opportunity to share our unique Native
9 Hawaiian history, culture, language, and stories with the world.

10 The Hawaii film studio at Diamond Head is situated at 510
11 18th Avenue TMK (1)3-1-42:9 and falls under governor's Executive
12 Order 4097 setting aside 7.422 acres. The studio currently
13 falls under the management and oversight of the department of
14 business, economic development, and tourism through its Hawaii
15 film office. The purpose of this Act is to streamline the
16 department's use of the Hawaii film studio facility at Diamond
17 Head for film activity and film-related business by not

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1 requiring land board approval of new tenants and in order to
2 further strengthen and develop Hawaii's film industry.

3 SECTION 2. Section 171-11, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
4 amended to read as follows:

5 **"§171-11 Public purposes, lands set aside by the governor;**
6 **management.** The governor may, with the prior approval of the
7 board of land and natural resources, set aside public lands to
8 any department or agency of the State, the city and county,
9 county, or other political subdivisions of the State for public
10 use or purpose. All withdrawals of the lands or portions
11 thereof so set aside shall be made by the governor.

12 Any public lands set aside by the governor prior to the
13 enactment of this chapter, or any public lands set aside by the
14 governor of the Territory of Hawaii, shall be subject to the
15 provisions of this section.

16 Lands while so set aside for such use or purpose or when
17 acquired for roads and streets shall be managed by the
18 department, agency, city and county, county, or other political
19 subdivisions of the State having jurisdiction thereof, unless
20 otherwise provided by law. Such department, agency of the
21 State, the city and county, county, or other political
22 subdivisions of the State in managing such lands shall be

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1 authorized to exercise all of the powers vested in the board in
2 regard to the issuance of leases, easements, licenses, revocable
3 permits, concessions, or rights of entry covering such lands for
4 such use as may be consistent with the purposes for which the
5 lands were set aside on the same terms, conditions, and
6 restrictions applicable to the disposition of public lands, as
7 provided by this chapter all such dispositions being subject to
8 the prior approval of the board; provided that any nonrenewable
9 dispositions granting rights for a period not in excess of
10 fourteen days shall not require (1) the approval of the board or
11 (2) public auction or public advertisement for sealed tenders;
12 and provided further that disposition of lands set aside for use
13 as agricultural parks pursuant to chapter 166 and lands set
14 aside for filming and film studio operation shall not be subject
15 to the prior approval of the board. If at the time of the
16 disposition of any such leases the board shall have approved the
17 same, any order withdrawing or setting aside any or all of such
18 lands for any other public purpose shall be made subject to such
19 leases. Subject to section 5(f) of the Act of March 18, 1959
20 (73 Stat. 6), all proceeds from such lands shall be deposited
21 into the appropriate funds provided by law.

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1 A survey of the land to be set aside shall not be a
2 condition precedent to set aside public lands to a department or
3 agency of the State; provided that a subsequent survey of the
4 land set aside shall be binding if ratified by the board of land
5 and natural resources and the governor; provided further that
6 the State, its departments and agencies, and its officials and
7 employees shall be immune from all suits of whatever character,
8 whether sounding in law or in equity, relating to the boundaries
9 of land set aside without a survey.

10 This section shall also apply where the purposes are the
11 uses and purposes of the United States; provided that all
12 revenues derived from the lands and improvements thereon shall
13 be paid to the department of land and natural resources by the
14 United States.

15 Whenever lands set aside for a public purpose to the
16 various departments and agencies of the State, or to any city
17 and county, county, or other political subdivisions of the
18 State, or to the United States, are not being utilized or
19 required for the public purpose stated, the order setting aside
20 the lands shall be withdrawn and the lands shall be returned to
21 the department. The governor may withdraw public lands and,
22 with the prior approval of the board of land and natural

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1 resources, set aside the withdrawn lands to another department
2 or agency of the State, the city and county, county, or
3 political subdivision of the State, or to the United States for
4 public use or purpose, provided that no structure on such lands
5 shall be built, demolished or altered until after the
6 legislative action or inaction as hereinbelow provided.

7 The power granted to the governor in this section to set
8 aside or withdraw or withdraw and set aside public lands shall
9 be exercised subject to disapproval by the legislature by two-
10 thirds vote of either the senate or the house of representatives
11 or by the majority vote of both, in any regular or special
12 session next following the date of the setting aside or
13 withdrawal, or withdrawal and setting aside.

14 Whenever portions of lands set aside for a public purpose
15 to the various departments and agencies of the State, or to any
16 city and county, county, or other political subdivision of the
17 State are not presently utilized or required for the public
18 purpose stated, the board shall have the power, without
19 withdrawing the order setting aside the lands, to dispose of any
20 and all real property interest less than the fee in the portions
21 of such lands where the disposition is for a use which is
22 consistent or inconsistent with the purpose for which the land

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1 was set aside. All funds derived from disposition by the board
2 shall be deposited in the general fund of the State or be paid
3 to the appropriate account; provided that all such dispositions
4 shall be with the prior written approval of the department,
5 agency, city and county, county, or other political subdivisions
6 of the State and the governor, and shall be undertaken in
7 compliance with all other applicable sections of this chapter."

8 SECTION 3. New statutory material is underscored.

9 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

10
11 INTRODUCED BY: 

12 BY REQUEST

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Report Title:

BLNR; DBEDT; Hawaii Film Studio; Public Lands; Exemption;
Creative Media; Entertainment

Description:

Provides an exemption to dispositions of lands set aside for film studio and film studio operation from prior approval of the Board of Land and Natural Resources pursuant to section 171-11, Hawaii Revised Statutes, thus streamlining the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism's use of the Hawaii film studio for filming activity and other film-related business in order to more efficiently develop Hawaii's film, media, and creative industries.

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.

JUSTIFICATION SHEET

DEPARTMENT: Business, Economic Development, and Tourism

TITLE: A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO THE HAWAII FILM STUDIO.

PURPOSE: To exempt dispositions of lands set aside for film studio and film studio operation from prior approval of the Board of Land and Natural Resources pursuant to section 171-11, Hawaii Revised Statutes, thus streamlining the Department's use of the Hawaii Film Studio for filming and other film studio activities without the need to go before the Board of Land and Natural Resources.

MEANS: Amend section 171-11, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

JUSTIFICATION: The Department is seeking this change to strengthen Hawaii's film industry by streamlining the use of the Hawaii Film Studio, which the Department has effectively managed for the past thirty-five years. The Hawaii Film Studio at Diamond Head (the only State-owned and operated facility of its kind in the country and the only purpose-built soundstage facility in the State) is a vitally important piece of the overall health, well-being and growth of Hawaii's film industry.

Impact on the public: The public benefits by having a sustainable, clean industry that provides well-paying jobs to residents and provides opportunities to young creatives to pursue media careers at home.

Impact on the department and other agencies: The Department would not have to go before the Board of Land and Natural Resources for every production that applies to rent out the Hawaii Film Studio.

GENERAL FUND: None.

OTHER FUNDS: None.

PPBS PROGRAM
DESIGNATION: BED-105.

OTHER AFFECTED
AGENCIES: Department of Land and Natural Resources.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon approval.