

Written Statement of
Trung Lam, Executive Director

before the
House Committee on Economic Development & Technology
And
House Committee on Tourism

Wednesday, February 4, 2026
10:00 am
Conference Room 423 & Videoconference

In consideration of
HB 1614
RELATING TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Chairs Ilagan and Tam, Vice Chairs Hussey and Templo, and Members of the Committee,

The Hawai'i Technology Development Corporation (HTDC) is dedicated to advancing Hawai'i as a leading innovation hub in the Pacific, with a focus on developing technology sectors such as ocean, aerospace, renewable energy, and advanced manufacturing. HB1614 is highly relevant to our mission, as it establishes a revolving fund specifically to finance the State's matching contributions required by federal grants. This mechanism directly supports HTDC's ability to leverage federal resources to accelerate technology-based economic development in Hawai'i.

The proposed revolving fund addresses a longstanding challenge for technology-driven initiatives: the need for timely and reliable state matching funds to unlock federal grant opportunities. Without a dedicated funding source, Hawai'i risks missing out on significant federal investments that could catalyze local innovation, job creation, and commercialization in priority sectors such as the blue economy, artificial intelligence, and clean energy. By establishing a revolving fund, HB1614 enhances HTDC's capacity to attract and deploy federal funds efficiently, maximizing the impact of every state dollar invested.

This approach aligns with best practices in technology-based economic development, where leveraging public-private partnerships and federal resources is critical for scaling innovation ecosystems. The revolving fund structure also promotes fiscal sustainability, as funds can be replenished and redeployed for future grant opportunities, ensuring ongoing support for Hawai'i's technology sector. This is particularly important for high-growth areas like ocean technology and renewable energy, where federal grant programs often require state matching to participate.

HTDC respectfully recommends that the Legislature ensure the revolving fund is structured for flexibility and rapid response to federal grant cycles, and that reporting requirements are clear but not overly





Hawai'i Technology Development Corporation

521 Ala Moana Blvd, Ste 255
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

808-539-3806
www.htdc.org

burdensome. We appreciate the Legislature's commitment to strengthening Hawai'i's innovation capacity and look forward to continued collaboration to advance the state's technology leadership.





1050 Bishop St. PMB 235 |
Honolulu, HI 96813
P: 808-533-1292 | e:
info@hawaiiifood.com

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Maile Miyashiro, C&S Wholesale, *Immediate Past Chair*

TO: Committee on Economic Development and Technology, and Committee on Tourism

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: February 4, 2026

TIME: 10am

RE: HB1614 Relating to Economic Development

Position: Support

The Hawaii Food Industry Association is comprised of two hundred member companies representing retailers, suppliers, producers, manufacturers and distributors of food and beverage related products in the State of Hawaii.

HFIA is in support of this measure to the establishment of a revolving fund, to be used and administered by the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation (HTDC) to finance the State's matching contributions required by federal grants supporting innovation, technology, research, and manufacturing initiatives.

Many of our member businesses have successfully utilized HTDC programs to do things like increase manufacturing capacity, upgrade equipment, increase efficiency, and become technologically enabled.

Providing state funding for HTDC to continue this work will ensure that more Hawaii companies have the opportunity to utilize these programs to grow and thrive. Supporting the growth and advancement of these companies leads to a more diverse, more technologically agile, and stronger economy for us all. We urge the Committee to pass this measure and we thank you for the opportunity to testify.



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

February 4, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TECHNOLOGY

TESTIMONY ON HB 1614
RELATING TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Conference Room 423 & Videoconference
10:00 AM

Aloha Chair Ilagan, Vice-Chair Hussey, 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 supports HB 1614, which establishes the Hawai'i Technology Development Corporation Revolving Fund for the purpose of financing the State's matching contributions required by federal grants.

Access to capital remains one of the most significant barriers facing Hawai'i's farmers, ranchers, and agricultural entrepreneurs, particularly when attempting to leverage federal grant opportunities that require state matching funds.

HB 1614 establishes a revolving fund within the Hawai'i Technology Development Corporation to provide timely state matching funds for eligible federal grants. We appreciate that the bill addresses a long-standing misalignment between federal grant timelines and the State's budgeting process, which has resulted in missed opportunities to draw down federal dollars.

For agriculture, federal grants often support research, manufacturing, value-added processing, food systems development, and adoption of technology. Programs administered by HTDC have historically helped agricultural producers and value-added food businesses expand markets, increase revenue, and improve competitiveness. Ensuring that the State can provide required matching funds strengthens Hawai'i's ability to compete for these federal resources.

We also appreciate the safeguards in HB 1614 that limit use of the revolving fund to situations where a federal award has already been secured, helping protect state resources while maximizing the return on investment of public funds.

By improving the State's capacity to leverage federal funding, HB 1614 supports economic diversification, innovation, and long-term growth across sectors, including agriculture. We respectfully urge the Committee to support this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



Testimony to the House Committee on Economic Development & Technology (ECD)

**Representative Gregg Ilagan, Chair
Representative Ikaika Hussey, Vice Chair**

**Wednesday, February 4, 2026, at 10:00AM
Conference Room 423 & Videoconference**

RE: HB1614 Relating to Economic Development

Aloha e Chair Ilagan, Vice Chair Hussey, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Sherry Menor, President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber"). The Chamber supports House Bill 1614 (HB1614) which establishes the Hawai'i Technology Development Corporation Revolving Fund for the purpose of financing the State's matching contributions required by federal grants.

HB1614 aligns with our 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii: An Economic Action Plan, specifically under the policy pillar for Small Business. This bill emphasizes strengthening Hawaii's small business ecosystem by expanding access to capital, supporting innovation and technology adoption, and enabling local entrepreneurs to compete in global markets.

HTDC has a strong history of supporting local entrepreneurs, helping small businesses commercialize new technologies and participate in emerging markets, while also advancing manufacturing capacity and innovation across the state. These efforts are delivered through a range of business assistance, research commercialization, and industry-support programs. However, many of the federal opportunities that support innovation-driven small businesses require timely state participation, and existing funding mechanisms do not always align with federal award schedules. As a result, Hawai'i risks missing opportunities to secure outside investment that could otherwise strengthen local companies and advance economic diversification.

HB 1614 addresses this challenge by creating a flexible funding mechanism that allows the state to respond quickly when federal awards are secured, while maintaining fiscal discipline. By improving Hawai'i's ability to leverage federal dollars, this measure would expand the impact of public investment, support small business growth, and enhance competitiveness in research, technology, and advanced manufacturing fields.

We respectfully ask to pass House Bill 1614. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii is the state's leading business advocacy organization, dedicated to improving Hawaii's economy and securing Hawaii's future for growth and opportunity. Our mission is to



Chamber *of* Commerce HAWAII



foster a vibrant economic climate. As such, we support initiatives and policies that align with the 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii that create opportunities to strengthen overall competitiveness, improve the quantity and skills of available workforce, diversify the economy, and build greater local wealth.

**TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NO 1614, RELATING TO
THE HAWAII TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

Position: **Support**

To Representative Greggor Ilagan, Chair; Representative Ikaika Hussey, Vice Chair; and Members of the Committee on Economic Development & Technology

Please accept this testimony in **strong support** of this bill, and its intentions to appropriate funds to the Hawaii Technology and Development Corporation to be used in a revolving fund to support the Small Business Innovation Research (HSBIR) matching funding program.


Simonpietri Enterprises LLC is an O'ahu-based small business developing innovative ways to recycle waste generated in Hawai'i into renewable fuels and other beneficial recycled-material products for use in Hawai'i. We strongly support the HTDC's matching funding programs and, as a previous awardee, SEL recognizes the matching funds program as a powerful way to multiply the State's funding to accelerate innovation and facilitate local manufacturing investment. The requirement to match funding to federal funds awards in the HSBIR program is a prudent way to leverage federal agency technical expertise and reward innovation while maintaining a level playing field.

In the 5+ years since launching our Aloha Carbon technology and project development effort with our first-ever SBIR award from the USDA, we have grown our team from one to ten skilled science, engineering and other industry adjacent positions, matured our innovations from concept to pilot scale, and secured a site in Campbell Industrial Park to be the future home for Aloha Carbon. We used the HSBIR funds in areas that the federal funds cannot cover: to support workforce development efforts through paid internships, five of whom are University of Hawaii undergraduate interns, three of whom are now full-time employees on our team. We also applied for and received our first-ever patent and now are now working on four international patents.

We are currently designing a small manufacturing facility, the Aloha Sustainable Materials Recycling and Fertilizer Facility (Aloha SMRFF) in Campbell Industrial Park in Kapolei. Aloha SMRFF will serve as a pilot to Aloha Carbon and will divert over 200 tons per day of construction and demolition waste from the state's only C&D landfill, and remanufacture that waste to displace over 10,000 tons per year of imported fossil fuels, fertilizers, and building materials. Thanks in part to the assistance from HTDC and HSBIR, we were able to compete at the national level and win a \$4 million manufacturing grant from the USDA, to build the Aloha Fertilizer manufacturing line of our Aloha SMRFF project. State matching funds like the ones provided by HTDC allow us to actually bring in these federal funds and build this facility to employ 2 dozen skilled workers. This facility is the first step to demonstrating our Aloha Carbon manufacturing process to manufacture pipeline-quality renewable fuel from solid waste generated in Honolulu.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this measure, and urge your support for this bill.

Sincerely,



Marie-Joelle Simonpietri

President

About Simonpietri Enterprises LLC

Simonpietri Enterprises is a Kailua, Hawaii-based woman- and veteran-owned small business with ten employees, focused on technical innovation and first-of-kind project development of emerging clean and renewable technologies. Since founding in 2006, we have helped dozens of small and large industrial companies in Hawaii, the continental U.S., Australia, and Canada improve the environmental and economic sustainability of their operations through technical and business advice in renewable energy conversion, waste reduction and re-use, and greenhouse gas lifecycle impact reduction. Simonpietri Enterprises' founder and employees have participated in the strategy, planning, design, financing, development, construction, and energy efficiency/greenhouse gas reduction/sustainability renovation for over \$400 million in new renewable and first-of-kind sustainable fuel projects over the past 15 years. Since launching the Aloha Carbon waste-to-fuel technical development process in August 2020, Simonpietri Enterprises is now developing renewable fuel production facilities in its own right, starting with the Aloha Sustainable Materials Recycling and Fertilizer Facility (SMRFF) in Kapolei, Hawaii to divert wastes generated in Honolulu from landfilling and transform it to renewable fuel, organic fertilizer, and recycled-material building products.