



DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

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

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JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR

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DIRECTOR

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DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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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, February 3, 2026
1:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

In consideration of
SB2580

RELATING TO THE MOTION PICTURE, DIGITAL MEDIA, AND FILM PRODUCTION INCOME TAX CREDIT.

The Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism (DBEDT) supports SB2580, which modernizes Hawai'i's film and television production tax credit to ensure the State remains competitive in the rapidly evolving global production market.

Film and television production is no longer simply a creative industry, it is a globally mobile economic sector driven by incentive policy, infrastructure readiness, and workforce capacity. As outlined in the State's Film Hawai'i strategic framework, more than 90 countries now offer film rebates ranging from 25%–40%, and U.S. states are escalating their programs with higher rates, uplifts, and expanded eligibility to attract productions. The global production landscape is in an "incentives and infrastructure arms race," where jurisdictions compete not just on scenery, but on cost structure and certainty.

Hawai'i currently offers a 22–27% credit with a \$17 million per-production cap and \$50 million annual cap. These limits place Hawai'i below competing jurisdictions in both scale and flexibility. Recent years have shown the consequences: recurring series have left, large-scale productions have relocated to countries like New Zealand, and overall production spend has declined sharply since 2022. The State has world-class locations but lacks a competitive incentive structure aligned with today's production economics.

Since the last structural adjustment to Hawai‘i’s production credit, the economics of production have shifted dramatically:

- Labor, insurance, freight, and equipment costs have increased nationwide.
- Studios report tighter budgets and place tax incentives among their top cost-control measures.
- Productions now prioritize locations offering higher base credits, labor uplifts, and uncapped or higher-cap programs.

These market pressures mean Hawai‘i’s current credit rate no longer offsets the State’s higher logistical and geographic costs. Without adjustment, productions will continue to choose jurisdictions where incentives better balance rising production expenses.

SB2580 implements targeted adjustments aligned with industry trends and the State’s Film Hawai‘i strategy:

Increase credit to 27% (O‘ahu) 32% (Neighbor Islands)	Restores Hawai‘i to a competitive range relative to peer markets offering 30–40% incentives
Waiver of the \$17M cap for productions spending \$60M+	Enables Hawai‘i to compete for large-scale studio and streaming productions that bring sustained employment
Increase annual program cap to \$60M	Reflects market demand and prevents program bottlenecks
Extension of the sunset to 2038	Provides long-term certainty required for studio investment decisions
Modernized reporting and certification	Strengthens accountability and data transparency

These updates reflect the strategy presented in the Film Hawai‘i blueprint, which identifies incentive modernization as the immediate lever needed to stabilize the industry while the State builds long-term workforce and facility capacity.

Film production delivers direct spending across local vendors, small businesses, transportation, lodging, food services, and skilled trades. It also creates career pathways in creative technology, post-production, digital media, and skilled technical occupations.

Recent State analysis shows that film production generates tax revenues, workforce training contributions, and internship investments that support industry development. However, without policy alignment to current market conditions, Hawai‘i risks losing both economic activity and workforce continuity.

The Film Hawai‘i plan identifies three immediate priorities:

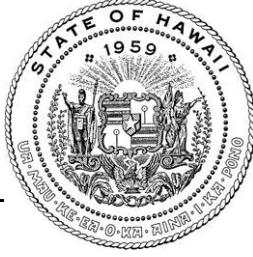
1. Modernize incentives to remain globally competitive
2. Stabilize production volume to sustain local workforce pipelines
3. Position Hawai'i as a Pacific creative hub for streaming-era content

SB2580 directly advances Priority #1 and enables the ecosystem growth outlined in the State's long-term strategy. Incentives are the entry point, once productions choose Hawai'i, infrastructure, workforce programs, and post-production capacity can scale.

SB2580 is not an expansion of policy direction; it is a necessary recalibration to market reality. Without these updates, Hawai'i will continue to fall behind in the competition for production activity. With them, the State can retain and grow a high-value creative sector that supports jobs, small businesses, and economic diversification.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Committee to pass SB2580.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support.



**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS,
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**
KA 'OIHANA HO'OMOHALA PĀ'OIHANA, 'IMI WAIWAI
A HO'OMĀKA'IKA'I

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LATE

Statement of
GEORJA SKINNER

Division Chief, Creative Industries

Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

February 3, 2026
1:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

In consideration of
SB2580

**RELATING TO THE MOTION PICTURE, DIGITAL MEDIA, AND FILM PRODUCTION
INCOME TAX CREDIT**

Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and members of the Committee. The Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) supports SB2580, which advances comprehensive reforms to Hawai'i's Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit program to improve competitiveness, workforce development, and long-term industry business attraction stability.

SB2580 aligns closely with DBEDT's administrative measures, SB3088 and HB2269, which modernizes the tax credit framework through increased incentive rates, expanded eligibility for streaming productions, stronger compliance verification, and long-term program extension. Raising the base credit rates to 27% and 32% to incentivize increase in production business for the state, increasing the annual cap to \$60 million, and setting a benchmark for exempting series and large-budget productions from the per-production cap.

LATE

The measure also extends the sunset date to 2038 which strengthens Hawai'i's market position and provide greater certainty for production planning.

DBEDT recognizes that these enhancements increase fiscal exposure and administrative demands. However, these risks are mitigated through enhanced reporting, verification, audit authority, and oversight mechanisms established under SB2580. DBEDT supports this measure and respectfully urges the committee to pass this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

JOSH GREEN M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR



GARY S. SUGANUMA
DIRECTOR

KRISTEN M.R. SAKAMOTO
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION

Ka 'Oihana 'Auhau
P.O. BOX 259
HONOLULU, HAWAI'I 96809
PHONE NO: (808) 587-1540
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**TESTIMONY OF
GARY S. SUGANUMA, DIRECTOR OF TAXATION**

TESTIMONY ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

S.B. No. 2580, Relating to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production
Income Tax Credit

BEFORE THE:

Senate Committee on Economic Development and Tourism

DATE: Tuesday, February 3, 2026

TIME: 1:00 p.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 229

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

The Department of Taxation (DOTAX) offers the following comments regarding S.B. 2580 for your consideration.

SB 2580 makes multiple amendments to section 235-17, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) as follows:

- Increases the credit amount which can be claimed for qualified production costs incurred in a county with a population of over 700,000 (Oahu) from 22 per cent to 27 per cent;
- Increases the credit amount which can be claimed for qualified production costs incurred in a county with a population of 700,000 or less (Neighbor Islands) from 27 per cent to 32 per cent;
- Adds a subsection requiring third party independent CPA certification, while repealing the similar provision in Act 143, SLH 2017;

- Increases the allowable credit amount per year from \$50,000,000 to \$60,000,000, and removes the \$17,000,000 per production limit cap if qualified costs meet or exceed the new \$60,000,000 cap;
- Extends from December 31, 2032, to December 31, 2037, the taxpayer ability to carry forward excess claims not processed because the yearly cap has been met;
- Makes clarifying amendments to the definition of a “qualifying production” regarding broadcast versus streaming productions and the minimum qualifying number of per season episodes;
- Defines “streaming platform” as online providers of content delivered via the internet as a paid subscription service.

Section 2 of the measure extends the sunset of Act 88, SLH 2006, as amended, to apply to costs incurred before January 1, 2038.

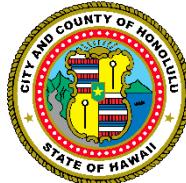
DOTAX recommends that section 5 of the bill be amended to state that section 1 shall apply to “costs incurred after December 31, 2025, rather than the current language stating “taxable years beginning after. . .”

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.

HONOLULU FILM OFFICE
KE KE'ENA LĪPINE O HONOLULU
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

530 SOUTH KING ST, ROOM 306 • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
PHONE: (808) 768-6100 • FAX: WEBSITE: honolulu.gov/film-office

RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR
MEIA



WALEA L. CONSTANTINAU
FILM COMMISSIONER
Kominina Līpine

Testimony of Walea Constantinau,
Film Commissioner, Honolulu Film Office
City and County of Honolulu

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

February 3, 2026 1:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 229 and via Videoconference

RE: SB 2580 RELATING TO FILM INDUSTRY – STRONG SUPPORT AND COMMENTS

Dear Chair DeCoite, Vice-chair Wakai and members of the committees:

The Honolulu Film Office would like to thank the Legislature and in particular this committee for its collaboration and long-standing support of Hawaii's Film Industry. **We are at a crucial juncture** with our industry and the industry-supporting proposals this Legislative Session **are vital for the industry to address market changes and remain competitive.**

We strongly support the portions of this measure that:

- Update the film tax credit percentages to answer shifts in the market,
- Support attracting more of a production to film in Hawaii which will allow the industry base to grow and develop infrastructure,
- Address technical issues that will streamline the tax filing process for both the State and Filers by using a Third Party Audit.

We offer these friendly amendments to take under advisement:

- Restore the Third Party language as discussed last session which would **exclude productions under \$1 million from the requirement**. Third Party Audits make sense for larger productions but can be cost-prohibitive for smaller productions, which would largely adversely affect our local filmmakers,
- Update and modernize a portion of the credit by deleting item (3) on line 7 of page 5 which currently excludes advertising messages for internet-only distribution. It is an outdated definition of a 'commercial' **and would inadvertently restrict commercials made for streaming platforms that allow advertising**, a strong growth-trend for that market segment.

Mahalo to the Chair and members of this committee who have been so supportive over the years, investing your time and mana'o to gain insights and an understanding of the needs of the industry and the significant economic benefits that the film industry brings to Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.

TAX FOUNDATION OF HAWAII

735 Bishop Street, Suite 417

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 Tel. 536-4587

SUBJECT: INCOME, Increase Motion Picture Production Credit and Raise Annual Caps

BILL NUMBER: SB 2580

INTRODUCED BY: DECOITE, CHANG, FUKUNAGA, LAMOSAO, MCKELVEY, MORIWAKI, SAN BUENAVENTURA, Elefante

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Increases the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit to 27 per cent of qualified production costs in counties with a population of over seven hundred thousand and 32 per cent in counties with a population of seven hundred thousand or less. Requires each taxpayer claiming the tax credit to submit an independent third-party certification verifying certain information to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. Excludes qualified productions that incur at least \$60 million of qualified production costs from the per-production total tax credit cap of \$17 million. Increases the total amount of tax credits allowed to be claimed annually to \$60 million. Defines "streaming platform" and amends the definition of "qualified production" to include certain streaming productions. Extends the sunset date of the tax credit to 1/1/2038.

SYNOPSIS: Amends section 235-17(a), HRS, to increase the creditable percentages by 5 percentage points to 27% of qualified production costs in Honolulu and 32% in other counties.

Amends section 235-17(h), HRS, to require submission of a certification by an independent CPA verifying the information in the application using procedures prescribed by DBEDT. The new language replaces an uncodified law section (Act 143, SLH 2017, section 6) that annually required such certifications.

Amends section 235-17(l), HRS, to exclude from the per-production tax credit limit any production incurring at least \$60 million of qualified production costs.

Amends section 235-17(n), HRS, to raise the aggregate cap statewide from \$50 million to \$60 million, and to extend the sunset date of the credit by five years to 1/1/2038.

Amends section 235-17(o), HRS, to amend the qualified production definitions to allow streaming platform series to qualify.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Taxable years beginning after December 31, 2025.

STAFF COMMENTS: The production credit in HRS section 235-17 was enacted as Act 107, SLH 1997, as a percentage of the costs incurred in the State in the production of motion picture or television films. As enacted, the credit was 4% of regular production costs plus 6% of transient accommodations, mirroring the GET and TAT rates at the time. Act 156, SLH 1988, raised the TAT credit to 7.25% while also raising the TAT rate to 7.25%.

After a period where this credit took a back seat to the qualified high tech business program enacted by Act 221, SLH 2001, this credit was next amended by Act 88, SLH 2006, which added credits for digital media and replaced the GET and TAT bifurcation with a unified credit of 15% of qualified production costs incurred in the C&C of Honolulu and 20% in any other county. The act added a per-production cap of \$8 million and sunset the credit on Jan. 1, 2016.

Act 89, SLH 2013, changed the credit percentages to 20% in Honolulu and 25% in any other county; raised the per-production limit to \$15 million; and extended the sunset date to Jan. 1, 2019.

Act 143, SLH 2017, extended the sunset date for the credit to Jan. 1, 2026, and first imposed an aggregate cap of \$35 million. Act 275, SLH 2019, raised the aggregate cap to \$50 million.

Act 217, SLH 2022, increased the credit percentages to 22% in Honolulu and 27% in any other county and extended the sunset date to January 1, 2033.

This bill yet again is proposing an increase to the aggregate credit cap from \$50 million to \$60 million and extending the sunset date for another 5 years to January 1, 2038.

We in Hawaii have had our production credit since 1997, so it's been more than twenty years. Have there been any studies about what the program has done for Hawaii's economy or Hawaii's tax revenue? None were cited to the Legislature when the Hawaii production tax credit was increased in 2013. Maybe we don't care as much about the hard dollars as we do about other intangible effects like local jobs, the development of a skilled workforce, or robust media education programs that simply weren't around at the turn of the century. Even if so, lawmakers should have data on these intangibles, and other cost-benefit information, so they can make rational decisions on this matter.

Certainly, the film industry promises increased opportunities. Some of them certainly have materialized. But chasing these opportunities needs to be balanced against the cold hard reality of solving the problems at hand. Lawmakers need to ask whether production tax credits create sustainable economic development. It's well known that most productions shoot for a while and then wrap; the crew that supports the production then jumps to the next one. A case may be made for the production credits if they keep the productions rolling in and contributing to the economy. But the people need to see that case to justify continued redirection of resources to these credits while those resources could instead lower the overall tax burden not only for families but for the businesses that provide long-term employment for Hawaii's people.

Digested: 1/30/2026



February 3, 2026

Committee on Economic Development & Tourism
Chair DeCoite
Vice Chair Wakai

The Senate
The Thirtieth-Third Legislature
Regular Session of 2026

RE: SB 2580 RELATING TO THE MOTION PICTURE, DIGITAL MEDIA,
AND FILM PRODUCTION INCOME TAX CREDIT.

DATE: Tuesday, February 3, 2026
TIME: 1:00pm
PLACE: Conference Room 229
State Capitol 415 South Beretania Street, Honolulu HI

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of SB 2580 RELATING TO THE MOTION PICTURE, DIGITAL MEDIA, AND FILM PRODUCTION INCOME TAX CREDIT.

SAG-AFTRA represents over 160,000 actors, recording artists, and media professionals nationwide and over 1400 in Hawai'i. We are the professional performers working in front of the camera and behind the microphone. The SAG-AFTRA Hawai'i Local has a long-standing history of protecting performers in all areas of the entertainment, advertising, and media industries.

Raising the annual aggregate cap to **\$60 million** and excluding high-spend productions (those over \$60 million) from the individual \$17 million cap encourages large-scale projects that provide long-term, stable employment for our local cast and crew to stay in Hawaii.

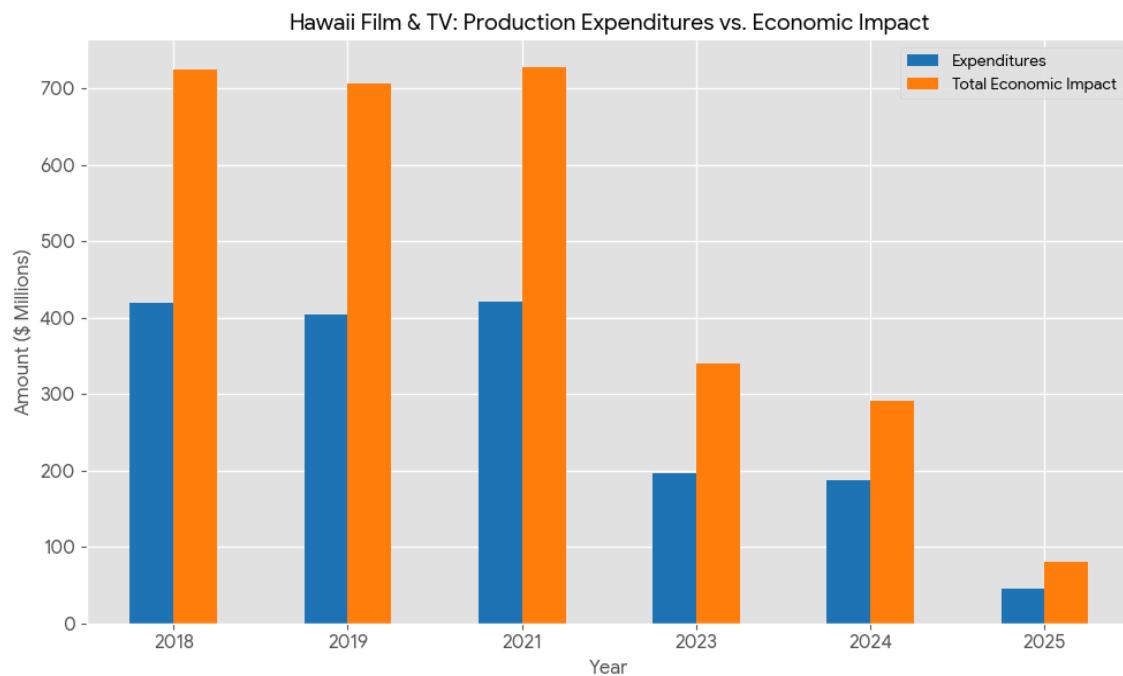
Including "**streaming platforms**" in the definition of qualified productions reflects the reality of today's media landscape. Our members are increasingly working on high-budget streaming content, and our tax laws must evolve to capture this market.

Mericia Palma Elmore, JD/MLSc
Executive Director
SAG-AFTRA Hawaii Local
mericia.palmaelmore@sagaftra.org
201 Merchant St. Suite 2301
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Ph: 808-596-0388 Fax: 808-593-2636

SCREEN ACTORS GUILD - AMERICAN FEDERATION OF
TELEVISION AND RADIO ARTISTS
SAGAFTRA.org

Associated Actors & Artistes of America / AFL-CIO

Extending the sunset date to **2038** provides the industry with the predictability it needs. Studio executives and producers plan years in advance; they need to know that Hawaii's commitment to film is here to stay.



We have been through significant declines in production expenditures these last couple of years. These are not just bars on a chart, these numbers¹ reflect real local families struggling to pay bills, make ends meet, and in some cases eventually moving away for better opportunities.

When a production chooses Hawaii, it isn't just about the actors on screen. It is about hundreds of local jobs, from crew and stunt performers, to the local small businesses that provide catering, lumber, and equipment. This bill is a direct investment in Hawaii's middle-class creative workforce.

¹ Reports found here: <https://dbdt.hawaii.gov/overview/annual-reports-reports-to-the-legislature/>



We urge the Committee to **pass SB 2580** to keep Hawaii's storytellers working here at home.

Respectfully,

Mericia Palma Elmore

Mericia Palma Elmore, Executive Director SAG-AFTRA Hawaii Local

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Associated Actors & Artistes of America / AFL-CIO



**State of Hawai‘i
The Thirty-Third Legislature
State Senate
Committee on Economic Development and Tourism (EDT)**

**Tuesday, February 3, 2026
1:00PM – Room 229, HI State Capitol**

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB 2580
RELATING TO THE MOTION PICTURE, DIGITAL MEDIA AND FILM PRODUCTION INCOME TAX
CREDIT

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

Mahalo for hearing our concerns over the past several months and for introducing SB 2580 as a result of those conversations. The Hawai‘i Film Alliance (HFA) submits this testimony in strong support of **SB 2580**.

HFA is a member-based organization comprised of over 600 Hawai‘i film and television professionals, entertainment union members, creative workers, production companies, small businesses, and allied industry partners who live and work in the State of Hawai‘i. Our members span the full spectrum of the production ecosystem, including crew, talent, independent filmmakers and support services that enable films to operate locally.

Long-term film projects have been non-existent these past two years, and SB 2580 has key components that will immediately **strengthen Hawai‘i’s film-friendly reputation**:

- **Removes the per production cap for films over \$60M.** This is an akamai game-changer to entice large format films.
- **Adds streaming language** to embrace the digital platforms of distribution that make Hawai‘i competitive. Films that go directly to streaming are now welcome to film in Hawai‘i.
- **Raises the overall film production cap to \$60 million dollars.** The increase to the tax credit signals to the world that the State of Hawai‘i supports film. It has not gone unnoticed in this economic climate.
- **Raises the base points** to 27% for Oahu-based filming and 32% for neighbor-island filming. Getting over the 30% threshold across the state has been a goal of ours, so seeing this begin on the neighbor islands is a huge step in the right direction.

SB 2580 supports **economic diversification** at a time when Hawai‘i must reduce overreliance on a single sector. Film and creative media production brings **outside capital** into the state, **circulates dollars locally for at least 18 months before the credit is paid out**, and enhances Hawai‘i’s global visibility in a way that aligns with cultural storytelling, place-based identity, and community pride.

The film industry generates high-quality jobs across a wide range of skill levels, from production crews and post-production professionals to construction, transportation, hospitality, and local vendors. These are high-paying, project-based opportunities that provide pathways into creative and technical careers for Hawai‘i residents.

With the loss of Hawai‘i residents to out-of-state locales, **graduates of the School of Cinematic Arts program at UH Mānoa** and **the Academy of Creative Media program at UH-West ‘Oahu** need a **vibrant film industry** that allow them to **work at home in the islands**. Having them stay home to raise families and nurture relationships with Aloha is part of what makes the Hawaiian culture so attractive and unique.

HFA recognizes that a strong incentive framework encourages productions to commit to Hawai‘i for the long term. Our film history shows that two television series filming simultaneously build careers, **stabilizes families**, provides upward **departmental promotion**, promotes **infrastructure growth**, and **deepens partnerships** with local professionals and businesses. These outcomes are essential to building a resilient industry that benefits residents first.

The film tax credit does not just provide jobs for local residents. It is a **reliable tax revenue source** for the state. In 2022, **tourists** who came to Hawai‘i because of a film they saw **spent \$1 Billion dollars** which generated **\$121 Million in state tax revenue**¹. Couple that with state taxes paid by film workers and supporting businesses, and you have a tax incentive that more than pays for itself year after year.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony and for your continued support of Hawai‘i’s film and creative media community. **Please pass SB 2580.**

¹ https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/economic/reports/film_impacts_on_tourism_feb_2024.pdf

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 8:36:01 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Henry Fordham	Testifying for IATSE LOCAL 665	Comments	In Person

Comments:

Aloha Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and members of the Senate committee,

My name is Henry Fordham. I'm a member of IATSE Local 665, the union representing technicians and artisans in the entertainment industry in Hawai'i. **I strongly support SB2580**, Relating to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit.

This bill is a direct investment in stable, middle-class jobs for Hawaii's creative workforce. The changes proposed in SB 2580 will significantly increase Hawai'i's ability to attract lasting work with thriving wage jobs to stabilize the long-term health of this vital industry. I thank the legislature for their foresight in proposing the increase of the overall cap, the increase of the per production percentages, the inclusion of "streaming platforms" as qualified productions, and the extension of the sunset date will make great strides in supporting the thousands of local working families that are supported by this industry. Excluding companies that incur more than \$60 million in qualified expenditures from the "per production" cap will encourage long-term projects towards our islands.

Hawai'i's film industry supports thousands of working families in the state of Hawai'i. These thriving wages are irreplaceable by other industries. When the film tax incentive is empowered, this industry generates significantly to state GDP, earnings, and even visitor spending. When the film tax incentive is restrained, we not only lose the economic benefits of the industry, but we also lose the ability to tell our own stories. To remain competitive in the global market, it is imperative that Hawai'i strengthens and stabilizes the film tax incentive program. SB 2580 will take meaningful steps to empower our film tax incentive program, and will support thousands of working families in Hawai'i.

I strongly support SB 2580. I urge your committee to do the same. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,

Henry H. Fordham III

IATSE Local 665 Executive Board



The Senate
The Thirty-Third Legislature
Regular Session of 2026

COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM

Senator Lynn DeCoite, Chair
Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

RE: SB2580 RELATING TO THE MOTION PICTURE, DIGITAL MEDIA, AND
FILM PRODUCTION INCOME TAX CREDIT

Date: Tuesday, February 3, 2026
Time: 1:00 p.m.
Conference Room 229
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

February 2, 2026

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

We **SUPPORT** SB2580 with the following comments and suggested changes:

- **Recognition of Independent Third-Party Certificates/Exemption:** We support the requirement of the Independent Third-Party Certificate but only if the certificates are recognized by DBEDT and DoTax, both of which have disregarded these certificates in the past and have proceeded with their own internal audits of every tax credit claim irrespective of evidence of non-compliance with the statute. Given the cost to obtain such certificates, qualified productions with less than

\$1,000,000 in qualified spend should be exempt from the requirement as they have been in the past.

- **Classification by Distribution Platform:** It should not matter whether a qualified production is distributed via streaming, broadcast or the internet, provided that the requisite amount of qualified expenditures are made in the state. The distinction between “streaming” and “broadcast” is also ambiguous since some qualified productions are distributed on both streaming and broadcast platforms. For the same reason, the exclusion of commercials that “include an advertising message with internet-only distribution” should also be eliminated.

We PROPOSE the following changes:

- **Distribution of Credit Proposed Language:**

Distributions of the tax credit shall be made in accordance with subchapter J, K, or S, or any other relevant pass-through entity allocation provisions of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, to which the State conforms, except that section 704(b)(2) shall not apply.

Basis for Proposed Language: The distribution of the tax credit is currently determined by administrative rule and requires that the tax credit can only be claimed by an investor in an amount related to its investment. For example, if three investors each invest \$100,000 in a film project, each investor can only claim a tax credit on its \$100,000 investment. In some situations, however, the investors may have different appetites for risk and wish to reallocate the tax credits that may be claimed. For example, investors 1 and 2 may agree to allocate their tax credits to investor 3, reducing investor 3’s investment risk, in exchange for investor 3 giving up some of its upside in the film project should it be financially successful.

Allowing investors to reallocate tax credits does not increase the cost to the state but makes it easier to attract investment for local film productions.

- **Studio Facilities Proposed Language:**

Proposed Language:

“Qualified Production”:

(2) *Means a studio facility located on property owned by the state or any county.*

“Qualified production costs” means...

(12) Development and construction costs relating to a studio facility.

Basis for Proposed Language: The inclusion of Studio Facilities as a Qualified Production will allow for much needed infrastructure support while providing ongoing revenue to the state and/or county. At the same time, the necessary approval of the governmental entity for the use of such property will allow for the flexibility of different facilities without restrictive statutory requirements.

About Island Film Group

Island Film Group is the largest locally owned and operated production company having produced more than 100 film, television and commercial projects in Hawaii. We began working in Hawaii's film and television industry in 2004 as attorneys at Goodsill Anderson Quinn & Stifel, where we represented mainland studios, local filmmakers and other production companies.

Me ke aloha,

The image shows two handwritten signatures side-by-side. The signature on the left is "Ricardo Galindez" and the signature on the right is "Roy Tjioe".

Ricardo Galindez and Roy Tjioe
Co-Founders
Island Film Group
Honolulu, Hawaii

February 3, 2026

Senate Committee on Economic Development and Tourism
Senator Lynn DeCoite, Chair
Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

Tuesday, February 3, 2026, 1:00 p.m.
Conference Room #229 and via video conference



RE: SB 2580 Relating to the Motion Picture, Digital Media and Film Production Income Tax Credit

Dear Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai and members of the Committee,

My name is Kiran Polk, and I am the Executive Director & CEO of the Kapolei Chamber of Commerce. The Kapolei Chamber of Commerce is an advocate for businesses in the Kapolei region including Waipahu, Kapolei, 'Ewa Beach, Nānākūlī, Wai'anae, and Mākaha. We work on behalf of our members and the broader business community to improve the regional and State economic climate and to help West O'ahu businesses thrive.

The Kapolei Chamber of Commerce is in **strong support for SB 2580**, which proposes targeted updates to Hawai'i's film incentive program to restore competitiveness, strengthen accountability, and support long-term industry growth. Specifically, this measure increases the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit to 27 percent of qualified production costs in counties with populations over 700,000 and 32 percent in counties with populations of 700,000 or less; requires independent third-party certification of claimed credits; increases the annual statewide tax credit cap to \$60 million; excludes productions incurring at least \$60 million in qualified costs from the per-production \$17 million cap; clarifies eligibility for certain streaming productions; and extends the sunset date of the tax credit to January 1, 2038.

For decades, television series such as *Magnum P.I.*, *Hawai'i Five-O*, and *NCIS: Hawai'i* filmed in West O'ahu, generating consistent demand for local restaurants, food vendors, transportation companies, equipment suppliers, cleaning services, and other small businesses. These productions provided more than short-term activity, they created steady revenue streams and sustained jobs that allowed local businesses and workers to remain rooted in our communities.

Today, for the first time in decades, Hawai'i does not have a television series filming in the state. This absence has been felt acutely in West O'ahu, where small businesses have lost customers and workers and lost income that supports their families. At the same time, **productions are increasingly choosing to film in other states and countries that offer more competitive and predictable incentive programs.**

This trend underscores that Hawai'i's current incentive structure is no longer keeping pace in an increasingly competitive global market. **Without meaningful updates, the state risks continued erosion of film-related economic activity, particularly in regions like West O'ahu that have demonstrated the capacity to support large-scale productions and associated workforce needs.**

Strengthening Hawai'i's film incentives through SB 2580 will help bring productions back, restore business activity for small businesses, and reestablish stable employment opportunities for local workers. **This is especially important as a film studio is planned for West O'ahu, positioning the region to become a significant hub for creative industry growth if the policy environment supports it.**

SB 2580 represents an important opportunity to reaffirm Hawai'i's commitment to supporting small businesses, retaining local jobs, and ensuring that West O'ahu remains an active and competitive participant in the State's economic development strategy.

For these reasons, the Kapolei Chamber of Commerce **supports HB 1694** and respectfully urges the Committee to pass this measure.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

Respectfully,

Kiran Polk
Executive Director & CEO

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 11:57:50 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Angela Laprete	Testifying for International Cultural Arts Network (ICAN0	Support	In Person

Comments:

I write in support of SB2580. Very grateful to Chair Lynn DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai and members of the committee for bringing forth this bill focusing on major film initiatives that could help move Hawaii's film industry to the limelight. Last year, you all visted the set of Wrecking Crew and saw what an impact a show like this had on local hiring of cast and crew, vendors, businesses, and not to mention the release of this feature is a "free campaign" for our beatuiful state on a global scale (streaming on Amazon prime). Look at the final product - Hawaii is a character - textures of Hawaii in story (pidgin, local cast, diversity) and in values (Ohana first) are showcased. This was just 12 days of shooting on Oahu vs 43 days in NZ. We put over 400 people to work in a short time, just imagine if we had these incentives in place then. Millions more could've been pumped into Hawaii's economy, sustaining work force devleopment for our local talent. Being one of the producers on Wrecking Crew and Chief of War, time and time again we've faced these challenges with the bigger budgeted productions as they're limited by the per project and overall cap. Plus, our 22% Oahu iincentive is too low compared to most states and countires when Hawaii is already considered one of the most expensve places to live in and shoot on location. These big shows hit the cap too quickly and are forced to go to other places where the money will go much farther. Why focus on the bigger budgeted shows for the lifting of the cap? Because these shows put hundreds of locals to work for several months (sometimes thousands like Chief of War), allows for internships, many local casting roles and money is spent on local hotels, restaurants, shopping, etc. - circular economy goes immediatley into effect. Currently I'm on the Netflix film, "Protectting Jared" and it is 100% shooting in Hawaii - and that comes from Jason Momoa himself who basically put his foot down and said no more moving locations. BTW, this is the 3rd project he's brought to Hawaii because he's loyal and he cares and there will be more.

As Co-Founder of ICAN, we foocus on elevating NHPI in our indsutry by providing high level training, work force devleopment opportunities, creating pathways into the indsutry and most importantly, building communities that never existed before for our talent. When productoins are here, we're able to bring accesss to industry professionals to our ICAN community.

These new incentives are overdue and I'm very excited to see it all come to fruition.

Mahalo.

Angela Laprete



IATSE LOCAL 665

FILM, TELEVISION, STAGE, PROJECTION AND TRADESHOWS
Since 1937



INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF THEATRICAL STAGE EMPLOYEES, MOVING PICTURE TECHNICIANS, ARTISTS AND ALLIED CRAFTS
OF THE UNITED STATES, ITS TERRITORIES AND CANADA, AFL-CIO, CLC

Thirty-Third Legislature, State of Hawai'i
Regular Session of 2026
Senate Committee on Economic Development and Tourism

Testimony by IATSE 665
February 3rd, 2026

SB 2580 - RELATING TO THE MOTION PICTURE, DIGITAL MEDIA, AND FILM PRODUCTION INCOME TAX CREDIT.

Aloha Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and members of the Senate committee,

My name is Tuia'ana Scanlan, Political/Legislative Committee Co-Chair of IATSE Local 665, the union representing technicians and artisans in the entertainment industry in Hawai'i, and IATSE International Trustee. **Local 665 strongly supports SB2580**, Relating to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit.

This bill is a direct investment in stable, middle-class jobs for Hawaii's creative workforce. SB 2580 will significantly increase Hawai'i's ability to attract lasting work with thriving wage jobs to stabilize the long-term health of this vital industry. We thank the legislature for their foresight in proposing the increase of the overall cap, the increase of the per production percentages, the inclusion of "streaming platforms" as qualified productions, and the extension of the sunset date will make great strides in supporting the thousands of local working families that are supported by this industry. Excluding companies that incur more than \$60 million in qualified expenditures from the "per production" cap will encourage long-term projects towards our islands.

Hawai'i's film industry supports thousands of working families in the state of Hawai'i. These thriving wages are irreplaceable by other industries. When the film tax incentive is empowered, this industry contributes significantly to state GDP, household earnings, and even visitor spending. To remain competitive in the global market, it is imperative that Hawai'i strengthens and stabilizes the film tax incentive program. SB 2580 will take meaningful steps to empower our film tax incentive program, and will support thousands of working families in Hawai'i.

Local 665 strongly supports SB 2580. We urge your committee to do the same. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tuia'ana Scanlan'.

Tuia'ana Scanlan
Political/Legislative Committee Co-Chair of IATSE Local 665
IATSE International Trustee

LATE



Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Pō'ai Lincoln, and I am a Hawaiian filmmaker and the Executive Director of Hawai'i Women in Filmmaking. I am writing in **support** of SB2580, which strengthens and extends Hawai'i's Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit.

As a filmmaker rooted in place, I view film not only as an industry, but as a form of stewardship for our stories, our people, and our 'āina. SB2580 reflects an understanding that Hawai'i's film ecosystem must be cared for intentionally if it is to remain sustainable, competitive, and accountable over the long term. By increasing the tax credit percentages, extending the program's sunset date, and modernizing the statute to clearly include streaming platforms, this bill provides stability and clarity that are essential for long-term planning and workforce development.

I especially appreciate the bill's emphasis on transparency and accountability through enhanced reporting and third-party certification requirements. Clear data on production spending and local hiring is critical not only for fiscal oversight, but for understanding how this incentive truly impacts Hawai'i's people and creative workforce. These provisions help ensure that public investment aligns with public benefit.

As a proud Waimea girl from Hawai'i Island, I also appreciate that SB2580 continues to recognize the importance of Neighbor Island production through higher credit percentages. This distinction acknowledges both the economic opportunity and the responsibility that comes with filming across the islands, where infrastructure, capacity, and community impact must be carefully balanced.

At the same time, I encourage the Legislature to view SB2580 as part of a broader, evolving conversation about equity and access within Hawai'i's creative economy. While the bill meaningfully strengthens the incentive at the top end of the production scale, many independent and community-based filmmakers operate at budgets far below large studio productions. As the program continues, I hope future legislation will explore complementary pathways that support smaller-scale productions and emerging local storytellers, ensuring that Hawai'i's film ecosystem remains diverse, resilient, and representative of the communities who call this place home.

SB2580 has the potential to help Hawai'i's film industry thrive by creating career opportunities and training pipelines that enable talented, home-grown creators to remain in Hawai'i and build sustainable careers as filmmakers, rather than being forced to pursue their dreams elsewhere.

Overall, SB2580 is a strong and necessary step forward. It affirms Hawai'i's commitment to creative industries while reinforcing values of accountability, place-based stewardship, and long-term sustainability. For these reasons, I respectfully urge your support of SB2580.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Me ke aloha,

Pō'ai Lincoln
Mālama Hui (Executive Director)
Hawai'i Women in Filmmaking

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:03:15 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Genaro Hale Gualdarama	Testifying for Hawaii Teamsters Local 996	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

i am in support of this bill.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 1/31/2026 10:01:50 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Malik Haynes	Testifying for SAG-AFTRA	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Malik Haynes. I am a SAG-AFTRA stunt performer from Hau‘ula, Hawai‘i, and I am writing in strong support of SB2580.

This bill is a major step forward for the people and communities of Hawai‘i nei. SB2580 will bring work to local families while also supporting local businesses. When productions come to Hawai‘i, cast and crew are employed, local vendors are used, locations are rented, and money is circulated back into our economy.

I remember when there were four to five productions running at the same time on O‘ahu. There was work for everyone, and everyone had an opportunity to earn a living. Over time, that changed. Many of my friends were forced to leave the film industry because there was no work. Hawai‘i is not an easy place to survive without steady employment.

I was personally impacted by this. Due to the lack of work here, I made the difficult decision to move to California to continue my career and pay my bills. That meant sacrificing time with my family and being away from my home. It was not easy, but it was necessary.

Earlier this month, I returned home to work on a local production. Seeing people back on set—working, smiling, and doing what they love—gave me hope. That feeling matters. It shows what this industry can provide when it is supported.

The film industry has faced constant challenges: COVID, labor strikes, and productions leaving Hawai‘i for other states and countries. Our community is still recovering. SB2580 will help make Hawai‘i competitive again and keep jobs, talent, and opportunity here at home.

I respectfully urge you to support and pass SB2580 for the benefit of our local community and economy.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Malik Haynes

SAG-AFTRA Stunt Performer

Hau‘ula, Hawai‘i



TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB2580

Relating to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Gerard Elmore, and I submit this testimony on behalf of **‘Ohina Labs**, a Hawai‘i-based nonprofit dedicated to developing local storytellers, producers, and creative entrepreneurs, particularly Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander voices, so they can build sustainable careers in Hawai‘i’s creative economy.

‘Ohina Labs strongly supports **SB2580**, which modernizes, strengthens, and extends Hawai‘i’s Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit. This bill represents a thoughtful, forward-looking investment in one of Hawai‘i’s most scalable, high-impact industries.

SB2580 strengthens Hawai‘i’s competitiveness. In a time where we are not just competing with other states but the rest of the world, we need the tools to compete.

SB2580 reflects today’s production landscape.

By defining “streaming platform” and explicitly including certain streaming productions as qualified productions, the bill recognizes the reality of how content is now made and distributed. Streaming is no longer emerging, it is the dominant model. Hawai‘i must keep pace or risk irrelevance in the global production market.

Raising the annual cap grows local opportunities.

Increasing the annual credit cap to **\$60 million** ensures Hawai‘i can accommodate multiple productions in a single year without turning away projects that would otherwise hire local crew, rent local equipment, book hotels, and patronize small businesses. These productions create real, measurable economic activity that circulates throughout the state.

Large productions do not crowd out local benefits.

Excluding productions that incur **\$60 million or more** in qualified costs from the per-production \$17 million cap allows Hawai‘i to attract major projects while still maintaining guardrails. These large-scale productions bring long-term infrastructure development, workforce upskilling, and global visibility that benefit local creators and small businesses alike.

Extending the sunset provides stability.

Extending the program to **January 1, 2038** gives producers, studios, and local organizations the certainty needed to plan multi-year investments. Stability is critical for workforce development, infrastructure growth, and the long-term success of local talent pipelines like 'Ohina Labs.

For 'Ohina Labs, this bill is not an abstract policy, it directly impacts whether local filmmakers can build careers here, whether young people can see a future in the creative industries, and whether Hawai'i continues to tell its own stories rather than simply hosting productions that pass through.

SB2580 is a smart, balanced, and necessary update to a proven economic driver. We respectfully urge the committee to **pass SB2580** and continue Hawai'i's commitment to a creative economy that is locally rooted, globally competitive, and economically impactful.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Gerard Elmore



Executive Director

'Ohina Labs

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 11:44:51 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kamuela Chandler	Testifying for Hawaii Film Alliance, BrokeAssFilms	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kamuela Chandler, and I am a Native Hawaiian independent filmmaker and a member of the Hawaii Film Alliance. I respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of SB 2580, and in general support of policies that strengthen tax incentives and long-term investment in Hawai‘i’s film and television industry.

I come to this from the ground level of the creative economy. I am not part of a large production company. I do not have studio backing, major funding, or corporate sponsorship. I work project to project, often building my own equipment, relying on donated or secondhand gear, and collaborating with local creatives who share the same passion to tell stories rooted in this place and its people.

Despite these challenges, I continue because I believe Hawai‘i’s stories deserve to be told by those who live here, who understand this land, and who carry its culture forward. The film and television industry is not just about entertainment — it is about jobs, education, cultural preservation, and economic opportunity.

When strong incentive programs exist, they don’t only attract outside productions. They create pathways for local crew members, students, artists, and small production teams to gain experience, earn a living, and build sustainable careers here at home instead of having to leave Hawai‘i to pursue their craft.

A healthy film industry means steady work for electricians, carpenters, drivers, costume designers, editors, musicians, caterers, and countless other local professionals. It means training

the next generation of filmmakers and technicians. It means creating an ecosystem where creativity and economic stability can exist together.

Right now, many independent filmmakers and local workers are struggling to stay afloat. Rising costs of living, limited job opportunities, and uncertainty in the industry make it harder each year to continue this work. Bills like SB 2580 represent more than tax policy — they represent a commitment to keeping Hawai‘i’s creative workforce alive and growing.

I strongly urge you to pass these measures and continue building a film and television industry that is not only attractive to the world, but sustainable for the people who call Hawai‘i home.

Mahalo for your time, your service, and your consideration.

Respectfully,

Kamuela Chandler

Actor

Independent Filmmaker

Member, Hawaii Film Alliance

BrokeAssFilms



Ho`onui LLC
P.O. Box 240316
Honolulu, HI 96824

Hawai`i State Senate Committee on Economic Development and Tourism (EDT)

Date: Tuesday, February 3, 2026

Time: 1:00 p.m.

Conference Room 229 & Videoconference
State Capitol, 415 South Beretania Street

RE: SB 2580 Relating to Film Incentives

Aloha e Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee,

My name is **Karen Chang Barr**, and I am a **small business consultant serving the state of Hawai`i and member of the Kapolei Chamber of Commerce** of West O`ahu.

I am writing **in support of SB 2580**, which would improve Hawai`i's film industry incentives.

Television series such as Magnum P.I., Hawai`i Five-O, and NCIS: Hawai`i have filmed in West O`ahu, and have bolstered economic development for small businesses, including local restaurants, vendors, and service providers, as well as supporting jobs for local workers.

Currently, with no television series filming in Hawai`i, small businesses are losing customers and workers are losing income that supports their families. Productions are increasingly choosing to film elsewhere because Hawai`i's incentives are no longer competitive. The Apple series, Chief of War, is an example of this.

Strengthening Hawai`i's film incentives will help bring productions back, support small businesses and jobs in West O`ahu, and increase economic activity in our communities, especially as a film studio is planned for the region. Helping keep small businesses in business and community members employed will help in keeping generational locals home.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to provide testimony and for considering the needs of our West O`ahu business community.

Respectfully,
Karen Chang Barr
Ho`onui LLC
Honolulu, Hawai`i

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 2:25:28 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keala Cody Peltier- Nakanelua	Testifying for IATSE Local 665	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please truly consider our whole union is struggling and it is riding on the decisions of a few people. We need these bills to pass for us to stay competitive in today's film economy. It's small kine shame and sad so many movies that tell our cultures stories have to be taken away from us to be filmed in other states or countries because our politicians won't listen to our plees for help from our struggling community.

To: Senator Lynn DeCoite, Chair; Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair; and Members of the Committee

From: Antonio Jeremiah Agosto, Founder/Director, Visionize Media

Date: February 3, 2026

Subject: STRONG SUPPORT for SB 2580, Relating to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and

Film Production Income Tax Credit

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

My name is Antonio Jeremiah Agosto. I am a 33-year-old filmmaker, MBA student at Chaminade University, and the founder of Visionize Media, based in 'Ewa Beach. I am writing to express my strong support for SB 2580. This bill is not just about tax numbers; it is about the survival and growth of our local creative community.

1. Proof of Concept: The Visionize Masterclass

Last year, we launched "The Art of Music Media Masterclass" in partnership with UH West O'ahu. We proved that when you give local creatives practical, real-world solutions—like shooting live at the Holo Holo Music Festival alongside professionals—they don't just learn; they thrive. We had students from across the UH system learning technical lighting, workflow, and backstage etiquette. The success of this masterclass shows that the talent is here, the drive is here, and the "practical solutions" are ready to be put on set.

2. Building at Home to Keep Our Talent

I created these programs because I know what it feels like to grow up in Hawai'i wanting to learn a craft that no one was teaching locally. We must be able to groom our own creatives and build our future *at home*. If we provide more sets here through the incentives in SB 2580, our youth won't feel forced to move to the mainland to pursue their dreams. By increasing the annual cap to \$60 million and raising the credit percentages, we create a "sustainable creative economy" where local families can make a living.

3. The Impact of Lost Productions

We have seen what happens when productions leave. When a show like *NCIS: Hawai'i* is canceled or chooses another location, it isn't just "glitz and glam" that disappears—it is the income for over 800 local businesses and 710 cast and crew members. For every 100 residents directly employed by a production, another 59 local jobs are stimulated. SB 2580 helps keep these jobs here by making Hawai'i competitive again while ensuring the state benefits from real, documented economic activity.

4. Remaining Competitive: "Raise or Retire"

The reality is that our current 22% and 27% incentives have become "bottom-of-the-barrel" numbers compared to other jurisdictions. Without the raise to 27% and 32%

proposed in this bill, we are effectively "out of the game". Major productions are already looking outside of Hawai'i for locations. We must modernize our incentives—including adding streaming platforms—to reflect the 2026 industry landscape.

Conclusion

Visionize Media and the entire Hawaii Film Alliance are ready to work, but we need the legislative infrastructure to stay in the fight. SB 2580 is the key to ensuring that the next generation of storytellers can build their careers right here on O'ahu and across the neighbor islands.

I urge the committee to Pass SB 2580. Mahalo for your time and for supporting our local film industry.

Mahalo,
Antonio J. Agosto
Founder & Director, Visionize Media

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 2:57:35 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nickoma Ing	Testifying for Film Industry	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Film should be saved here in Hawai‘i. Hawai‘i has so much to offer — aloha, talent, ‘ohana, and powerful stories that deserve to be shared. The friendships built on set create an environment that is supportive, welcoming, and truly enjoyable to work in.

Hawai‘i filmmakers are an incredible backbone to major productions. We show up, we support, and we help bring large-scale films to life while sharing our local knowledge, culture, and heart. I love working on set and hope to do it full time — not only for the craft, but for the people we meet and the skills we exchange as we come together to create something meaningful.

Film allows us to tell stories that touch others through the screen. These stories matter. They inspire, educate, and connect people across the world. Hawai‘i deserves to keep filming here, to grow our creative community, and to support the development of larger productions and our own studios.

Please continue to invest in Hawai‘i’s film industry. Support our creatives. Keep the magic alive.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 6:34:20 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elijah Solis	Testifying for ALA TALENT	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Supporting a strong and well-regulated film and media industry in Hawai‘i aligns directly with the Legislature’s broader goals of consumer protection, economic diversification, workforce development, and responsible tourism.

The film and television industry is a proven economic driver for Hawai‘i. Film productions inject millions of dollars directly into the local economy through wages, lodging, food services, transportation, construction, and small local vendors. These expenditures support local jobs—many of which are unionized, skilled, and year-round—and create career pathways for residents in technical, creative, and administrative roles. Strengthening this sector helps reduce Hawai‘i’s reliance on a single industry and supports long-term economic resilience.

The establishment of the Hawai‘i Film Commission and the Film Industry Development Special Fund (SB 2580) creates clearer governance, accountability, and transparency. This mirrors the intent behind other measures before the Legislature that promote consumer protection, accurate pricing, and responsible business practices. A well-structured film commission ensures that public funds are used efficiently, that productions comply with local laws, and that benefits accrue to Hawai‘i residents and businesses.

Enhancements to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit (SB 2796) are necessary for Hawai‘i to remain competitive with other states and countries aggressively courting film and streaming productions. These incentives are performance-based, meaning tax credits are only earned after spending occurs in Hawai‘i. The inclusion of third-party certification requirements further strengthens oversight and ensures fiscal responsibility.

Film production also complements broader tourism and branding efforts. The global visibility created by films and television series shot in Hawai‘i promotes the State as a destination while supporting community-based economic activity beyond traditional visitor spending. Unlike short-term tourism surges, film productions often operate for months, providing stable income for local workers and businesses.

Additionally, the industry supports local creative professionals while remaining distinct from other creative sectors, allowing targeted investment without diverting resources from small businesses, cultural practitioners, or emerging industries. This balanced approach reflects the Legislature’s intent to study economic impacts, protect consumers, and invest in industries that provide measurable returns.

For these reasons, continued support for filming in Hawai‘i is a sound economic policy that promotes transparency, job creation, and sustainable growth while ensuring public accountability and long-term benefits for local communities.



Tiffany Hoke DNP, RN, RNP, APRN-RX, AGACNP-BC, SCRN, CNRN

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Honor. Homeostasis. Hope.

Subject: Testimony in Support of SB2580 – Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in strong support of SB2580, relating to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit.

Hawai‘i’s film and digital media industry is not a luxury sector. It is a critical economic engine that supports thousands of local workers across multiple trades, including production crews, construction, transportation, hospitality, post-production, food services, and creative professionals. SB2580 strengthens Hawai‘i’s competitiveness while ensuring fiscal responsibility and transparency.

The proposed increase in the tax credit rate recognizes the real and rising costs of production in Hawai‘i, particularly in counties with smaller populations where film activity has an outsized economic impact. Increasing the credit to 27 percent in larger counties and 32 percent in smaller counties helps level the playing field against mainland and international jurisdictions that aggressively court productions with higher incentives.

The bill’s requirement for independent third-party certification is a particularly important safeguard. This provision enhances accountability, protects public resources, and reinforces confidence that tax credits are awarded based on verified, qualified production costs. Transparency strengthens the program and ensures its long-term sustainability.

Excluding large-scale productions with at least \$60 million in qualified production costs from the per-production cap recognizes the substantial workforce demand and economic return these projects generate. At the same time, raising the annual statewide cap to \$60 million allows Hawai‘i to remain competitive without crowding out smaller productions that also support local jobs and talent development.

Including eligible streaming productions reflects the realities of today’s media landscape. Streaming platforms now drive a significant share of global production, and updating the statute ensures Hawai‘i does not lose opportunities simply due to outdated definitions.

Finally, extending the sunset date to January 1, 2038, provides the stability and predictability that productions, investors, and local workers need. Film projects are planned years in advance. A stable incentive framework allows Hawai‘i residents to build long-term careers rather than rely on intermittent, uncertain work.



Tiffany Hoke DNP, RN, RNP, APRN-RX, AGACNP-BC, SCRN, CNRN

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Honor. Homeostasis. Hope.

SB2580 is a thoughtful, balanced measure that promotes economic growth, workforce stability, and fiscal accountability. For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to support SB2580.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your continued commitment to Hawai'i's local workforce and creative economy.

Respectfully,

Tiffany Hoke DNP, RN, RNP, APRN-RX, AGACNP-BC, SCRN, CNRN

Our Neuro Network

CEO | Neuroscience and Neurovascular Nurse Practitioner | Coach | Consultant |

Podcast Host

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Podcast, Coaching & Consulting Fax: 307-312-3277

I am writing to express my strong support for SB2580 and SB2796. These bills come at an important time for Hawai‘i’s film industry and the many local professionals who contribute their talent, creativity, and hard work to it.

Having seen firsthand the passion and dedication of our local filmmakers, artists, performers, and crew, I believe these measures will make a meaningful difference. SB2580 and SB2796 create opportunities for local talent to grow and succeed while helping ensure that Hawai‘i’s stories are told authentically and responsibly.

Supporting these bills means investing in our community, strengthening our creative economy, and creating sustainable jobs for local families. It also helps reinforce Hawai‘i’s cultural identity by allowing our unique voices to reach a wider audience.

I respectfully urge lawmakers to pass SB2580 and SB2796 and continue supporting the people who help make Hawai‘i a vibrant center for creative work.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Bliss Models & Talent

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:34:19 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anthony Borengasser	Testifying for Bliss Model and Talent Agency	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support!!'

Anthony Borengasser



Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce

1321 Kino'ole Street - Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

Phone (808) 935-7178 - Fax (808) 961-4435 - Email exec@hicc.biz - www.hicc.biz

Executive Officer

Carla Kuo

2025-2026

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Testimony to the Senate Committee on Economic Development & Tourism

Senator Lynne DeCoite, Chair • Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

Tuesday, February 3, 2026 at 1:00 PM

RE: SB2580 Relating to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit - SUPPORT

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

The Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce, representing more than 350 businesses and individual members primarily on the east side of Hawai'i Island, strongly supports SB2580, which makes important updates to Hawai'i's Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit program. This measure will strengthen Hawai'i's competitiveness, encourage long-term industry investment, and deliver meaningful economic benefits statewide.

SB2580 appropriately recognizes the higher costs and logistical challenges of producing films and digital media on neighbor islands by increasing the tax credit to 32 percent in counties with a population of 700,000 or less, while maintaining a 27 percent credit in counties with populations over 700,000. This adjustment helps level the playing field and incentivizes productions to film outside of O'ahu, bringing direct economic activity to neighbor island communities such as Hawai'i Island and **creating jobs for local residents, small businesses, and creative professionals**.

Film and digital media productions generate immediate and measurable economic impacts on Hawai'i Island, including **local hiring, increased hotel occupancy, restaurant spending, equipment rentals, transportation services, and the use of local vendors**. These projects provide both short-term employment and long-term skill development opportunities while supporting a broad range of small businesses.

The Chamber also supports SB2580's provisions to increase the annual statewide tax credit cap to \$60 million, modernize the program by including qualified streaming productions, and extend the sunset date to January 1, 2038, providing the **long-term certainty needed to attract sustained industry investment**.

For these reasons, the Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce respectfully urges your **support and passage of SB2580**. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carla Kuo".

Carla Kuo
Executive Officer
Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 9:18:33 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeff Juett	Testifying for Sagafta.org	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 8:43:20 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jalem Correia	Testifying for SAG-AFTRA	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

As a proud SAG-AFTRA member, I believe investing in Hawaii's film industry means investing in our local workforce.

I appreciate this committee's consideration of SB2580, which raises the tax credit cap to \$60 million, includes streaming platforms, and extends the program to 2038.

Our creative workforce needs stable, middle-class jobs and long-term predictability to build careers here rather than relocating to the mainland.

I know from firsthand experience that this bill will attract major productions and create consistent employment for local actors and crew across all our islands.

Mahalo nui loa!

Jalem Correia

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:42:30 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amber Stone	Testifying for Premier Models & Talent	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB2580 & SB2796
Relating to Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in **strong support of SB2580 and SB2796**, which are critical measures to sustain and grow Hawai‘i’s motion picture, television, and digital media industry.

The film and television industry provides thousands of local jobs, supports small businesses across multiple sectors, and offers meaningful career pathways for Hawai‘i residents—especially our young people—without requiring them to leave the state. These bills recognize the real economic value of the industry and take important steps to keep Hawai‘i competitive with other production hubs.

SB2580 strengthens and modernizes Hawai‘i’s film tax credit program, helping ensure that productions continue to choose Hawai‘i as a place to film. Increasing and extending the tax credit, updating eligibility to reflect current production models, and providing long-term stability gives studios the confidence they need to plan projects here. This directly translates into more local hires, more consistent work, and a healthier creative economy.

SB2796 further supports the industry by addressing the tax treatment of motion picture and digital media production activities. Reducing unnecessary tax burdens helps productions allocate more resources toward local wages, benefits, and services—keeping more dollars circulating within Hawai‘i’s economy.

Together, these bills are not giveaways; they are **investments**. Productions bring in outside money, create union and non-union jobs, and support everything from hotels and restaurants to construction, transportation, and post-production services. When productions leave Hawai‘i due to lack of competitiveness, those jobs and economic benefits leave with them.

I respectfully urge you to pass **SB2580 and SB2796** to ensure Hawai‘i remains a viable, competitive, and sustainable home for film and digital media production.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your continued support of Hawai‘i’s creative workforce.

Respectfully,
Amber Stone Napoleon



Statement in Support of SB 2580
Submitted by Sight & Sound Productions

Sight & Sound Productions strongly supports SB 2580 and appreciates the Legislature's continued commitment to sustaining and strengthening Hawai'i's motion picture, digital media, and film production industry.

SB 2580 makes targeted and thoughtful updates to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit that reflect current industry conditions and increasing global competition. By increasing the credit to 25% in counties with populations over seven hundred thousand and 32% in counties with populations of seven hundred thousand or less, the bill encourages production activity across all islands and supports more equitable economic development statewide.

The bill also responsibly strengthens accountability by requiring taxpayers claiming the credit to submit an independent third party certification verifying qualified production costs, tax credit amounts, and local hire data to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. This requirement promotes transparency and ensures that the tax credit continues to deliver measurable benefits to Hawai'i's economy and workforce.

SB 2580 further recognizes the scale and economic impact of large productions by excluding qualified productions that incur at least sixty million dollars in qualified production costs from the per production tax credit cap of seventeen million dollars. These projects generate substantial local spending, create hundreds of jobs, and provide long term benefits to Hawai'i based vendors and crew members. In addition, increasing the annual statewide cap on available tax credits to sixty million dollars provides greater certainty and stability for production planning. This predictability is critical for attracting projects in a highly competitive global marketplace.

The bill also modernizes the program by defining "streaming platform" and expressly including qualifying streaming productions within the definition of "qualified production." As the industry continues to evolve toward streaming distribution, this update ensures that Hawai'i remains relevant and competitive. Extending the sunset date of the tax credit to January 1, 2038 further provides the long term certainty necessary for investment, workforce development, and infrastructure growth.

As a Hawai'i based production company that employs local crew and collaborates with local businesses, Sight & Sound Productions believes SB 2580 supports sustainable industry growth while maintaining appropriate oversight and fiscal responsibility. For these reasons, we respectfully urge support for SB 2580.

Mahalo for your consideration,
Sight & Sound Productions

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:32:12 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Todd Robertson	Testifying for Hyperspective Studios, Inc.	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a locally-based film and digital media production company, Hyperspective strongly supports **SB 2580**, as we believe that it will benefit our industry and the Hawai‘i economy.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:36:15 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alexander Dayuha	Testifying for Hawaii Film Alliance	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Alexander Dayuha, and I am an actor involved in local commercials and theatrical film productions here in Hawai‘i.

The film industry has had a meaningful impact on my life by providing financial opportunities, fostering a strong creative community, and allowing me to pursue my passion in storytelling while remaining on the islands.

I support this bill because expanding and modernizing the film tax credit will help Hawai‘i remain competitive, attract more productions, and create sustained jobs for local residents. By investing in the motion picture and digital media industry, this legislation will strengthen our local economy and support creatives who are committed to building their careers in Hawai‘i.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:24:58 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joy	Testifying for The Kathy Muller Talent & Modeling Agency	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Joy Kam and I have been a talent agent in Hawai‘i for over 30 years. I am writing to urge you to pass SB 2580.

SB 2580 is a vital investment in Hawaii’s creative economy and workforce.

- Protecting Local Jobs: As someone who works in this industry, I have seen how the lull in production affects local families. This bill provides the necessary framework to bring large, long-term productions back to our islands, providing stable, middle-class jobs.
- Strengthening Local Small Businesses: It is not just about actors; the film industry supports caterers, construction workers, technicians, and local vendors. Supporting SB 2580 means supporting local small businesses.
- Remaining Competitive: To keep Hawaii on the map, we need to stay competitive with other production hubs. Modernizing our tax credit to include streaming platforms and raising the cap ensures that we do not lose out on economic opportunities to other states or countries.

This bill represents a move toward diversifying our economy beyond tourism, providing sustainable, high-paying jobs for our community.

I urge the committee to support SB 2580 and invest in the future of Hawai‘i’s film industry.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Joy Kam

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:48:56 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Luis Chacon	Testifying for Niche Models and Talent	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in **strong support of SB 2580**, which modernizes and strengthens Hawai‘i’s Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit.

SB 2580 is a critical step toward keeping Hawai‘i competitive in an increasingly global film and television industry. By raising the base tax credit to **27% and 32%**, adjusting the per-production cap for projects with qualified spending over **\$60 million**, establishing a **\$60 million annual cap**, and extending the sunset date to **January 1, 2037**, this bill provides the stability and incentive structure necessary to attract and retain high-quality productions in our state.

Film and television productions generate significant economic benefits for Hawai‘i. These projects create well-paying local jobs, support small businesses, and inject millions of dollars into our economy through spending on lodging, transportation, construction, catering, and professional services. The benefits extend well beyond the production itself, positively impacting tourism and Hawai‘i’s global visibility.

Many other states and countries now offer film incentives at or above 30%. Without updating our program, Hawai‘i risks losing productions — and the jobs and revenue they bring — to more competitive jurisdictions. SB 2580 ensures that Hawai‘i remains an attractive destination while maintaining reasonable fiscal controls through a defined annual cap.

Just as importantly, a strong and predictable incentive program supports the growth of Hawai‘i’s local workforce. Increased production activity allows residents to build long-term careers in creative and technical fields, reducing the need to leave the state for opportunity.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Legislature to **pass SB 2580** and reaffirm Hawai‘i’s commitment to economic diversification, job creation, and long-term investment in our creative industries.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of this measure

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:01:50 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tyler Young	Testifying for Tyler Young Films, LLC.	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:**Written Testimony in Support of SB2580 – Film Tax Base Credit Increase**

My name is Tyler Young. I am a Creative Producer, Line Producer, and Unit Production Manager based here in Honolulu, Hawaii. In the last 25 years I have produced over 450 different productions for the film & television industry worldwide. As a producer, I am responsible for building and managing budgets, hiring local crew and vendors, and bidding projects to studios, television networks, streamers, and production companies. I am writing in great support of SB2580.

Hawaii's current film tax incentive is relatively good, but not competitive enough to attract larger film and television productions to the state. The current base credits and caps are too limiting, and prevent large scale productions from choosing Hawaii to spend their higher budget dollars. Productions are turning to other locations with more competitive film tax incentives, taking millions of dollars elsewhere, and leaving Hawaii with a weaker economy.

With tighter film production budgets, the business of our industry has become extremely competitive where each individual line item and potential cost savings factors into the larger decision of where in the world to film. If productions choose to film in locations outside of Hawaii, our state will lose millions and millions of dollars in revenue, and will slowly crush our film and television industry. We also risk cultural misrepresentation, with productions depicting Hawaii's stories and characters without local cultural guidance and authenticity.

SB2580 proposes to increase the film tax base credit to 27%/32%, which is a small increase from the current base credits. However, this small increase will make a huge difference in how competitive Hawaii can be in attracting larger film productions to the state.

Passing SB2580 is crucial to supporting a more sustainable film and television production industry in Hawaii. Studios, networks, streamers, and producers like me will be able to hire more local people and vendors, spend more of our budget dollars in the state, and create a more robust career path for our keiki. I urge you to pass SB2580 to encourage more film and television production, and to supercharge our local economies where everyone benefits from a robust film and television industry.

Sincerely,

Tyler Young

Creative Producer

Tyler Young Films LLC.

Honolulu, Hawaii

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:06:52 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Betty Bolton	Testifying for HFA	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Once again I'm compled to write to this legislature to have bill SB2580 approved. Our State and residents need more job opportunities! It's beyond my understanding why the bill did not pass previously. It seems like a win-win. I don't see what, if any, downside or negatives to this bill. might be. It would provide employment to thousands of residents, no major infrasturcture by the state needed, add to our tourism profile around the world and tax revenue that the state doesn't currenlty have. It just seems a no brainer to me. The benefits far out weigh any negatives. Studios want to film here and Hawaii governement pushes them away. Be Akamai and vote for the Hawaii Tax Credits and bring a huge industry back to Hawaii.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 1:49:29 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Iliana Macias	Testifying for Bliss Models and Agency	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Must continue to provide work and casting opportunities for the state.



LATE

**HEARING BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, SENATE CONFERENCE ROOM 229
Tuesday, February 3, 2026 AT 1:00 P.M.**

To The Honorable Senator Lynn DeCoite, Chair
The Honorable Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Economic Development & Tourism

**SUPPORT SB2580 RELATING TO THE MOTION PICTURE, DIGITAL MEDIA, AND
FILM PRODUCTION INCOME TAX CREDIT**

The Maui Chamber of Commerce recognizes the importance of policies that strengthen local industries, create jobs, and foster long-term resilience. We have long been supporters of the film industry and attracting more projects to Hawai'i. SB2580 is particularly relevant to our mission, as it proposes enhancements to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit—an incentive that has proven effective in attracting creative sector investment and supporting local businesses, especially in counties like Maui that continue to face economic challenges.

The bill's proposed increase in the tax credit rate, particularly the higher percentage for counties with smaller populations, aligns with our commitment to supporting regions still recovering from recent economic challenges. By incentivizing productions to invest in less populous counties, SB2580 can help distribute economic activity more equitably across the state, stimulate job creation, and provide opportunities for local talent and suppliers. The inclusion of streaming platform productions further modernizes the credit, ensuring Hawai'i remains competitive in a rapidly evolving industry.

We also recognize the bill's introduction of independent third-party certification as a prudent measure to enhance accountability and transparency. This requirement can help ensure that public resources are used appropriately and that economic benefits are realized as intended. Raising the annual tax credit cap and exempting large-scale productions from the per-production limit may attract higher-budget projects, amplifying both direct and indirect economic impacts.

We appreciate the Legislature's attention to economic diversification and respectfully urge continued support for measures that foster sustainable, broad-based growth.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 1/31/2026 6:21:09 PM

Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Teya Tilley	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support Bill SB2580 because it'll bring movies and TV shows back to the islands bringing an influx of support to local businesses and local people. So many local people have been in the industry their entire lives, bringing their keiki into it because they love what they do. Those people, including myself have been forced to switch careers, leave the islands, or find multiple jobs to support themselves and family. So please, lets help get the industry back to what it was. Mahalo.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 1/31/2026 9:29:22 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keala Kekaulua	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB2580

Relating to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit

TO: Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee

FROM: Keala Kekaulua, Outreach Ambassador

DATE: January 31, 2026

SUBJECT: Bridging the Gap: Keeping Hawai‘i’s Stories and Jobs Home in Hilo

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Keala Kekaulua, and I serve as an Outreach Ambassador in Hilo dedicated to aligning our community with sustainable career opportunities. I am testifying today in strong support of SB2580. Our community faces a critical choice: we can either continue to export our talent and stories, or we can build the infrastructure necessary to let Hawai‘i tell its own stories, right here in Hilo.

The Cost of Inaction: The Chief of War Warning

We need look no further than Jason Momoa’s epic series, Chief of War, to see the direct result of our current geographic and financial disparities.

- **A Lost Opportunity:** Despite being a deeply personal Hawaiian saga co-created by Momoa as an "homage to his people," approximately 80% of the production was filmed in New Zealand rather than Hawai‘i.
- **Economic Flight:** New Zealand’s more competitive tax incentives and lower production costs meant that millions of dollars in wages and hundreds of jobs were diverted away from our local economy.
- **The Talent Drain:** When major productions set in Hawai‘i are forced to film elsewhere for "budgetary reasons," our local actors and crew in Hilo are the first to suffer. They are

left with the immense stress of either funding expensive travel to Honolulu for smaller roles or watching from the sidelines as our stories are filmed on foreign soil.

How SB2580 Corrects the Course

SB2580 is the specific policy tool we need to ensure this doesn't happen again. By offering a 32% tax credit for production costs in counties under 700,000 residents, this bill provides a powerful incentive for creators like Momoa to keep their projects—and our jobs—on the Neighbor Islands.

- Decentralizing the Industry: A 5% "Neighbor Island Bonus" directly offsets the logistical costs that currently drive productions toward the "Honolulu Monopoly".
- Alleviating Workforce Stress: Bringing productions to Hilo removes the financial and emotional strain on local talent who are currently forced to choose between their homes and their careers.
- Empowering Community Vision: This bill aligns with our community's strategic goal to "foster creativity and workforce development," turning Hilo into a hub for "future media" rather than just a backdrop.

Conclusion

It is time to let Hawai‘i tell the stories of Hawai‘i. We must stop forcing our best talent to choose between their roots and their profession. Passing SB2580 will ensure that the next great Hawaiian epic is filmed where it belongs: in our own communities, with our own people.

I urge the committee to pass SB2580. Mahalo for your time and for the opportunity to testify.

Keala Kekaulua, Outreach Ambassador

kealakekaualua@gmail.com

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 2:02:41 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shereen Balles	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou,

My name is Shereen Balles. I am in full SUPPORT of SB2580.

I am an Actress, Writer, Director, Producer, Singer, Musician, Caterer, Cultural Advisor, Props Builder in the film industry. I will do my best to help support our industry in any way my skills are needed.

Raising the annual aggregate cap to \$60 million and excluding high-spend productions (those over \$60 million) from the individual \$17 million cap encourages large-scale projects that provide long-term, stable employment for our local cast and crew to stay in Hawaii. Including "streaming platforms" in the definition of qualified productions reflects the reality of today's media landscape. Film industry professionals are increasingly working on high-budget streaming content, and our tax laws must evolve to capture this market.

Thank you for being considerate for the job security of the many talented film industry professionals here in Hawai'i nei.

Me ke Aloha Pumehana Pau'ole,

Shereen Balles

SAG-AFTRA Member

SAG-AFTRA Legislative Committee Member

International Cultural Arts Network Alumni (ICAN)

Hawai'i Film Alliance Member

TO THE SENATE
KA 'AHA KENEKOA

THE THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2026

COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

Senator Lynn DeCoite, Chair
Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

DATE: Tuesday, February 3, 2026

TIME: 1:00 PM

PLACE: Conference Room 229 & Videoconference
State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

HEARING SB2580

Bill No. **SB2580**

POSITION: STRONG SUPPORT

I support the intent and current language contained within SB 2580. The film industry is one of the strongest mechanisms that improves the overall economic activity, which directly affects the velocity of money (how many times a dollar circulates within the economy) through the local economy.

These tax credits are not without guardrails. SB2580, in its current form, requires each taxpayer claiming the tax credit to submit an independent third-party certification verifying certain information to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism. In prior practice, only an affidavit was needed by a producer or production company promising to adhere to the conditions of the tax credit. This oversight measure contained within the bill will ensure that the tax credits are used properly and give peace of mind to taxpayers who are against tax credits for tax credits' sake.

In addition, SB2580 increases the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit to 27 per cent of qualified production costs in counties with a population of over seven hundred thousand and 32 per cent in counties with a population of seven hundred thousand or less. Furthermore, SB2580 creates a codified definition for "streaming platform". Streaming Platforms are becoming popular, and we should have a policy created on how to address this new sub-industry within the entertainment industry.

In summary, the passage of this measure will help to solidify Hawaii in the global film industry. Therefore, I recommend that SB2580 be passed by this committee. I hope all changes to this bill will be in keeping with the intent. The passage of this bill will increase the standard of living for all workers in Hawaii. Thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony.

Mahalo,

Ken Farm

Chair Emeritus,
Former Chair Neighborhood Board No. 15
Speaking in my personal capacity,

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 6:09:15 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cassie Fillhart	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

We need better tax incentives, we have so much potential here that is wasted! Please help support the Hawaii Film Industry.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:09:42 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John Salanoa	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Aloha Chair DeCoite,

My name is John Salanoa and I stand in support of SB2580.

Mahalo,

John Salanoa

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:23:44 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Heidi Berengue	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

We need other businesses in Hawai'i to have opportunities to grow. Making shows here in Hawai'i will allow this opportunity as well share a piece of Hawai'i with the world. Please do not delay any longer and support film industry in Hawai'i for our children's future. My daughter is in the industry and I would love more opportunities for her future.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:18:30 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lucas Zambrano	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

My name is Lucas Zambrano, and I am a lifelong Hawai‘i resident. As a kid, I always dreamed of working in TV and film, but Hawai‘i was never known as a place where that felt realistic. Shows like *Hawai‘i Five-0* and *Rescue: HI-Surf* changed that and gave me the opportunity to work in the industry without leaving home.

Through film and television, I was able to earn more than I ever had in any other job in Hawai‘i—something that truly matters given our high cost of living. These productions create real, well-paying jobs for local residents and allow creatives and crew members to build sustainable careers here.

When we lose film and TV productions, we lose economic opportunity and pathways for local people to stay in Hawai‘i. I urge you to support policies that protect and strengthen our film industry so local residents can continue to work, create, and thrive at home.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:35:06 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacqueleen Miramontes	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

The Hawai'i film industry has drastically changed from thriving to almost a ghost town in such a short period of time and it's very devastating on so many levels. So much local talent ready for work, from actors, crew, vendors and small businesses, all now effected with little to minimal work. Hawai'i deserves to be thriving and production friendly. Tax burdens in Hawai'i bring many missed opportunities for local talent and businesses to thrive and contribute to a bigger cause, as well as shine a light to a multi-cultural world and beautiful nature that most of the world may not ever know. Unnecessary tax burdens on productions causes a huge ripple effect that I'm sure many do not even consider. It truly is devastating how much opportunity is lost. I stand with supporting local and supporting growth and a thriving island. We go to Kualoa Ranch and see just a snippet of how much work has been filmed here and for productions to go to places like Atlanta, New Zealand, Vegas, etc. just seems disrespectful to the people and the land. We not only need change but rely on it for everyone's successes.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:17:02 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Doreen Dye	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

I believe if we pass this law into legislation we bring jobs and money into our economy.. I have family that has worked in this industry and are now unemployed and need to work to thrive in our economy..

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 4:08:58 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mark Petritz	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

I strongly support the diversity of the film industry

SB-2580

Submitted on: 1/31/2026 5:19:19 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ashley de Coligny	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a Kaneohe resident writing in support of this bill and strengthening Hawaii's film industry.

Mahalo,

Ashley de Coligny

SB-2580

Submitted on: 1/31/2026 5:20:06 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rachel Whitley	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To whom it may concern!!

I have been working in TV and Film for over 20 years here in Hawaii. I 100% back this bill. This bill supports actors, crew members, vendors, and strengthens our economy beyond tourism. We need this bill to pass to keep productions coming here, if we don't pass competitive legislation Hawaii will lose work to New Zealand and other countries where the incentives are much better than our own! Supporting the film industry isn't just supporting its workers, it's supporting the story telling of the Hawaiian people and is important to our cultural representation. Thank you for your time!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 1/31/2026 5:41:08 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aubrey Lee Staley	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Aubrey Lee Staley, and I submit this testimony in strong support of SB 2580.

I am a Hawai‘i-based talent agent, manager, producer, and small business owner. I am the founder of ALA Hawai‘i, representing over 200 local actors, models, and creatives, and a co-founder of the Hawai‘i Film Alliance, a nonprofit organization dedicated to advocacy, education, and workforce development for Hawai‘i’s film and television industry. I am also a Hawai‘i resident raising my family here and building businesses rooted in our local economy. As someone who has worked in New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma and Los Angeles, all previously positive film hubs, I have seen economic value of a thriving film industry. My time in the industry since moving back has also proven the value when giving local/Native Hawaiians a voice, representation, opportunities and space in this field only accumulate and give our people and islands growth to tell our stories.

SB 2580 is critical because it strengthens Hawai‘i’s competitiveness as a film and television production hub while directly supporting local workers, local businesses, and long-term economic stability.

The motion picture and digital media industry in Hawai‘i is not abstract or “Hollywood-only.” It is made up of local crew members, Native Hawaiian and local actors, small vendors, family-run businesses, students, and entrepreneurs who rely on consistent production activity to remain in Hawai‘i. When productions leave due to an uncompetitive incentive structure, it is local people who lose jobs and representation—not studios.

SB 2580 modernizes Hawai‘i’s tax credit in a way that reflects today’s production realities. By increasing the base credit and adjusting caps for large-scale qualified productions, this bill helps ensure Hawai‘i can attract projects that employ hundreds of local workers at a time while still maintaining safeguards and long-term oversight. These productions generate significant downstream economic impact with hotels, restaurants, transportation, construction, post-production, and tourism visibility, benefits that extend well beyond the set.

As someone who works directly with local talent, I see firsthand how these opportunities change lives. Film and television projects provide union-qualifying work, health benefits, pension

contributions, and career-sustaining wages. They also allow Native Hawaiian and local stories to be told by people from this place, rather than exported elsewhere.

Importantly, SB 2580 is about retention, not just attraction. Without a competitive and predictable incentive, Hawai‘i risks losing an entire generation of skilled workers to the mainland. Once that workforce is gone, it is extraordinarily difficult and costly to rebuild. We currently have non-profit groups like Lil‘uokalani Trust offering programs within the film industry to our next generation keiki. How disheartening it would be for them to find their passion within the industry if only to become another displaced Hawaiian.

This bill represents an investment in Hawai‘i’s people, culture, and economy. It supports an industry that brings outside dollars into the state while keeping local talent employed at home. For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB 2580.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony and for your continued support of Hawai‘i’s creative workforce.

Respectfully,

Aubrey Lee Staley

Owner of ALA Hawai‘i a Talent and Model Agency

Founding member of Hawai‘i Film Alliance

Native Hawaiian Hawai‘i-based Talent Agent, Manager, Producer

SB-2580

Submitted on: 1/31/2026 6:15:41 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keahi Kuikahi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB 2580

SB-2580

Submitted on: 1/31/2026 6:19:48 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Raimar Bylaardt II	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The movie business has generated many jobs and millions of dollars in revenue. Production companies are in for profit and will film where they can make the most for their buck. Without tax incentives they will film somewhere else.

Please bring the movie industry back to Hawaii

SB-2580

Submitted on: 1/31/2026 5:08:32 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cameron Prestwich	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Film/tv jobs are my primary source of income. I personally need more work on-island to survive, and I know others feel the same.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 1/31/2026 6:24:05 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leanne Teves	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai and members of the committee(s),
Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB2580. This bill captures what will help to bring Hawaii to a viable space with regards to having productions come to our wonderful state to film. The increase with the base credit to 27% and 32% along with all else this bill captures will help with increasing filming numbers in Hawaii. Over the past few years, we have seen a tremendous decrease of jobs in this film industry as we all know. Many of my friends, including myself have had to make adjustments in all areas of life in general, due to this very real loss of monetary income. I look forward to once again being able to have more options in Hawaii with regards to working in the film industry.

Thank you all for your time in reviewing not only mine but all the other testimonies. Mahalo

SB-2580

Submitted on: 1/31/2026 6:34:19 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Adam Dulin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello my name is Adam Dulin Tavares I was born and raised on O'ahu and I am an actor/performer in tv/film. I SUPPORT SB 2580 raising the film tax credit because it keeps Hawaii a sought out and competitive production hub. This is very important in strengthening the local economy, small businesses, productions, artists, vendors, families and communities that otherwise never get to flourish and thrive to their full potential. Hawai'i's unique gifts go well beyond the realm of Tourism. This is an opportunity to mindfully expand its ability to thrive economically and its cultural representation.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 1/31/2026 6:45:52 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eric Uyeda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB2580, WITH AMENDMENTS

Relating to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I submit this testimony in support of SB2580, with amendments, based on direct experience in Hawai‘i’s film and television industry and the framework outlined in my A Smarter Blueprint for Hawai‘i’s Film Industry.

SB2580 correctly recognizes that Hawai‘i’s current film incentive structure is not delivering consistent jobs, infrastructure growth, or long-term stability. However, raising caps or adjusting percentages alone will not improve return on investment. What matters is how effectively each public dollar is deployed.

Recommended Amendments**1. Performance-Based Incentive (20%–40%)**

Establish a 20% base credit, with productions earning up to an additional 20% only by meeting measurable local investment benchmarks:

- +4% for hiring 80% local crew (or +3% for 70%)
- +4% for using certified Hawai‘i sound stages or post-production facilities
- +4% for hiring Hawai‘i-based key creatives and principal actors

- +4% for spending 70% or more of the budget in-state
- +4% for completing post-production, VFX, or AI work with Hawai‘i vendors

Maximum incentive: 40% — earned, not automatic.

This structure raises the State’s ROI and increases the dollar-for-dollar economic return by tying incentives directly to local wages, vendor spending, and infrastructure use.

2. \$20 Million Per-Production Cap

Adopt a hard \$20 million cap per production to prevent any single project from absorbing a disproportionate share of public funds.

3. Separate \$20 Million Major Film Fund

Instead of increasing the general incentive pool to \$60 million, create a separate \$20 million Major Film Fund for large-budget productions that commit to extended shoots, large local crews, and significant in-state spending.

This allows Hawai‘i to attract major productions without diluting ROI or crowding out mid-sized and local projects.

4. Semiannual Credit Payments

Replace long audit delays with predictable payments every six months, improving cash flow for workers and vendors while preserving fiscal oversight.

5. GE Tax Parity for Local Rental Vendors

Address General Excise Tax pyramiding on locally owned film equipment so local vendors are not structurally disadvantaged, further improving in-state spend efficiency.

Conclusion

These amendments focus the incentive on outcomes, not volume. They increase return on investment, improve dollar-for-dollar impact, protect taxpayers, and build lasting local capacity.

I respectfully urge you to pass SB2580 with these amendments.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 3:36:49 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mallory De Dely	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 1/31/2026 7:19:00 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brittney Kealoha	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Brittney Kealoha, mother to 9 year-old actress Maia Kealoha. Maia has been in the entertainment industry since she was 6 years old. During that time, my family has watched in frustration as productions have gradually moved projects away from Hawai'i.

I'm writing to you today in strong support of SB2580, a bill that aims to boost the tax credits for Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Productions. This bill has the potential to generate economic opportunities and provide crucial financial support for Hawaii's talented and creative workforce.

During our daughter's first feature film in the recent production of Lilo & Stitch, our 'ohana was blessed to build relationships with the remarkable talent present in Hawaii. From the film crew, actors, stunt team, wardrobe, makeup and hair artists, drivers, catering companies, etc., these individuals and their families are facing significant financial challenges due to the decline in work opportunities here in the state.

In the past 3 years we have seen firsthand how major productions have canceled shows and shifted majority of their filming to locations outside of Hawaii, such as Atlanta and New Zealand. It's disheartening to see these opportunities meant for Hawaii residents and Native Hawaiians being stripped away because of the lack of incentives in our state. The stories of the people of Hawaii deserve to be told and made here in our islands.

I strongly encourage you all to approve SB2580. In addition, I encourage you to continue engaging in conversations with leaders in the film industry to explore creative solutions that can give the film industry in Hawaii a fighting chance.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Brittney Kealoha

SB-2580

Submitted on: 1/31/2026 8:00:54 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Renee Hall	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Renee Hall, and I submit this testimony in strong support of SB 2580.

I have worked as a wardrobe stylist in television and film for nearly 20 years, including multiple projects here in Hawai‘i. Film and television production has allowed me to build a career, support my family, and contribute meaningfully to the local creative economy. The work we do on island is not temporary or disposable—it sustains skilled local professionals across departments, from wardrobe and makeup to set construction, transportation, catering, and post-production.

When Hawai‘i had a competitive film incentive, productions came, crews stayed busy, and local talent was hired and trained. Since the incentive weakened, we have felt the loss directly. Productions that want to film here often cannot justify the cost without a competitive tax credit, and as a result, work that should be done in Hawai‘i is now going elsewhere. That loss affects not only creatives, but also small businesses, vendors, and families across the state.

SB 2580 is critical to restoring Hawai‘i’s ability to compete with other production destinations while maintaining accountability and long-term planning through caps and certification requirements. Raising the credit and extending the sunset date provides stability—something productions and local workers need in order to plan, invest, and commit to Hawai‘i.

I love the work I have been able to do on island, and I want to continue building my career here. We miss the incentive, and SB 2580 is an important step toward bringing sustainable film and television jobs back to Hawai‘i.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Renee Hall

Wardrobe Stylist – Television & Film

SB-2580

Submitted on: 1/31/2026 10:02:37 PM

Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ute K Finch	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

With tourism on the down slope, we need this industry back. It was viable. It provided jobs. And pumped money back into the community. The Crews and the Talent want their jobs back. Pass this bill and make it happen! Mahalo

SB-2580

Submitted on: 1/31/2026 11:34:52 PM

Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Julie Scalpone	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha. I am writing in support of SB2580. Hawai'i needs competitive tax incentives in order to keep productions returning to our beautiful islands. When a production comes, it doesn't just employ our local actors and crew, but also helps many local businesses flourish. Beyond just helping local communities, having productions shot here creates a desire for tourists to keep coming back to the islands to visit locations they have seen on the screen. Thank you for supporting the film industry in Hawai'i!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 12:44:03 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nancy Arnstein	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill as a SAG AFTRA film actress in Hawaii

SB-2580

Submitted on: 1/31/2026 5:21:18 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brian Wallace	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Brian Patrick Wallace. I am a Hawai‘i-based film and television professional with over 17 years of experience working in this industry, a Vice President of IATSE Local 665, and a leader with the Hawai‘i Film Alliance.

I am writing in strong support of SB 2580, which modernizes Hawai‘i’s film tax credit by raising the base credit to 27% on O‘ahu and 32% on the Neighbor Islands, increasing the annual cap to \$60 million, and adjusting the per-production cap for large-scale projects.

Hawai‘i’s film industry has historically been a powerful economic engine for the state, creating thousands of local jobs and driving spending across hotels, restaurants, rental houses, construction, transportation, and small businesses. However, in recent years, Hawai‘i has lost work to competing jurisdictions that offer clearer, more competitive, and more predictable incentive structures.

SB 2580 directly addresses this challenge. By increasing the base credit and annual cap, this bill restores Hawai‘i’s competitiveness while still maintaining fiscal guardrails. Importantly, it encourages larger productions to stay and spend more in-state while ensuring smaller productions can continue to access the program. This balance is critical for sustaining consistent employment for local crews and vendors.

From the workforce perspective, this bill is not about giveaways — it is about stability. Film workers rely on steady production cycles to remain employed in Hawai‘i rather than being forced

to leave the state for work. When productions choose Hawai‘i, local residents are hired, local businesses benefit, and tax revenue circulates back into our communities.

The Hawai‘i Film Alliance has identified SB 2580 as one of the key bills needed this session to strengthen and retain our local film industry . Passing this bill sends a clear message that Hawai‘i values its local workforce and is serious about keeping film and television production here at home.

I respectfully urge you to pass SB 2580 and support policies that protect local jobs, strengthen our economy, and ensure Hawai‘i remains a competitive and desirable place to produce film and television.

Mahalo for your time, consideration, and continued support of Hawai‘i’s working families.

Respectfully,

Brian Patrick Wallace

Vice President, IATSE Local 665

Hawai‘i Film Alliance

Film & Television Professional

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 1:09:26 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pualalea Slover	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha 'o Pualalea ko'u inoa. He kanaka hana keaka au.

I am an actor and storyteller. It's something I've always wanted to do since keiki days. It would help a lot if those kinds of opportunities are here in the first place. We deserve to have our talented Kānaka both in front and behind the camera employed and showcased without having to go away for this kine work. So, 'ae, I support this bill and support film in Hawai'i.

Mahalo.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 1:48:10 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ashlee Valeros	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support our film industry and the thousands of local trade workers who have been out of jobs for a full year by incentivizing productions to return to Hawai'i.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 7:22:46 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christopher Kahunahana	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Kakou,

I support this bill.

As an independent Kanaka filmmaker any and all funding support helps make the prospect of film production more viable here.

Our stories have value and should be told and made here in Hawaii. If the State tax credits aren't competitive to other film production states and nations, projects like WAIKIKI and my new film HOTEL STREET will be forced to shoot elsewhere. At a great loss of revenue and IP for Hawaii.

Please pass SB2580 to keep Hawaii stories being told by Hawaii people.

Mahalo,

Christopher Kahunahana

Writer, Director, Producer

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 8:22:05 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Soraya-Elena Perez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

- - Increases the tax credit cap to \$60 million annually.
 - Excludes high-spend productions (over \$60M) from the individual cap—encouraging major studio projects.
 - Includes "streaming platforms"—reflecting today's market reality.
 - Extends the sunset date to 2038—providing necessary long-term predictability.
- Why it Matters: This bill is a direct investment in stable, middle-class jobs for Hawaii's creative workforce.

Testimony in Strong Support of SB 2580

Relating to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committees on Economic Development & Technology and Ways and Means,

My name is Marie Hathaway, and I submit this testimony in strong support of SB 2580, relating to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit.

I am a Hawai‘i-based creative professional, actor, producer, and author as well as a former City and County Paramedic Supervisor. Today, my work spans film, television, live events, and community-based storytelling. I am also a parent who raised a local child here in Hawai‘i, and I care deeply about whether creative professionals can realistically build stable, middle-class lives in this state.

SB 2580 is critical because it recognizes the current realities of the film and digital media industry and responds with thoughtful, accountable, and future-focused policy.

This measure increases the tax credit to 27 percent of qualified production costs in counties with populations over 700,000 and 32 percent in counties with populations of 700,000 or less, ensuring statewide competitiveness while supporting productions across all islands. It raises the annual statewide cap to \$60 million, excludes productions that spend \$60 million or more from the per-production cap, and extends the sunset date to January 1, 2038—providing the long-term predictability that studios and investors require to commit to Hawai‘i.

Importantly, SB 2580 also defines and includes streaming platforms within the definition of qualified production. Streaming is no longer an emerging sector—it is the dominant model for film and television production. If Hawai‘i does not explicitly include streaming projects, we will continue to lose work to other states and regions that have already adapted.

The bill’s requirement for independent third-party certification submitted to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism adds an important layer of transparency and accountability. This ensures that public investment is verified, responsible, and aligned with the Legislature’s intent.

From the ground level, I can say this clearly: our film and digital media industry is a workforce, not a luxury. It supports electricians, drivers, medics, carpenters, caterers, editors, accountants, costume designers, small vendors, and countless other local professionals. These are skilled, middle-class jobs that allow people to stay in Hawai‘i, raise families, and contribute to our local economy.

Without long-term certainty, we see talent leave—not because they want to, but because they have no choice. SB 2580 directly addresses that instability. It allows Hawai‘i to compete fairly, attract larger and longer-term productions, and provide consistent employment for local crews rather than short bursts of work followed by long gaps.

Just as importantly, it helps ensure that Hawai'i stories can be told by people who live here, respect this place, and are invested in its future.

For these reasons, I strongly urge your support of SB 2580.

Mahalo for your time, your leadership, and your commitment to Hawai'i's working families.

Respectfully submitted,
Marie Hathaway

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 8:37:28 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bradley Margol	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill, because it will bring jobs and boost our state economy.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 8:41:05 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
james koons	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

On behalf of the IATSE, sagaftra actors like myself and countless civilians in the production business as well as Hawaii taxpayers, please pass this bill to protect Hawaii's Film Industry.

Thank You

James Koons

Hawaii SB 2580

Building Hawai'i's Film, Television, and Creative Industry

Kulani Watson – Hawai'i-Based Writer

My name is **Kulani Watson**, and I am a Hawai'i-based writer and creative storyteller.

Before I begin, I would like to invite you to take a brief moment and think of one of your favorite films or television shows set here in Hawai'i. Just one. I will bring this up later.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share my testimony in strong support of bills dedicated to strengthening and investing in our film, television, and broader creative industry here in Hawai'i.

For many people around the globe, their first introduction to Hawai'i didn't come from stepping off a plane. It came from a screen. When many of us think of Hawai'i on screen, a flood of iconic images and stories come to mind. From classics like "**Blue Hawaii**" and "**Diamond Head**," to modern favorites like "**Forgetting Sarah Marshall**," "**50 First Dates**," "**Blue Crush**," "**Jurassic Park**," "**Godzilla**," "**Tropic Thunder**," and television phenomenons like "**Lost**," "**Hawaii Five-0**," "**Magnum P.I.**," Hawai'i has long been a backdrop for stories that reached the entire world.

Now let me ask, what film or television show you were thinking of? Chances are, someone from our community had a hand in bringing that story to life. A local writer, a camera operator, a production assistant, a costume designer, a location scout, a driver, a small-business owner providing meals, or a resident opening their space for filming. Behind every scene you remember, every line you quote, and every landscape shot that stayed with you, there were real people from these islands contributing their talent, time, and heart to make it possible.

I stand here as one of many people in our community trying to become a professional storyteller for Hawai'i, not just for entertainment, but for representation, culture, and identity. I have written multiple short films and feature-length screenplays that aim to show Hawai'i in a fuller, more authentic light. Stories that go beyond the surface level images often associated with our islands. Stories that reflect our humor, our struggles, our families, our modern realities, and the depth of our culture. Stories that show the world there is far more to Hawai'i than hula skirts, luaus, and surfers.

But I want to be honest about the journey. Writing and creating in general can be an incredibly lonely ordeal. You sit at your computer staring at a blinking cursor for thirty minutes, sometimes an hour, mentally drained and asking yourself: Is this funny? Is this relatable? Will anyone understand this? Will an audience in Hawai'i connect with it? Will an audience across the world? And then there is the larger question that quietly lingers in the back of your mind, the one that makes you pause and wonder why you're even writing at all:

If I finally get the opportunity to pitch this story to a major studio or streaming platform, and they see that it's based in Hawai'i... will their first thought be to pass on it because our incentives and tax credits can't compete?

That question is not rooted in ego. It's rooted in reality. I fully understand that the global film industry does not revolve around me or any single individual. But this issue does revolve around **us**, the writers, directors, crew members, designers, actors, editors, technicians, and countless unseen professionals who make productions possible. It revolves around local businesses that provide catering, transportation, lodging, construction materials, and services. It revolves around our keiki who dream of creative careers but feel they must leave home to pursue them. It revolves around the economic ripple effect that a thriving creative industry brings to our communities.

Investing in Hawai'i's film and television infrastructure is not simply about entertainment. It is about **economic development, workforce opportunity, cultural preservation, and global visibility**. Stronger support and competitive incentives allow productions to choose Hawai'i not only for its beauty, but for its viability. When we build this industry locally, we are not only inviting outside productions in, we are empowering our own residents to create from within.

It is my firm belief that **this is Hawai'i's time to tell its own stories**. We have the landscapes. We have the talent. We have the culture. What we need is the structural support that allows those elements to meet opportunity. When we invest in creative industries, we invest in voices that might otherwise go unheard. We invest in jobs that keep families together instead of forcing them to relocate. We invest in a future where Hawai'i is not only a filming location, but a **storytelling powerhouse**.

Allow us the opportunity to be storytellers, and we will show you what we can do, not only for the film industry, but for tourism, for small businesses, for cultural education, and for the pride of our people. The stories born here have the power to travel the world, just as the world has long traveled here through stories.

Mahalo for your time, your consideration, and your commitment to the creative future of Hawai'i.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 9:29:55 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ashley Chewning	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To whom it may concern:

As a person who is connected to the Hawaii Film Industry as both talent and crew, I support SB 2580 for the State of Hawaii Film Industry and feel this will benefit everyone associated with the industry as well as the State of Hawaii.

Mahalo,

Ashley Chewning

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 9:31:52 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lachlan Ta'imua Hannemann	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha my name is Lachlan Ta'imua Hannemann, I go by Ta'imua. I am an actor who recently moved back from studying at drama school in LA. I was raised here in Kaimuki and went to Saint Louis, played basketball my whole life until I was bed ridden from a career changing injury. I found social media during those times which also happened to be during Covid. I was graciously blessed with a manager who saw a vision, my vision, a vision that was greater than me, a vision to represent my people, my roots, everyone that came before me and everyone coming after me. I then moved to LA in 2019 where my manager recommended to take this London based drama school in the heart of Hollywood. I then studied there for 3 and half years and have been working in LA for the last 2. I came back home because my spirit was longing for stillness, family, nature, and home. This is where my peace is. Since being back, I have been welcomed with open arms in this film community. Angie Laprete introduced me to everyone here, god bless her, I am so grateful for what she has done for this industry here. ICAN which I'm sure you are familiar with, has so much potential and that is the future of the next generation of creatives. No longer needing to go elsewhere to find great training, but a conservatory where we are all gathered under one roof. Moving back has also made me realize how far behind we are as a state. My cousins and uncles who were long time grip guys had to find other careers because of the lack of production being withheld from filming here the past few years. In the same vein of gardening students/actors/artists/talent here the same goes with keeping projects here and going elsewhere because the backdrop is cheaper to film. Everyone is fed and no one has to leave there family or start a new life away from HOME. I am very excited for our future here and even more excited that I'm back to be apart of the shift.

Aloha,

T

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 9:35:15 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Peter Wu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I wish Hawai'i was more competitive in the local film scene, I've worked on so much independent great films but all they do is sit at film festivals and that's it, surely they get more eyes on the creators but those eyes are only local, which can only do so much as to make another film that just lays there.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 10:08:41 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
colleen chambers	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 10:23:17 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
La Fa'amausili-Siliato	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is La Faamausili-Siliato, and I am a local Hawai‘i resident, creative worker, and co-owner of a food truck that has been hired multiple times by film and television productions in our state. I am submitting testimony in strong support of SB 2580.

The motion picture and digital media industry has a real and measurable impact on my livelihood and the livelihoods of many people I work alongside. When productions come to Hawai‘i, they do not just hire actors and crew, they rely heavily on local small businesses for catering, transportation, equipment, lodging, and services. My food truck has directly benefited from these opportunities, allowing us to employ people, purchase local supplies, and reinvest money back into our community.

SB 2580 helps ensure Hawai‘i remains competitive with other states and countries that are aggressively attracting productions through strong incentive programs. Without a competitive tax credit, Hawai‘i risks losing projects and when projects leave, so do jobs, contracts, and income for local workers and small businesses like mine.

This bill also supports long-term industry stability. When productions return consistently, it creates sustainable career pathways for local residents, encourages training and skill-building, and strengthens the overall creative and economic ecosystem in Hawai‘i. The proposed updates in SB 2580 help balance accountability while continuing to attract projects that bring meaningful economic activity to our islands.

As someone who has personally experienced the positive ripple effects of film production, not just as a creative, but as a business owner I urge you to pass SB 2580 and continue investing in an industry that supports local workers, families, and small businesses.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

La Faamausili-Siliato

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 10:32:00 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alison Week	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Alison Week, and I am an independent producer and filmmaker working in Hawai‘i. I am writing in strong support of **SB 2580** and **SB 2796**, two measures that meaningfully strengthen Hawai‘i’s film and television industry and support the local workforce that sustains it.

I know firsthand how challenging it is to produce and distribute an independent feature in Hawai‘i. While our islands offer extraordinary creative and cultural value, the financial realities of production here remain difficult—particularly for local producers committed to hiring Hawai‘i-based cast and crew and building long-term careers in this state.

SB 2580 takes an important step forward by expanding the film tax credit, modernizing it to include streaming platforms, and extending the sunset date to 2038. These changes provide the predictability and scale needed to attract larger, longer-term productions while helping stabilize year-round employment for Hawai‘i’s creative workforce. Increasing the annual cap and encouraging high-spend productions is a direct investment in middle-class jobs and industry sustainability.

SB 2796 addresses a critical cost barrier by reducing the General Excise Tax burden on film production, particularly as it relates to local wages, benefits, and taxes. By exempting these disbursements and applying a lower GET rate, this bill makes it more financially viable for productions to hire local talent—protecting Hawai‘i jobs and ensuring that economic benefits remain in our communities.

We have more work to do to build a truly resilient film industry in Hawai‘i, but these measures move us decisively in the right direction. I respectfully urge you to support SB 2580 and SB 2796.

Mahalo for your consideration and your continued support of Hawai‘i’s creative economy.

Sincerely,
Alison Week
Independent Producer & Filmmaker

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 10:32:03 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ANDREA TORRES	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As an artist, performer and educator, I work closely with emerging talent- whatch them grow into high skilled, disciplined and creative professionals. I also witness the moment they realize they must leave Hawai'i to have a future in their field.

This is not because they lack talent. Hawai'i has extraordinary performers, technicians, storytellers and creatives- the issue is OPORTUNITY.

When film and television productions are active here, we are given oportunities to turn passion into viable work and imagine a future here at home. These experiences are transformative, besides it allows our creative force to stay rooted in the community, support our families, and contribute to our economy.

If we want a future where our creative voices thrive, we must invest in the infrastructure that makes that possible.

I respectfully urge you pass this bill. Mahalo.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 10:43:59 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dezmond Gilla	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello,

I, Dezmond Gilla, support this bill in order to provide more sustainable jobs here in Hawaii. I have worked in the film industry for 20+ years. In that time I have seen local workers rise to key positions on productions and within the last decade have seen even more spread and advancement in skills and opportunities for native born individuals. I, myself have gained valuable knowledge, skills, and connections from these big-budget productions which have allowed me to create locally made and sourced film projects. On top of this, when I was working steadily on one of the network shows filming here, I was finally able to qualify for health insurance. Since that production has ended, I have become ineligible for health coverage. The financial and benefits loss has been disastrous not only for me, but for my fellow film industry professionals and their families. Many of them have been scrambling for work outside the industry in the already shrinking job market.

Hawaii's top industry is tourism. This is supported by the film industry, promoting Hawaii as a tourist destination. With the success of many films and series that highlight Hawaii, it can only benefit our state to keep as many productions here as possible. The one industry helps build the other, which trickles down to all other local businesses. Restaurants, shopping, hotels... There is no limit to the benefit we all will reap. Let's continue to build long-term, sustainable economic prosperity for all Hawaii local citizens. Bring back our local film industry!

Thank You,

Dezmond Gilla

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 10:44:14 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kapena Liu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Sean Liu, and I am an independent filmmaker working in Hawaii. I am writing in strong support of SB 2580 and SB 2796, two measures that meaningfully strengthen Hawaii's film and television industry and support the local workforce that sustains it.

I know firsthand how challenging it is to produce and distribute an independent feature in Hawaii. While our islands offer extraordinary creative and cultural value, the financial realities of production here remain difficult—particularly for local producers committed to hiring Hawaii-based cast and crew and building long-term careers in these islands.

SB 2580 takes an important step forward by expanding the film tax credit, modernizing it to include streaming platforms, and extending the sunset date to 2038. These changes provide the predictability and scale needed to attract larger, longer-term productions while helping stabilize year-round employment for Hawaii's creative workforce. Increasing the annual cap and encouraging high-spend productions is a direct investment in middle-class jobs and long-term industry sustainability.

SB 2796 addresses a critical cost barrier by reducing the General Excise Tax burden on film production, particularly as it relates to local wages, benefits, and taxes. By exempting these disbursements and applying a lower GET rate, this bill makes it more financially viable for productions to hire local talent—protecting Hawaii jobs and ensuring that economic benefits remain in our local communities.

There is more work to be done to build a truly resilient film industry in Hawaii, but these measures move us decisively in the right direction. I respectfully urge you to support SB 2580 and SB 2796.

Mahalo for your consideration and your continued support of Hawaii's creative economy.

Ke aloha no,
Sean Liu

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 11:04:15 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carlynn M Wolfe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Our State gained so much visibility with Chief of War but lost out on the economic benefits since filming was in New Zealand. Let's boost our wonderful Film Industry.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 11:05:38 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dayva Escobar	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As an actor who is proudly a part of Hawaii's film industry and an observer who, like the rest of the nation, has found great enjoyment in the productions that do come out of Hawaii, I have seen first hand the talent, drive, and impact making local film jobs accessible for Hawaii based professionals has had. The film industry is a gold mine for sustainable economy in Hawai'i and would greatly impact not only the tourism industry, but also direct forward a path where we no longer need to rely on tourism for a booming economy. It provides income for Hawaii based professionals so that they can stay in Hawai'i, as an asset to our state, rather than having to transition to another state to make a living. I believe our community of creatives are speaking out loudly, and as a state dedicated to our community, it is imperative we listen. When we are in times of crisis, we turn to art. At the end of our work day, we turn on the television, we listen to music, we absorb media. It is time we take the arts seriously.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 11:07:37 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa C Gotschall	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Good afternoon,

I would like to comment on the Bill 2580, I truly believe this needs to happen, because Hawaii needs more productions in this amazing state. But it's more than a state, it's a way of life for all who live, visit and keep coming back. The beauty is compared to heaven on earth and the people are just as beautiful. I'm from Ohio, born and raised, but when I was 3 months old my mother flew me and herself to Oahu in 1970. She was only 18 years old, just having me, my father was in Vietnam, a marine, not knowing when or if she would ever see him again. She flew us both from Akron/Canton airport to Hawaii. There my father saw me for the first time. The pictures I saw growing up from that time has always been there imprinted in my heart and mind. It's always had a special place in my heart. I have yet to return, but I will. That is why this must pass, so the local people, the film industry, will continue to live in the same place they have always known as home. Bringing extras from the mainland to do their jobs is just wrong. Please let them keep their jobs and home. Keep Hawaii the way it was intended for its own to keep their jobs. I just hope that productions start coming back to Hawaii soon and this will help the industry back and prosper again.

Thank you.

Lisa C Gotschall

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 11:30:03 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Taiana Tully	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Taiana Tully, and I respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of SB 2580, which seeks to strengthen and extend Hawai‘i’s film and television tax credit.

I am a local Hawai‘i based actor working professionally in film, television, and live entertainment. Film and television work has allowed me and many others like me to remain in Hawai‘i while pursuing sustainable creative careers. Without a competitive and reliable tax credit, productions leave the state, and so do jobs, income, and opportunities for local residents.

Film and television productions do far more than create jobs for actors. They employ local crew members, technicians, drivers, caterers, carpenters, costume makers, and countless small businesses. These are skilled, well paying jobs that help residents afford to live in Hawai‘i and build long term careers without having to relocate to the mainland.

As someone who has worked on both local and mainland productions, I have seen firsthand how incentives directly influence where projects choose to film. When Hawai‘i is competitive, productions come here and invest in our people. When incentives are uncertain or less attractive, those same productions simply go elsewhere. That loss is felt immediately by local workers.

Supporting SB 2580 is about keeping Hawai‘i talent in Hawai‘i. It is about honoring the workforce that already exists here and ensuring that future generations can see film and television as a viable career path at home.

Hawai‘i’s landscapes, culture, and people are world class. With the right support, our film industry can continue to grow responsibly while providing stable employment and economic benefits across the state.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share my perspective, and thank you for your consideration and support of SB 2580.

Respectfully,

Taiana Tully

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 11:47:16 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sally "Kalei" Davis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am Sally "Kalei" Davis. I have worked in the Hawai'i Film business since the 1980's. This is the worst I have ever seen it. Last year I heard a legislator say, "Hollywood needs to pay their share of taxes". If that is true, the state 0% of %. Producers chase tax incentives. We need to up these amp and the tax caps to even have a chance competing against other states, let alone other countries!

Mahalo,

Sally "Kalei" Davis

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 11:59:33 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaliko Fase	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I choose to support sb 2580. It'll bring more film production to the real Hawaii. And it will bring more jobs and opportunities to the real citizens of Hawaii. And I am for that support.

mahalo

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 12:09:29 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ali Wasdovich	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Ali Wasdovich, and I am a resident of Maui. I began working in the film industry in Kentucky at the age of 13 and have continued my work in Hawaii since 2021.

The film industry in Hawaii has not only shaped my career path, but also the way I approach my work and community. Through this industry, I have learned professionalism, patience, collaboration, and resilience. While the work is demanding, it has provided meaningful opportunities for growth, skill development, and long-term career building.

I am now preparing to attend law school with the intention of working in and supporting the film industry. For the industry to continue offering stable employment, professional training, and career mobility to local workers, it must be built on a strong and reliable foundation.

I support **SB 2580** because competitive tax incentives are essential to sustaining Hawaii's film industry. This bill helps attract productions that support local artists, small businesses, and long-term careers, while strengthening Hawaii's creative economy.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of this measure.

Respectfully submitted,
Ali Wasdovich
Maui, Hawaii

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 12:29:18 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Fairai Richmond	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Fairai Richmond and I am a native Hawaiian Filmmaker here in Hawaii! My family has been in the film industry for over 75 years. My entire family works in the film industry. That's the only thing that we do! I provide for my family (My two small children and my wife) With the money that I make as a Filmmaker, Writer, Director producer, Stuntman, Location manager etc. I am a homeowner and taxpayer in this state of Hawaii. I used to live in Los Angeles, where I saw the decline of the film industry affect every single business, including retail, restaurants, tourism etc. it has impacted the State of California so much that thousands if not hundreds of thousands of taxpayers have left that state entirely. I was a part of the TV show Chief Of War and the movie wrecking crew Which most of was shot in New Zealand. That is hundreds of billions of dollars that could've been spent in Hawaii. Chief Of War was the story of Hawaii and we lost it. This is a travesty. Movies and television don't just stimulate the economy, but they stimulate the culture. Entertainment is America's number one export. We are quickly losing it to other countries because our tax incentives are not competitive enough. We need your help so that we can keep this thriving industry in our state! A movie like Lilo and stitch will bring hundreds of millions of dollars if not billions to this state. Please help us! Please help Hawaii!

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

SB2580 demonstrates a clear ability to strengthens Hawai'i's film production tax credit by improving competitiveness and fiscal accountability.

SB2580 updates credit rates to reflect real production costs statewide, with higher incentives for neighbor island counties, as well as exempts large productions from the existing cap positions - thereby attracting high-value projects that generate substantial local spending and workforce opportunities.

Hawaiian opportunity and representation in media are absolutely crucial, especially when telling Hawai'i's stories. We must realize the potential of our media and talent workforce by supporting legislative action such as SB2580.

This measure addresses economic growth and responsible oversight. I strongly urge the Committee to pass SB2580.

Mahalo nui for considering such important steps to furthering Hawai'i's economy, opportunities, and talents.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 12:50:18 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Burdick	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 1:05:35 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Scarlino	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 1:06:56 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kevin Yamada	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Supporting this bill would greatly help projects to be filmed in Hawaii.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 1:10:45 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Travis Asaeli	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I submit testimony in strong support of SB 2580, which updates and strengthens Hawai‘i’s Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit.

SB 2580 is an important modernization of Hawai‘i’s film and digital media incentive program. The bill improves Hawai‘i’s competitiveness by updating credit percentages, recognizing streaming platforms as qualified productions, increasing the annual credit cap, and extending the program’s sunset date to provide long-term stability. These updates reflect the realities of today’s production industry and help ensure Hawai‘i remains a viable and attractive location for film and digital media projects.

Equally important, SB 2580 strengthens accountability by requiring third-party certification of qualified production costs. This added oversight helps protect taxpayers while ensuring that credits are tied to verified in-state spending that supports local jobs, vendors, and small businesses across the islands.

Film and digital media productions create meaningful economic activity beyond the screen—supporting local employment, hospitality, transportation, construction, post-production, and creative professionals. By providing certainty and competitiveness, SB 2580 encourages repeat productions and sustained investment in Hawai‘i’s creative economy.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to pass SB 2580.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Respectfully,

Travis Asaeli

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 2:15:39 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ivana Skelin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support the passage of bill SB 2580 to increase the number of film and tv productions in the State of Hawai'i. Hawai'i is unlike any other state in the US, it glows and radiates with stunning beautiful landscapes, excellent weather, and an important rich history that is a testament to the legacy of the Hawai'ian people's resilience and strength. In addition, the film community is extremely talented hardworking and supportive, making it an enticing opportunity for productions from around the world.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 2:16:44 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Julianne Chen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 2:22:14 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daniel Hamilton-Lowe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I write in full support of SB2580, as well as SB 3088 and companion bill HB 2269. Thank you, Senators, for listening to our concerns and for addressing specific issues related to Hawai'i film production.

I am a member of the Directors Guild of America and was the unit production manager on Doogie Kamealoha, MD and Red One, and production supervisor on Moana. Currently, I am the unit production manager on Protecting Jared, a Netflix film that will begin shooting later this month.

Hawai'i's film tax incentive has been a huge success in the past, but has fallen behind in the past two years. Most other states with thriving film production have incentives above 30%. My community is now suffering because in 2025, there was nearly zero production work on the Islands.

These bill help address four major concerns for film workers: **increasing the overall percentages, allowing larger projects to have a larger per-production cap, increasing the over all cap, and increasing the sunset date.**

Increasing the base rate to 27%/32% is the single best move we can make to bring mainland production spending into our economy. The studios have departments dedicated to judging incentives against one another. Hawai'i is often overlooked from the start because of its current 22% base rate. This increase will help all productions, but will mostly help smaller local production or shorter jobs coming from the mainland that do reach the production cap.

Allowing productions that spend more than 60 million to exceed the per-production cap is exactly what is needed to bring larger and long-term productions. Long-term television series and big-budget studio features will be able to shoot exclusively in Hawai'i rather than the current standard - where shows shoot exteriors for a couple of weeks, then shoot another location that passes for Hawai'i.

Increasing the overall cap is a commitment to finding success in this plan. The current \$50 million cap has not increased in several years. Raising it to \$60 million is a modest increase in line with inflation since the last increase. These bills are not about giving a handout to corporate studios; they enable the state and production companies to work as investment partners, adding to the local economy.

Extending the sunset date on the tax incentive is a strong message to producers and studios that Hawai'i is a committed investment partner. Television series have been the true stimulus in building the film community on Island. Television series producers need to know that they can create multi-year productions before committing to shoot in Hawai'i.

These bills will help bring mainland production money to the islands and distribute it to local vendors and workers; that's why they have my support. If enacted in conjunction with the other bills focused on improving the terms of our film tax incentives, they send a strong message that Hawai'i is a film-friendly state.

Thank you, Senators, for your stewardship and partnership.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 2:23:48 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christine deLaAwesome	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Christine deLaAwesome. I'm a Hawai'i-based film and live-event worker, and I'm here in strong support of these bills to restore and strengthen Hawai'i's film tax incentives.

Film and television was recently a billion-dollar industry in this state. Since the tax rate was reduced, that work has largely disappeared—not because Hawai'i lost its beauty or its talent, but because productions follow incentives. When the work leaves, so do the jobs.

These are not abstract numbers. This affects local crew, union members, small vendors, hotels, restaurants, and families who rely on consistent work. When productions leave Hawai'i, our skilled workforce is forced to leave too—or leave the industry entirely.

Restoring a competitive tax rate brings productions back, keeps local people employed, and returns far more to the state than it costs.

Please pass these bills and invest in Hawai'i workers and Hawai'i's economy.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 2:24:44 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jesse Liu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 2:31:12 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kalani Edwards	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha to whom it may concern,

The film industry has been my only means of income most of my life. I've honed my craft to create art and generate revenue to support and uplift the Hawaiian people also directly benefitting the state of Hawai'i.

Behind tourism and gross domestic export, film is perpetually in the top five money earning industries in our entire state. And given the right support and framework, there is absolutely no reason that we can't build upon that and make the industry even higher on that list. Which in my true belief, would only aid the state and its people further self reliance and the ability to bring better and better products and project to our shores. Making us our own unique, culturally and morally rooted and superior successor to Hollywood. Thank you for your time and kuleana on this matter.

-Kalani Edwards

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 2:32:19 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bryan McCormick	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Its hard to watch Hawaiis Film industry evaporated into nothing while New Zealand pretends to be Hawaii, taking our jobs and our economy with it. Tourists arent the only thing that matters in Hawaii and lately they are coming less and less because its so expensive. Our economy in a monoculture and its failing fast because people cant afford to live here without jobs and industry to sustain our existence, its pretty simple we need to continue Hawaii's legacy of film and television because no one does it better than locals and Hawaii has by far the greatest potential than any other location in the world!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 2:34:59 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ashley Heathcock	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Ashley Heathcock and I am a costume designer. I have been working in Hawaii's film and television industry for 6 years

I am testifying in strong support of SB2580

As someone who directly benefits from and works within this industry, I have witnessed how crucial film productions are to our local economy. This measure is essential for retaining local talent, supporting small businesses, keeping production in Hawaii.

Key Reasons for Support:

- Economic Impact: Our production recently hired 200 local residents and utilized over 1000 local vendors retail stores keeping money within the community.
- Job Security: Without competitive tax incentives, productions will take their work to other states or countries.
- Workforce Development: This industry provides high-wage, specialized jobs for our youth, encouraging them to stay in Hawaii rather than moving to the mainland.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 2:36:01 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Roland N Turner	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The film industry in Hawaii is super important. Everyone benefits in some way or another by that part of the economy. Please consider helping this industry thrive!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 2:40:23 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shiloh Swanson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 2:43:36 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Natalie Schroeder	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawai'i and its people really need this!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 2:46:44 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bingham Moananu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support local businesses and people and keep Hawaii more authentic

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 2:48:47 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Virginia L. Baker	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As someone who was born and raised in the state of Hawaii on the big island in a small town plantation community I find it really sad that Hawaii continues to be represented by New Zealand.

We finally have the opportunity of big names starring in films with a deep personal interest in bringing the real Hawaii to the world.

I for one, would like to have Hawaii represented by the people of Hawaii and having full cooperation of the government of Hawaii.

Thank you,

Virginia L. Baker

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 2:51:09 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melissa Bojorquez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We need the FILM INDUSTRY to continue to bring in millions of dollars to our STATE. We can't depend on government revenue, healthcare, military and tourism only. We will lose jobs and our children to the mainland! ACT NOW. Bring back FILM INDUSTRY to our STATE.

Melissa Celebrado Bojorquez

Concerned Hawaii Resident and Mother of children who rely on FILM Industry for their livelihood.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:04:34 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keoni Shizuma	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

While I am full in support of increasing the tax credit for films and adjusting needed definition changes, I do think one thing that should be considered in this bill is the addition of tiered benefits, which should be created to increase benefit for productions that utilize long-term residents (graduates of local high schools) and/or Native Hawaiians, as well as productions that focus on portraying Native Hawaiian culture or the history of Hawaii accurately. Amending this bill to increase the beneficial impact to both Native Hawaiians as well as our long-time local residents would have a greater positive impact for Hawaii.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Keoni Shizuma

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 3:03:11 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jody L Eggleston	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The film industry is a great way that our state can continue diversification so the dependency solely on tourism isn't all we have. It provides wonderful jobs for so many. If this was a stronger part of our culture when I was growing up I would have studied film.

Mahalo

WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB2580
Relating to Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kobe Benn, and I respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of SB2580.

I am a creative professional working in film, digital media, and production, and I currently live and work in Hawai'i. The motion picture and digital media industry has been a critical pathway for local residents—especially creatives, technicians, and small businesses—to build sustainable careers while contributing directly to Hawai'i's economy.

The film and digital media tax credit has proven to be one of the most effective tools Hawai'i has to create local jobs, support small businesses such as equipment rentals, hotels, restaurants, transportation, and post-production services, and attract outside investment while keeping spending local.

Film and digital productions do not only benefit large studios—they directly impact everyday workers such as production assistants, drivers, security staff, caterers, editors, and location managers. These productions inject millions of dollars into local communities and help diversify Hawai'i's economy beyond tourism alone.

As someone actively involved in creative work, I can say firsthand that maintaining and strengthening this tax credit is essential if Hawai'i wants to remain competitive with other states and countries that are aggressively courting productions. Without a strong incentive, productions will simply go elsewhere—taking jobs, training opportunities, and revenue with them.

SB2580 represents an investment in Hawai'i's people, culture, and future workforce. It helps ensure that local residents can tell Hawai'i's stories, build long-term careers, and keep creative talent rooted in the islands.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to pass SB2580 and continue supporting Hawai'i's film and digital media industry.

Mahalo for your time, consideration, and commitment to Hawai'i's creative economy.

Respectfully submitted,
Kobe Benn
Hawai'i Resident & Creative Professional

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 3:15:56 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
TERRIE-LYN LAU	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

: Members of the Hawaii State Legislature

From: Terrie-Lyn Lau

Date: January 31, 2026

Subject: Support for SB2580 – Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit

I am writing to express support for SB2580, which many in the community view as an important measure to strengthen Hawaii's motion picture, digital media, and film production industry. Supporters believe that enhancing and updating the income tax credit will help Hawaii remain competitive with other states that offer strong production incentives.

Advocates note that SB2580 would help attract new projects, retain local jobs, and support the many small businesses that rely on film and media production. The industry contributes significantly to Hawaii's economy, cultural visibility, and creative workforce, and supporters see this bill as a practical step toward ensuring long-term stability and growth.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge your consideration and support of SB2580.

Sincerely,

Terrie-Lyn Lau

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 3:35:37 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
kamakani de dely	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 3:37:02 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Julian Earle	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The people of Hawaii need this.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 3:37:08 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laura Aguon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

please help us save our Hawaii film industry.

myself in many many others have been supporting our families and our community for 30+ years in this industry and without this, it may never come back for us.

Thank you so much, Mahalo

Laura Aguon

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 3:37:50 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan Dedely	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 3:40:49 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Serena Flores	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SB 2580.

As a worker in Hawai‘i’s film industry, I have directly experienced how competitive tax credits determine whether productions stay in Hawai‘i or move elsewhere. When productions leave, local jobs disappear, impacting crew members, actors, vendors, and the small businesses that rely on this work.

SB 2580 strengthens Hawai‘i’s film tax credit, helping our state remain competitive with other production hubs and encouraging large productions to hire locally and invest in our communities. Film and television production supports working families and diversifies our economy beyond tourism.

This bill is essential to keeping film jobs in Hawai‘i and sustaining a long-term, local industry. I respectfully urge your support.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 3:51:52 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shana Kanani Benz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

‘O wau ‘O Kanani Benz, and I am writing to express strong support for SB 2580, which pertains to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit. This legislation plays a crucial role in fostering the growth and sustainability of Hawaii’s creative industries.

Supporting Points:

1. Economic Growth and Job Creation:
The tax credit incentivizes film, television, and digital media productions to shoot and produce in Hawaii, resulting in significant economic activity. It creates jobs across multiple sectors—from creative professionals, technical crews, hospitality workers, to local businesses that provide goods and services.
2. Industry Development and Diversification:
Encouraging production companies to utilize Hawaii’s unique landscapes and talent helps diversify our economy beyond traditional sectors such as tourism. The film and media industry offers year-round employment opportunities and supports local artists, technicians, and storytellers.
3. Cultural Representation and Storytelling:
Supporting local productions means more authentic Hawaiian stories are told, preserving and sharing our culture on global platforms. The incentive makes it financially viable for Hawaii-based creators to bring these narratives to life.
4. Long-Term Investment:
By maintaining and possibly enhancing this tax credit, Hawaii ensures it remains competitive with other states and countries offering similar incentives. This encourages repeat business and long-term partnerships with production companies.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to pass SB 2580 to continue supporting Hawaii's film, digital media, and motion picture industry.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 4:12:09 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ashley Trotter	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of this bill. This will bring jobs and money to the islands.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 4:18:36 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
cynthia paliracio	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please don't take away jobs from hard working people of Hawaii. The economy is bad enough. These movies and TV shows not only entertain people around the world, they bring in tourist dollars, which also support locals who depend on tourism jobs. Do the right thing!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 4:21:14 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mark Sanders	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Film production is a great industry. It supports tons of local business from caterers to cleaners to actors and so many more. Plus it's perpetual advertising. People are still coming to spend money here because of Jurassic Park, 50 first dates, from here to Eternity and tons of other works from decades ago. This will bring in so much money with minimal environmental impact.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 4:25:32 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joseph Incaprera	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this Bill.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 4:30:23 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Casey Merrill	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Pass this please, we need it especially over on Maui.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 4:33:37 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Siona	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of this bill. We need to keep the movie industry alive here in Hawaii. It provides so many jobs and brings joy and a sense of pride to our people. Our stories need to be told.

mahalo,

Siona Tejada

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 4:42:45 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Travis Logan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The film industry plays an important role to the economy of Hawaii, it's skilled labor crew, and for many businesses, tourism and people of Hawaii. Please pass this bill to continue the legendary film industry of Hawaii

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 4:49:54 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Randall Yokota	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha. My name is Randall Yokota and I'm a SAG-AFTRA union actor and a small farmer. I'm seriously in support of bill SB2580 because we really need to show the movie industry how seriously we are about making movies and TV shows here in Hawaii. Without this bill passing it will be very very difficult to compete with other locations that have better tax incentives. And, that will mean more locals moving away from the islands to other places on the mainland for work. Let's keep diversifying our economy by supporting and bringing back Hawaii's film industry. And, let's try harder to keep the locals, local. IMUA !!! And, MAHALO

I Lee Washington Support SB2580 and SB2796 on behalf of myself for all filmmakers. Hawaii should be supported for more than tourism, but a strong destination across the world showing that we can take care of ourselves as well as travelers who come to see us. I 100% support the film community here on this Island. Thank you for hearing my testimony. Mahalo.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 4:59:31 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gregorie Michael Towai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of SB 2580 – Relating to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit

To: Committee on Economic Development and Tourism

From: Gregorie Michael Towai

Re: Support for SB 2580

Hearing Date: February 3, 2026

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

I strongly support SB 2580, which increases the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit, extends the sunset date of the credit to 2038, and expands reporting requirements including independent third-party certification.

Although I am not a Hawai‘i resident, my work across Pacific Island communities in cultural programming, event activation, and equitable economic development gives me relevant insight into how location-based creative industries can influence broader local economies. My work has often involved coordinating community cultural events that interlink place identity, local employment, and external investment — similar dynamics to what Hawai‘i’s film and media industry faces.

A competitive film tax credit is one of the most effective tools states use to attract productions from around the world. Increasing the credit percentage, extending the program timeline, and strengthening verification requirements will help Hawai‘i remain a compelling choice for productions of all sizes.

Importantly, SB 2580’s requirement for independent third-party certification and detailed reporting on qualified production costs and local hiring aligns with principles of accountability and transparency. This emphasis on measurement and verification is critical to ensure incentives generate tangible outcomes for local economies and communities.

Expanding and modernizing the credit helps attract high-value productions that can create jobs for local crew, offer training opportunities, and stimulate demand for services across lodging, transportation, food, and retail — especially if coupled with intentional local participation.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to support SB 2580.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Gregorie Michael Towai

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 5:03:49 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ben Cassell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The film industry keeps money flowing and keeps attention on forgotten parts of the beautiful pacific. Many benefit, from physical jobs to worldwide exposure, in a place that needs tourism for economic benefit.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 5:04:24 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Corinne Blanchon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It would be amazing for film and television productions to come back to the islands. Hawaii is a magical place where all the scenery, whether it's the mountains, the beaches, the ocean and the jungle can be found in one spot. No talking about the crew people and actors who are so looking forward to working in their fields instead of flying somewhere else. If the taxes were not the issue more people will be working and filming in Hawaii helping the community and State revenues. Think large and let's go back to work with all the mixed talented people you have here. It would be a win win for all of us.

Hawaii will shine again all over the world for her amazing series and not only for tourism!

Mahalo,

Coriine Blanchon

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 5:13:12 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dina Willis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I Support this bill!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 5:13:22 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Williams	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a military veteran who has worked in the industry as a background actor from 2000 to beginning of 2025. I actually began doing stand-in work on major films and tv shows in 2010 on Hawaii Five-0 and my last stand-in gig was on Lilo and Stich. After my one day of background work early last year, I had no work. I know this bill will definitely get countless local artists (in front of and behind the camera, back working). I miss many of my production friends and hopefully this bill will pass so we all will be creating again! Mahalo!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 5:14:45 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kevin Chang	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha committee members, my name is Kevin Chang I am kupa‘āina to Kahalu‘u, O‘ahu and am an inactive attorney and non-profit executive director in the state of Hawai‘i going on 15 years. I am also a musician and have dabbled in film and other arts as well.

I support 2580 reinstate and increase Hawai‘i’s income tax credit for film production with graduated levels depending on county population size and investment with the suggestion that this legislative body works to be sure this tax break incentivize investment in our own community industry.

I write in my capacity as a citizen. I currently have no major monetary interest in the film industry. However, as a creative person, it is an industry I have always felt could be a unique driver for our economy, not just because of our unique cultural circumstances, outlook and place in the world but also for the overall creativity of our community and the lessened impact this industry versus our current options (tourism and military) have on our natural and cultural environment.

On many levels a strong film industry in Hawai‘i could be a great contributor to our economic and socio-cultural economy **if we attract more investment that incentivized to invest in building our own industry, and training and hiring our own community members.** This includes telling our stories too.

When I was in law school a focus of my interest was particularly in entertainment and sports law. It is something I wanted to do. But I did not want to live in Los Angeles, New York or Tennessee. I came home to find most opportunities in this industry comprised of outside investors leveraging our community’s uniqueness to further their business beyond our shores.

Opportunities to practice in the field of entertainment law and industry were minimal for someone who wanted to stay home. Most contracts and issues were led by industry professionals flown here, business aspects were negotiated by outside council and when culture was utilized it leveraged our community outlook to generate profits outside of our home. This is not all bad, of course some of it is just the nature of business, but it has always lacked reciprocity. And yet, despite this lack of reciprocity Hawai‘i has always punched over our weight for the short end of the bargain. This equation must be corrected.

Hawai‘i has the talent to tap into and train at all levels of the film industry. Investors in our home dating back to 1893 and before have always taken more than they give. I think in this new world we can welcome investment and require them to give back and help us build what we want for Hawai‘i. If we can have a green fee on tourism to cover some of the conservation gap we cannot currently afford we can find a way forward with an industry that I believe has the potential to do more good than damage to our home.

Please pass this bill out of your committee.

Aloha

Kevin

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 5:24:00 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eugene Yu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support Hawaii's film making industry and film makers and aspiring film makers who have a home here. Please do not favor gambling and the greed of a few people over the artform of storytelling. This beautiful place has so much potential in film making both in the talent and spirit of its people and environment.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 5:24:07 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michelle Archuleta	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support Hawai‘i’s film tax credit because it creates real, lasting benefits for our entire local economy. Film and television productions don’t just support large studios — they directly impact small businesses, from local vendors and hotels to restaurants, transportation, and independent contractors across the islands.

The tax credit also helps retain and attract creative professionals who live and work in Hawai‘i, allowing them to build sustainable careers without leaving the state. By keeping production local, we strengthen our creative workforce, support entrepreneurship, and showcase Hawai‘i to a global audience in an authentic way that encourages responsible tourism.

Investing in the film tax credit is an investment in local jobs, small businesses, and a diversified, resilient Hawai‘i economy.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 5:39:37 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Perry Neptune Daniel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please save Hawaii's film and television industry.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 5:39:45 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacob White	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in strong support of SB2580.

Hawai‘i is no longer competitive with other states and countries when it comes to film and television tax incentives. As a result, productions that want to shoot in Hawai‘i often choose to go elsewhere.

SB2580 strengthens Hawai‘i’s motion picture and digital media tax credit, helping to attract and retain productions that provide hundreds of local jobs. Hawai‘i has a large and highly skilled film workforce, and when projects do not shoot locally, our community is directly affected.

Film and television productions inject millions of dollars into the local economy, support small businesses, and provide lasting global exposure that benefits Hawai‘i tourism. Strengthening this tax credit is an investment in local workers and long-term economic growth.

I respectfully urge you to support SB2580.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Jacob White

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 5:44:04 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Margaret Pearlman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB2580 fully for the economic growth of Hawaii with keeping our Film Industry vibrant in Hawai'i. There is no place like Hawai'i with Hawai'i talent and crew. Our economy depends upon the vitality of the film industry and all the jobs for families in Hawai'i.

Mahalo,

Margaret Pearlman

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 5:47:39 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sadie sarkissian Eckart	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am urging to Support this Bill. Hawai'i needs this here. Employment for our people and free advertising for Hawai'i. This is Much needed to help our people.

Mahalo nui loa!

Sadie S Eckart

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 5:51:52 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cyrus Apeles	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As someone who is directly impacted by those bill please hale to keep Hawai'i file alive and help keep family's in Hawaii! Help us make film in Hawaii great again and giving us the Opportunity to show our skill set to the world

mahalo!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 6:02:59 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brian Gilhooly	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the committee. My name is Patrick Brian Gilhooly II, I've worked in the industry for over 10 years. I stand on my written testimony in support of SB2580. Thank you for the opportunity to testify

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 6:07:12 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Toa Lobendahn	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass this bill

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 6:10:47 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
justin anderson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Justin Anderson, I'm a member of IATSE Local 665, the union representing technicians and artisans in the entertainment industry in Hawai'i. I strongly support SB2580, Relating to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit.

This bill is a direct investment in stable, middle-class jobs for Hawaii's creative workforce. The changes proposed in SB 2580 will significantly increase Hawai'i's ability to attract lasting work with thriving wage jobs to stabilize the long-term health of this vital industry. I thank the legislature for their foresight in proposing the increase of the overall cap, the increase of the per production percentages, the inclusion of "streaming platforms" as qualified productions, and the extension of the sunset date will make great strides in supporting the thousands of local working families that are supported by this industry. Excluding companies that incur more than \$60 million in qualified expenditures from the "per production" cap will encourage long-term projects towards our islands.

Hawai'i's film industry supports thousands of working families in the state of Hawai'i. These thriving wages are irreplaceable by other industries. When the film tax incentive is empowered, this industry generates significantly to state GDP, earnings, and even visitor spending. When the film tax incentive is restrained, we not only lose the economic benefits of the industry, but we also lose the ability to tell our own stories. To remain competitive in the global market, it is imperative that Hawai'i strengthens and stabilizes the film tax incentive program. SB 2580 will take meaningful steps to empower our film tax incentive program, and will support thousands of working families in Hawai'i.

I strongly support SB 2580. I urge your committee to do the same. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,

Justin Anderson

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 6:18:12 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christopher Wiecking	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and members of the Senate committee,

My name is [INSERT NAME HERE]. I'm a member of IATSE Local 665, the union representing technicians and artisans in the entertainment industry in Hawai'i. I strongly support SB2580, Relating to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit.

This bill is a direct investment in stable, middle-class jobs for Hawaii's creative workforce. The changes proposed in SB 2580 will significantly increase Hawai'i's ability to attract lasting work with thriving wage jobs to stabilize the long-term health of this vital industry. I thank the legislature for their foresight in proposing the increase of the overall cap, the increase of the per production percentages, the inclusion of "streaming platforms" as qualified productions, and the extension of the sunset date will make great strides in supporting the thousands of local working families that are supported by this industry. Excluding companies that incur more than \$60 million in qualified expenditures from the "per production" cap will encourage long-term projects towards our islands.

Hawai'i's film industry supports thousands of working families in the state of Hawai'i. These thriving wages are irreplaceable by other industries. When the film tax incentive is empowered, this industry generates significantly to state GDP, earnings, and even visitor spending. When the film tax incentive is restrained, we not only lose the economic benefits of the industry, but we also lose the ability to tell our own stories. To remain competitive in the global market, it is imperative that Hawai'i strengthens and stabilizes the film tax incentive program. SB 2580 will take meaningful steps to empower our film tax incentive program, and will support thousands of working families in Hawai'i.

I strongly support SB 2580. I urge your committee to do the same. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,

Christopher Wiecking

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 6:31:00 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Katrina Katakura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I believe we should have the movie industry here on the islands as we also have our youth interested in these types of careers and they shouldn't have to move to other countries or the mainland to do something they love or to get started.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 6:34:34 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joshua "Baba" Tavares	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support this bill for Hawaii film and tv to thrive with the voices and representation of our Native Hawaiian and local stories.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 6:38:07 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joseph Barrett	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the committee. My name is Joey Barrett, I've worked in the industry for 5 years. I stand on my written testimony in support of SB2580 . Thank you for the opportunity to testify

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 6:38:16 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Phillip F	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Phillip Foster, I am educator, actor, and musician living in Honolulu. I have spent my formative years living on Oahu. I have spent many years working in the theatre scene in Honolulu and have met many wonderful people in the Hawaii Film Industry. I support this industry whole heartedly. It pains me when film jobs that should stay in Hawaii are moved to locations outside of the islands. Please support this bill that will help to bring back film jobs to the island and provide my many talented friends with work.

Mahalo Nui Loa!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 6:41:18 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John Rodriguez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing to express my strong support for the continued growth and stability of Hawai‘i’s film and television industry.

The film industry has been an essential contributor to Hawai‘i’s economy for decades. Beyond the visibility it brings to our islands worldwide, it provides high-quality jobs for local residents, supports small businesses, and creates long-term career pathways in skilled trades, technology, creative arts, and production services. Many of these are family-supporting jobs that allow residents to remain in Hawai‘i rather than seek employment elsewhere.

Film and television productions generate significant economic activity across multiple sectors, including hospitality, transportation, construction, equipment rental, catering, and local vendors. The benefits extend well beyond the duration of a single production, strengthening communities statewide and contributing to sustained economic resilience.

Equally important, Hawai‘i’s film industry helps tell stories that reflect the diversity, culture, and talent of our local communities. Supporting this industry means investing in local voices, preserving cultural integrity, and ensuring Hawai‘i remains a competitive and attractive location for responsible production.

I respectfully urge continued support for policies, incentives, and programs that keep Hawai‘i competitive as a filming destination while prioritizing local hire, workforce development, and community benefits. A stable and well-supported film industry is an investment in Hawai‘i’s people, economy, and future.

Thank you for your time and for your continued commitment to Hawai‘i’s working families and creative industries.

Mahalo,

John Rodriguez

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 6:42:35 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ehrynn McNulty	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

- This bill is a direct investment in stable, middle-class jobs for Hawaii's creative workforce.
- This bill could help bring financial stability to families all over the islands.
- This bill could also increase the ability for larger production companies to support Hawaii as a state. Incentivizing them to come here to make more projects, including projects on Hawaiian culture and history, will be bringing the beautiful islands and their people to a larger world audience. More eyes could not only inspire others to recognize the importance of understanding Hawaiian culture but could also increase tourism and continue to bring more financial benefits to the local communities.
- Long term, this bill could be an investment in the islands and our communities.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 6:53:57 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Zenues-Jay Vaimanino	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I believe that Hawaii has so much to offer and the local talent deserve to follow their dreams without having to leave their backyard to pursue said dreams. The media has painted Hawai'i to be an oasis of some sort. The same magic that is portrayed in the media should be the same magic that is captured on film.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 6:58:57 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gary Rotter	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to express my strong support for **SB 2580**. Extending the film tax credit sunset date to 2038 provides the long-term stability necessary to attract multi-year television series and major studio investments to Hawaii. This bill ensures that the film industry remains a reliable pillar of our state's economic diversification.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 7:01:56 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christie Mussell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Bring filming to Hawaii!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 7:02:21 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaipo Dudoit	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Kākou,

I am a locally-based actor in Hawai‘i and have been working in the film industry for the past five years. I have had the privilege and honor in working with hundreds of local people within Hawaii's film industry. We have been so fortunate to work in Hawaii: telling our stories as local people, showcasing the beauty that is our 'āina, and have had the opportunity to express our "aloha" globally through our films.

With the current legislation, major film-production companies have left Hawai'i, leaving no work for many of the crew/assistants/actors/creators-alike. By increasing the tax credit, there will be an undoubtable incentive to come to Hawai'i and provide jobs and opportunities for Hawaii's people.

Today, there is a definitive need for art. Art is an expression of what it means to be human, a chance to celebrate and honor those that have come before us, a chance to authentically present the richness of the place that we call home. For many years, Hawaii was utilized as the tourists hotspot, but in recent years the narrative has shifted to display Hawai'i as not just a destination but a living-thriving place of people, culture, and history. Films and TV Shows included in this work are: "Chief of War," "Lilo & Stitch," and "Rescue: HI Surf." All three projects were fundamentally run and supported by Hawaii's people and have been very successful in its global reach.

My kūpuna were master story-tellers. For generations and generations the Hawaiian people lived and breathed our identity through the stories that we have told. Please do not silence our hearts and our kūpuna.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 7:22:13 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Angela Kila	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support for SB2580.

My partner is a union member, we have felt the impact of why we need to support this bill.

KEEP THE JOBS IN HAWAII FOR OUR OWN PEOPLE.

There should be any caps of on tax credits so unlimited resources can be spent here in Hawaii, to help boost our own economy, not other countries or state but Hawaii.

We have already proven what our film industry and the local brother and sisters are capable of producing on the international stage, with top dollar record breaking box office hits like Lilo and Stitch, Chief of War.

Let's make the change- approve this bill SB 2580.

Come on Hawaii Do better for your own people.

Thank you

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 7:23:47 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Victoria Serrao	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of this!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 7:26:32 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Roselio Hernandez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a filmmaker and individual born and raised in Hawai'i who has been employed by the film industry in Hawai'i, I strongly support SB2580.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 7:26:40 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathleen Stuart	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Film and TV productions that have shot on O‘ahu, and specifically asked to cast local talent, have changed the shape of my experience, credits, and work. To date, this professional work in Hawai‘i elevates my resume in a way that doesn't compare to any other single credit in my career. Please make Hawai‘i competitive for locations in the industry with higher tax incentives. Film production in Hawai‘i is a win for kama‘āina who work on the project, for our communities, as well as for the production companies to be able to connect with the people and hearts less frequently visible in commercial media.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 7:42:50 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Richard Hamasaki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm a published poet, independent filmmaker, producer, and creative collaborator, I fully support this bill. It must be passed!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 7:45:59 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marissa Molina	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair and Committee Members,

My name is Marissa Molina, a Hawai‘i-based creative and small business owner, and I strongly support SB2580 and SB2796.

My husband was born and raised here, and we are raising our children on Maui. My work centers around storytelling with the hope of future media and film, rooted in dreams, hope, and empowering young people. I want our keiki — and youth across our community — to grow up believing they can build meaningful creative careers *here at home*, not feeling like they have to leave Hawai‘i to pursue their futures.

A strong film and digital media industry does more than support creative dreams. It creates skilled jobs across many fields — from artists and editors to electricians, carpenters, drivers, and technical crews. These productions also support local small businesses, including hotels, talent agencies, food vendors, equipment suppliers, retailers, salons, transportation services, and everything inbetween - strengthening our broader island economy.

Growing this industry helps build real training and career pathways for local students while keeping Hawai‘i’s young talent from having to leave the islands to find opportunity elsewhere. When our stories are created by people who live here, they reflect Hawai‘i with authenticity, respect, and cultural understanding that cannot be replicated anywhere else. Keeping our youth and local talent here ensures they can stay, create, and thrive in a place they love — a place that is home, that is safe, and where they are surrounded by family and hānai family.

Mahalo for supporting Hawai‘i’s creative community, families, and future.

Respectfully,
Marissa Molina

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 7:51:46 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
paul ehman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and members of the Senate committee,

My name is Paul Ehman. I own a production company on Maui and work and hire crew on all islands. I'm a member of IATSE Local 665, the union representing technicians and artisans in the entertainment industry in Hawai'i. I strongly support SB2580, relating to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit.

The changes proposed in SB 2580 will significantly increase Hawai'i's ability to attract lasting work with thriving wage jobs to stabilize the long-term health of this vital industry. I thank the legislature for their foresight in proposing the increase of the overall cap, the increase of the per production percentages, the inclusion of "streaming platforms" as qualified productions, and the extension of the sunset date will make great strides in supporting the thousands of local working families that are supported by this industry. Excluding companies that incur more than \$60 million in qualified expenditures from the "per production" cap will encourage long-term projects to return our islands.

Hawai'i's film industry supports thousands of working families in the state of Hawai'i. These thriving wages are irreplaceable by other industries. When the film tax incentive is empowered, this industry contributes significantly to state GDP, earnings, and even visitor spending. When the film tax incentive is restrained, we not only lose the economic benefits of the industry, but we also lose the ability to tell our own stories. To remain competitive in the global market, it is imperative that Hawai'i strengthens and stabilizes the film tax incentive program. SB 2580 will take meaningful steps to empower our film tax incentive program, and will support thousands of working families in Hawai'i.

I strongly support SB 2580. I urge your committee to do the same. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,

Paul Ehman, Ehman Productions (Maui)

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 7:53:57 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Crystal Branco	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Kāko'o au i SB2580

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 7:55:26 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
zander dushenko	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

working in the hawaii film industry is the first job that didnt have me living paycheck to paycheck, and is one of the few jobs that left me feeling truely fulfilled and proud of my work at the end of the day. the people ive met in the local film industry are some of the best people ive met on the islands, and we all carry a unique set of skills that really shine when were on set. since the writers strike and the loss of the film tax incentive that followed, many of us have been forced to go backwards in our careers to the olds jobs we used to have, living paycheck to paycheck and feeling unfulfilled our day jobs. once youve gotten established working in film, going back to other jobs feels like being a fish out of water, or a formula one pit crew working a desk job. since the loss of film work ive had hundreds of friends and coworker forced to move to mainland, or other countries seeking out work as hawaii's cost of living only grows. this indistry employs thousands of the best people hawaii has, and the money it brings in also flows through the rest of the islands, proping up local buisnesses and individuals in all the opportunities it brings. On top of that the films produced in Hawaii also brings international recognition of all the diverse fascets of our islands, our people, and our culture. This in turn also fuels more tourism while also giving tourists a deeper look into hawaiis culture that isnt boiled down to outdated stereotypes and misconceptions that many haoles still have about hawaii. At the end of the day the most lasting and meaningful mark a society can make, worthy of filling museums and history books, lies in its arts and culture. Please help us continue to contribute to the lasting legacy of hawaii, and the fullfilling livelyhood that filmmaking affords of its current population.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 8:01:09 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joseph Palmore	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, thank you for considering this bill. I have been a schoolteacher here on Maui for going on 30 years. Occasionally, I worked most recently co-starring in the last season episode-6 of Hawaii Five-0. Not only does it inspire my students and give me some street cred in the drama department, but it also helps subsidize my family income. I love working as an actor and highlighting Hawaii and sharing the island beauty with the world. Sincerely, Joseph.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 8:04:23 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amelia Matera	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of SB 2580

Relating to the Film and Digital Media Tax Credit

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committee,

I strongly support SB 2580. As a Hawai‘i resident, I have personally seen how the film and digital media industry creates meaningful, well-paying jobs for local people and supports families who want to build long-term lives here. Friends and neighbors who work in film rely on consistent production work to stay in Hawai‘i, cover rising costs, and continue contributing to our local economy.

Beyond individual jobs, film productions support a wide network of local businesses—from equipment rentals and construction to restaurants, hotels, and transportation. When productions choose Hawai‘i, that spending stays in our communities and circulates locally.

The film tax credit helps keep Hawai‘i competitive with other states and countries that actively invest in this industry. Supporting SB 2580 is not just about attracting productions; it is about supporting local workers, small businesses, and economic diversification so our residents can thrive here at home.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 8:12:33 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Austyn Queja	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:



SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 8:16:05 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeremy Gilbert	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I have been a local actor in Hawaii since 2008. Moving here from Los Angeles I was incredibly excited for all the opportunities to work in the film and television industry here on the islands. I've worked on many of them as an actor. The biggest roles and achievements of my career. When the last tax credit failed to pass all of those opportunities disappeared. My first audition in over 2 years was this past week. Previously I would audition 5 to 10 times a year. Luckily for me acting is not my main source of income. However, for most local men and women who work off camera in film and tv it is their main source of income. That well has dried up since the last attempt to pass a tax credit failed. I support this bill because I support my friends whose livelihood depend on as many productions coming to our home to create content. Please pass this bill and bring these opportunities back to us.

Mahalo,

Jeremy Gilbert

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 8:17:10 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Angie Hamilton-Lowe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you for supporting families in Hawai'i who depend on film & TV production to earn a living wage.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 8:23:41 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Matthew Calica	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 8:29:03 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Orion Tom	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill as it is a step in the right direction to have tv and film industry come back here to film their productions and provide opportunities to our local actors. Everyone should have an opportunity to achieve their dream and passion.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 8:34:41 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Conrad Pratt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a Native Hawaiian, I would like to believe majority of those voting on this bill would like to support one of the most fundamental practices of our culture; storytelling. It is in our blood to keep our stories alive so that history will never be forgotten. Many productions, specifically based on the Hawaiian culture, have gone outside of Hawai'i to film leaving not only our Kingdom but our people out of jobs simply because the ignorance in this industry goes uneducated. Give Hawai'i her time to shine. Let our people continue their passion for story telling in modern times. Denying Hawai'i her voice on the world stage simply diminishes everything the Native Hawaiian culture stands for. IMUA <3

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 8:37:44 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Milo Magno	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Milo Magno, and I respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of SB 2580.

I am a medically retired, disabled, combat-wounded veteran living in Hawai‘i after serving 12 years in the U.S. Army as an infantryman. Like many veterans, I continue to live with the lasting effects of my service, including PTSD and significant orthopedic injuries. Transitioning back to civilian life has not always been easy, and finding healthy, meaningful ways to cope and heal has been an ongoing journey.

While living in Hawai‘i, I discovered acting—something I never expected would become such an important part of my recovery. Acting has become both an escape and a newfound passion for me. When I am creating or portraying a character, I am no longer the veteran managing PTSD or physical injuries. For that time, I am simply immersed in the work. That experience has been deeply therapeutic and has played a meaningful role in my recovery and overall mental health. I would hate to have to move to the continent—yet another family leaving the ‘aina—to pursue something that has helped me heal and rebuild my life.

SB 2580 is important because it helps create an environment that encourages more film and television productions in Hawai‘i. More productions mean more opportunities—not just for large studios, but for local actors, crew members, and creatives who are trying to build sustainable lives and careers here. For veterans and individuals with disabilities, these opportunities can be truly life-changing.

I have personally helped connect disabled veterans—some of whom rarely leave their homes—to work on local productions. For example, veterans I met through a Wounded Warrior Project Regatta in Waikīkī were able to paddle canoes on *Chief of War*, and an amputee veteran was hired as background talent on *NCIS: Hawai‘i*. These experiences provided not just income, but confidence, connection, and purpose.

This bill represents more than economic development. It represents access, inclusion, and healing. By supporting SB 2580, the Legislature helps open doors for residents who are working to rebuild their lives, contribute to their communities, and pursue meaningful work in Hawai‘i’s growing creative industry.

I would be honored to speak in person with any lawmakers or staff members who would like to learn more about my experience and how opportunities created by SB 2580 can positively impact veterans and individuals recovering from trauma.

I respectfully urge you to support SB 2580 and allow Hawai'i to continue fostering a creative economy that benefits local residents, including veterans like myself who have given much in service to our country.

Mahalo for your time, consideration, and continued service to the people of Hawai'i.

Respectfully,
Milo Magno
Wai'anae, Hawai'i
Disabled Combat Veteran

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 8:40:24 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mahina Chillingworth	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Keep the Film Industry Alive in Hawai‘i!!!!!!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 8:45:41 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Craig Davidson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha My Name is Craig Davidson and I am a Stunt Coordinator here in Hawaii and around the world.

I am in full support of this bill. Increasing this tax incentive will attract more productions to come to Hawaii to film.

in the last 6 months I have traveled to the US Mainland and Saudi Arabia to work on various productions around 15 times.

There was no work for me in Hawaii. So traveling away from my family to work was my only option. It's very hard on a marriage and family life.

This incentive will attract more to come to Hawaii to film. Also will let me stay home and work at home.

Currently I am already working on An Action comedy slated to start shooting in Mid February.

I am very grateful for the support from all of you and will continue to support you all in the future.

Mahalo Craig

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 8:46:38 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Monica Zelkowski	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Working in Film and Televison, the lack of tax incentives has decreased our work on island. We need greater incentives.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 8:49:17 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ted Kaneda	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Ted, and I am a resident of Mililani Town, O‘ahu. I am testifying in strong support of SB2580 because this bill is essential to revitalizing and sustaining Hawai‘i’s film, TV, digital media, and streaming production industry, which provides good-paying jobs, boosts local businesses, and showcases our islands to the world.

Hawai‘i’s current film tax credit has been a success in attracting productions, but competition from other states and countries (with higher incentives) has reduced activity here in recent years. Many productions bypass Hawai‘i for places like Georgia, New Mexico, or Canada, taking jobs and economic benefits with them. SB2580 addresses this by:

- Raising the credit to 27% on O‘ahu and 32% on neighbor islands, making us more competitive while rewarding productions that film in less-populated areas (spreading economic benefits statewide).
- Increasing the annual cap to \$60 million, allowing more projects to qualify without turning away viable productions due to exhausted funds.
- Removing barriers for large-scale productions (over \$60 million in costs) by lifting the per-project cap, which could attract major streaming series, blockbusters, or high-impact projects that create hundreds of local jobs.
- Strengthening accountability through required reporting on local hires and third-party certification, ensuring the program benefits Hawai‘i residents first.

The film industry supports thousands of jobs across trades like construction, catering, transportation, hospitality, security, and creative roles—many union and family-wage positions. Productions also spend millions at local stores, hotels, restaurants, and vendors, providing an immediate economic multiplier during filming and long-term tourism promotion.

As a Hawai‘i resident, I see the value in diversifying our economy beyond tourism, especially post-pandemic. SB2580 will help retain and grow this clean, high-value industry without major new state spending—it’s an investment that pays back through taxes, jobs, and visitor spending.

I urge the Committee to pass SB2580 to keep Hawai‘i competitive, create opportunities for our people (especially on the neighbor islands), and support creative industries that celebrate our culture and landscapes.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify and for your work on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Ted

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 8:58:24 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Asia Collier	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly support SB 2580. This bill will support in keeping Hawai'i competitive with other production hubs as well as protect local work. As a local, the Hawai'i film industry has given me so many opportunities in building my career, supporting my livelihood, working with immensely talented individuals in creating beautiful projects. I am beyond grateful to be a part of this unique industry and hope to see this bill come to fruition.

Mahalo piha!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 9:11:09 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Kahanui Paleka III	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support this bill bc it creates jobs for us kanaka and allow hardwork and talents to be shown and displayed to all pau =E KU=

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 9:19:39 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This is what Hawaii's film industry needs.

Written Testimony In Support of SB 2580

To the Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I submit this testimony in support of this bill based on direct experience working in Hawai'i's film and television industry. Mahalo to Senator Decoite for addressing this specific issue that has been a major issue to Hawai'i's film production.

Since moving to Hawai'i in 2016 I have had the opportunity to work on a number of various film and television series like HAWAII FIVE-0, MAGNUM, P.I., TRIPLE FRONTIER, and NCIS: HAWAII. I have been able to make a career working in film production and was able to join my union, the Directors Guild of America, in 2021. I have directly benefited by the constant stream of film productions coming to Hawai'i. However, things changed starting in 2024. After the last two television series filming here regularly were canceled, work has significantly dried up since.

Major films and television series won't come to film in Hawai'i as long as the tax credits remain the same and not reflect the changing industry. Other states, including my own home state of Texas, have increased their tax incentives above 30% and are adding additional bumps if they hire more than a certain percentage of local crew, spending more money locally, or even telling specific stories based in that states history or promote the state in any way. **I believe that Hawai'i needs to raise its tax incentives and add some of these "bumps" that other states have if they want to stay a viable film destination.**

If Hawai'i doesn't change with the times, I fear that not only will we completely fall behind to not just other states, but to other countries as well. Without a large number of films and television series filming each year, Hawai'i will no longer be able to support the thousands of film workers and vendors that live here, and many will either change careers or move out of the state to find film work, which has already started happening.

By **increasing the base rate to 27%/32%** it gives the best chance to kickstart the studios wanting to come back to Hawai'i for longer productions instead of the two to three weeks it has been for the last few years. It's not just about the "location," it's about what is the better option for the studios to choose from, and they will choose the one that offers the better incentives every single time.

We need this bill to pass for everyone's sake. It's not just the film workers that benefit from this, it's their families, the vendors, the restaurants, the food and equipment suppliers, the locations, the local talent and so much more. **Hawai'i needs to stay competitive to be relevant in this game, or we will no longer be a viable filming destination for the studios, and they'll look elsewhere while we are left behind.**

Thank you very much for your time to testify on this matter,

Mahalo,

Ian Petriello Eisenberg

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 9:24:41 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mariann Tesauro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and members of the Senate committee,

My name is Mariann Tesauro. I'm a member of IATSE Local 665, the union representing technicians and artisans in the entertainment industry in Hawai'i. **I strongly support SB2580**, Relating to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit.

This bill is a direct investment in stable, middle-class jobs for Hawaii's creative workforce. The changes proposed in SB 2580 will significantly increase Hawai'i's ability to attract lasting work with thriving wage jobs to stabilize the long-term health of this vital industry. I thank the legislature for their foresight in proposing the increase of the overall cap, the increase of the per production percentages, the inclusion of "streaming platforms" as qualified productions, and the extension of the sunset date will make great strides in supporting the thousands of local working families that are supported by this industry. Excluding companies that incur more than \$60 million in qualified expenditures from the "per production" cap will encourage long-term projects towards our islands.

Hawai'i's film industry supports thousands of working families in the state of Hawai'i. These thriving wages are irreplaceable by other industries. When the film tax incentive is empowered, this industry generates significantly to state GDP, earnings, and even visitor spending. When the film tax incentive is restrained, we not only lose the economic benefits of the industry, but we also lose the ability to tell our own stories. To remain competitive in the global market, it is imperative that Hawai'i strengthens and stabilizes the film tax incentive program. SB 2580 will take meaningful steps to empower our film tax incentive program, and will support thousands of working families in Hawai'i.

I strongly support SB 2580. I urge your committee to do the same. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,

Mariann Tesauro

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 9:25:00 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eli Cusick	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I've been working in the industry since 2014.

I graduated from Punahou in 2012, did two years of university in the mainland. During a summer I picked up a job on the Hawaii 5-0 film set as a production assistant. I've been working in different capacities in the industry ever since, and became eligible for DGA employment in 2024. Since then I've had one day of work. The industry has changed drastically in the last 6 years, work has slimmed down and gone to other countries for cheaper labour and better incentives. Which is only at our own detriment- these places that the work has gone... they offer incentives far exceeding even what this bill proposes. We have to ask ourselves why are places like London and New Zealand so aggressive with their policy. They aren't stupid for doing this, they know the economics and understand that having a thriving entertainment industry is good for their economies as a whole. Obviously the situation isn't exactly the same, they offer health care for their workers, have weaker labor unions and the exchange rate itself is in favor for the studio producers- this bill is the VERY LEAST we should be doing to even hold a chance to be competitive with these other countries. We've lost a lot of good jobs and production's very recently, like Chief of War and Wrecking crew. Who only shot what they needed to here, and you can't exactly blame them for taking advantage of these incentives. It's a business, but is this what Hawaii is going to be? A destination to steal exterior shots then pretend the show was filmed there? I think we owe Hawaii more than that. We owe the crew of Hawaii- who have spent the last 25 years building their resume, working 16 hour days back to back- they are the ones responsible for creating these iconic shows that will last for decades. And without any smart support from their government they have been very much left out to dry.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 9:26:17 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sheela Sharma	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SB 2580 will help keep film & television jobs in Hawaii. By raising the film tax credit, SB 2580 will ensure that Hawaii is able to be competitive for future productions, and ultimately will generate more funding. We need this bill to pass so that we can continue to support crew, actors, vendors, small businesses, and families across the state.

When we are able to have productions shot here with incentives like tax credit, this ultimately boosts our economy. Not passing this bill is shortsighted.

Now, more than ever, we need to be sharing Hawai'i's stories, and they should be made here as well.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 9:27:44 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicole Rombaoa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Nicole Rombaoa, and I am a local actor and creative professional living and working in Hawai‘i. I am writing in strong support of SB2580 because this bill directly affects not only my livelihood, but the health and future of my creative community.

For many of us in the film, television, and digital media industry, Hawai‘i is not just a filming location — it is home. When productions choose Hawai‘i, it creates real, tangible opportunities for local actors, crew members, and creatives to work where we live, grow our careers, and support our families without having to leave the islands. When productions leave due to uncompetitive incentives, those opportunities disappear.

SB2580 is critically important because it modernizes Hawai‘i’s film tax credit to reflect today’s production landscape. Other states and countries are actively competing for the same projects, often with stronger and more flexible incentives. Without updates like those proposed in this bill, Hawai‘i risks losing work, talent, and long-term economic growth in the creative sector.

This bill is not just about large productions — it’s about community stability. Film and digital media projects support a wide network of local workers: actors, writers, stunt performers, production assistants, costume designers, makeup artists, editors, drivers, caterers, and small businesses that rely on consistent production activity. When work is steady, creatives can stay in Hawai‘i, reinvest in our local economy, and continue telling stories rooted in these islands.

As an actor and creative, SB2580 represents opportunity, sustainability, and dignity in our work. It sends a message that Hawai‘i values its local talent and is committed to building a future where creatives are not forced to leave home to succeed.

I respectfully urge the committee to pass SB2580 and support a stronger, more competitive, and more inclusive creative economy for Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Nicole Rombaoa

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 9:27:55 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Manuel Razon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha my name is Manuel Razon. I live in waiane where my wife and I have raised our 3 children. I have worked in the movie industry for 20 years. While working in the movie industry, I made enough to buy a house in waiane. Since the decline of the movie industry I have run out of unemployemnt twice. No work in 2 years. My wife and I had to apply for SNAP benifits. Thank god for that, because we were able to feed our children. We have been working 2 jobs each to keep the lights on. I have taken loans out with family to pay my mortgage. We are on our last leg. Something will have to give. If we dont get work soon, we have decided to sell our house and move to the mainland. Leaving our island and culture behind. Please help us stay on our land. We have worked so hard to buy our house that we love. We are strugling. Please support our tax credit so more work will come. They are shooting most of our work in other countries. To have a hawaiian movie shot in another country is worng. Please help us.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 9:29:17 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Richard Ribuca	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I've been in the industry for 13 years and we all depend on this industry from the little guy to the top. This past couple of years has been really hard as we try to stay a float on unemployment. Not just us workers but small businesses are closing due to movies not filming here everyone is struggling.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 9:41:50 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bonnie Porter	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We need this bill for the future... Our film Ohana has brought so many beautiful projects to the island. This Bill is pivotal in order to continue to keep our film community thriving. Mahalo.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 9:54:54 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James Robert Jost	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill. Thank you.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 9:55:10 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stasia Jost	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please bring production back to Hawaii ... Our families are struggling! Please create stronger tax incentives!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 9:55:13 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michelle Umipeg	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB 2580 because it raises the film tax credit, keeps Hawai‘i competitive with other production hubs, brings large productions and local jobs here, supports crew, actors, vendors, small businesses, and families, and strengthens our economy beyond tourism.

Film isn't just Hollywood -- its local paychecks, hiring local, cultural representation, and long-term industry growth for Hawai‘i.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 10:10:48 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Crystal Thornburg-Homcy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please bring back our local cast and crew to Hawaii made studios and locations. Families on the island depend on the film industry for their survival.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 10:10:49 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ronya Honda Takemoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Here to support the Hawaii Film and TV industry.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 10:12:36 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jean Simon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of SB 2580

Relating to the Film and Digital Media Tax Credit

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committee,

I strongly support SB 2580.

The film industry brings in a lot of money to Hawaii. Not only the direct money, but payroll taxes, purchases from local vendors, and let's not forget the tourism the film industry invites to Hawaii. I have personally experienced tourists who are here to visit where Magnum P.I, Hawaii 5-0, LOST, Lilo and Stitch and other TV shows and movies were shot.

The state needs the money brought in by the film industry. The money given back is needed to attract the industry. We can't afford to lose this clean, green industry in Hawaii.

I, myself, do acting on films and TV shows. When they don't come in, I don't work. Even more important, the crews that live here don't work.

Hawaii needs the income tax credit for the film industry.

Mahalo,

Jean Simon

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 10:14:39 PM

Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kim Luong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We need the film industry.



Valerie Matsunaga PO 330519 Kahului, Maui, HI 96733

February 1, 2026

Letter of Testimony in SUPPORT

SB 2580 Relating to the Motion Picture Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit

Aloha Chair Decoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and the Members of the Committee on Economic Development and Tourism,

Testimony in Support of SB 2580

Relating to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit

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

My name is Valerie Matsunaga, and I am a resident of Maui, writing in strong support of **SB 2580**. I submit this testimony as a Neighbor Island community member, actor since 2020 who has participated, seen and felt the impact of how Hawai‘i’s creative economy—especially film, television, and digital media—has long provided **family-sustaining, middle-class jobs** for local residents across all islands.

For Maui, film and media production is not an abstract industry. It means steady work for local cast and crew, technicians, drivers, carpenters, costume designers, caterers, equipment vendors, and small businesses that rely on production activity to survive. When productions come to Hawai‘i, the economic ripple effects are felt immediately and locally—especially on Neighbor Islands where opportunities are fewer and job losses hit harder.

In recent years, we have experienced a sharp decline in production activity. These declines are not just numbers on a chart; they represent real local families struggling to make rent, pay bills, and remain in Hawai‘i. Some skilled workers have already been forced to leave the state in search of more stable employment. SB 2580 is a direct and necessary response to this reality.

By raising the annual aggregate cap to **\$60 million**, modernizing eligibility to include **streaming platforms**, and extending the sunset date to **2038**, SB 2580 restores predictability and competitiveness to Hawai‘i’s film incentive program. Producers plan years in advance. Without certainty, Hawai‘i—particularly Neighbor Islands like Maui—loses out to other jurisdictions that have made long-term commitments to their creative industries.

This bill is not a giveaway; it is an **investment in Hawai‘i’s middle-class workforce**. When productions choose Hawai‘i, they invest directly in local people and local businesses. SB 2580 helps ensure that Hawai‘i residents can continue telling Hawai‘i stories while working at home, rather than being forced to relocate elsewhere.

For Maui and the Neighbor Islands, SB 2580 represents economic recovery, workforce stability, and a path forward for creative professionals who want to build their lives here. I respectfully urge the Committee to **pass SB 2580** and reaffirm Hawai‘i’s commitment to keeping its storytellers, technicians, and creative workers employed right here at home.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Warm regards and respect,

Valerie M. K. Matsunaga
Maui, Hawaii
Actor,
SAG-AFTRA
Email: val.matsunaga@gmail.com

USAW Level 1 Coach, RYT 200 Yoga Certified
Phone: 808-205-5677

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 10:35:08 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jonavin Sablay	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jonavin Sablay, and I am submitting testimony in support of SB2580 as an individual citizen.

SB2580 is important because the arts and film industry contribute significantly to Hawai‘i’s economy, workforce, and cultural identity. Film and creative projects create local jobs, support small businesses, and help keep talent in Hawai‘i rather than forcing artists to seek opportunities elsewhere.

Supporting this measure strengthens Hawai‘i’s creative economy and ensures that local voices continue to be represented on screen. I respectfully urge you to pass SB2580.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Jonavin Sablay

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 11:01:27 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tani Siu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I believe that it is important to preserve the Hawaiian culture in every shape and form. What better way to do that than to make it easier to create, film, and share it with the world... while also providing jobs. That way actors can stay in Hawaii and won't have to move to the mainland in order to "make it"

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 11:01:40 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Taj Nakoa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in support of SB 2580. I am a native of Hawai‘i and am an aspiring actor who hopes to build a future in the creative industries here at home.

SB 2580 matters to me because it supports the growth of Hawai‘i’s creative economy and helps create pathways for local talent to access real opportunities. I respectfully urge you to pass this measure.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:27:11 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hannah Rodriguez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Hannah-Grace Rodriguez (McDermott). I'm a professional stuntwoman and intimacy coordinator working in the TV & Film industry. I'm submitting a written testimony in support of SB2580 and SB2796, both of which help strengthen Hawai'i's competitiveness as a film and media production location while supporting local industry jobs.

I've been very blessed to have also worked on productions in Atlanta, LA, Nashville and Orlando. Through this industry, I have met my husband (Steven Rodriguez) who is a fight coordinator. We've worked together, created a life together and both know there is NO place like home. There is no better place to film.

Hawai'i is home to some heavy hitters in the TV & Film industry not only on screen but we have some of the best of the best, hard working crew members. While you, your friends/family are crunching on freshly popped popcorn watching your favorite shows or movies, just know there were some incredibly hard working crew members sacrificing long hours, time away from their families so that you can enjoy the entertainment and they did it with a smile on their face and they'd do it over and over again because anyone who works in the industry here in Hawai'i LOVES IT.

People often say "you don't quit the industry, the industry quits you" and if there is anything you've taken from my statement, please let it be that. Please let the cast & crew members keep having a chance to create what they are so passionate about.

In my line of work, I love to express my creativity in both physical performance, safety coordination, and intimacy work. Both of these positions **directly** contribute to the quality and safety of productions and employ both local and visiting crew members.

The film and media industry brings significant economic activity to our islands.

This bill would mean more consistent employment opportunities for performers, coordinators like myself, crew members of all departments and many local small businesses that provide services to production crews. When productions come here, they spend locally on hotels, restaurants, equipment rentals, transportation, training facilities, etc.

I am so passionate about the TV & Film industry as well as many others. I respectfully ask that the committee support SB2580 and SB2796. Mahalo for your time, your consideration of this testimony and your ongoing efforts to support Hawai'i's creativity.

Please save the film industry in Hawai'i!!

Mahalo Nui Loa,
Hannah-Grace Rodriguez (McDermott)

IMDb: imdb.me/hannahgracemcdermott

Stuntwoman & Intimacy Coordinator

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 11:11:49 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dean Hamer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

As a documentary filmmaker, with 12 films produced in Hawai'i and nationally and internationally streamed and broadcast, I am very aware of the importance of financial incentives to members of our industry. This bill will make a big difference to filmmakers and increase jobs and income in Hawai'i. It's a simple equation, hope you support it.

Dean Hamer, Director, Qwaves Media

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 11:16:28 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chris Kalei Jr	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

👉 I support SB2580

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 11:17:05 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
reynaldo a mozo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha kakou, I (Allen) Reynaldo Mozo, would like to voice and document my support for SB2580.

I am a Hawai'i resident, tax payer, registered voter and full time wage earner in the Hawai'i film and motion picture industry for 35 years. In the past, it has provided me with a dignified living and career at home here in Hawai'i, but not so lately. Work has been at a historic low and the limited or lack of work and stability has drastically affected me and many others ability to provide for our ohana's and community.

Our local Hawai'i industry is one that compete's nationally and globally , which creates challenges to secure work and we need to adapt, to stay competitive with other destinations, markets and to stay current with successful industry models. Without a current and competitive tax incentive it is a death sentance to our local industry that we and a past generation has worked so hard to build, grow and hope to pass on.

As a long standing industry professional I humbly ask you to support this bill on behalf of myself, my dependent ohana, fellow craftsman, performers, workers and the many local businesses and citizens who benefit from a healthy film industry.

I ask you to consider and understand the positive impact and effect this bill can have in stimulating work, growth, stability, competitiveness that our industry, career's and income we depend on to survive, provide and contribute to our communities. Please also consider the global promotional benefits, representation and contributions our work has provided for the state, its people and culture in the past, present and that we hope to continue in the future adding to a long proud history and legacy of film making in the islands.

Your decisions,support and vote are critical to the health, growth and future of Hawai'i film , our jobs, our ohana.

Mahalo nui for considering my testimony,

Allen Mozo

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 11:22:04 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
KALAE PEARCE	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I absolutely support and agree that our Hawaii film industry continue here in our islands. This opens many opportunities for our economy. We cannot let movies represent Hawai'i and not be from Hawai'i. There's no place on Earth that should do that, but our beautiful Hawai'i.

Mahalo!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 11:23:20 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kelsey Sugai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Mahalo nui loa for considering this bill for the betterment of our local film industry. I am in support because I believe it will not only help our industry, but also have positive ripple effects across the state.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 11:25:12 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
kecia littman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is **Kecia Littman** and I am a proud member of **IATSE Local 665**, representing the technicians and artisans who power Hawai‘i’s entertainment industry. I am writing in strong support of **SB2580**, relating to the film industry.

I deeply appreciate the Legislature’s continued commitment to sustaining and strengthening our sector. The provisions in this bill—applying the manufacturer’s general excise tax rate of 0.5% to productions; exempting from GET the amounts passed through by motion picture project employers for wages, payroll taxes, insurance, benefits, and loan-out payments; and formally including “streaming” within the incentive—will have a meaningful and positive impact on the working families who rely on Hawai‘i’s film and television industry.

Our industry supports thousands of local households with stable, skilled, and well-paying jobs that cannot be easily replaced by other sectors. When the film tax incentive is strong, Hawai‘i sees measurable gains in GDP, household earnings, and even visitor spending. When the incentive is weakened, we lose not only economic opportunity but also the ability to tell our own stories on our own shores.

Recent productions illustrate this challenge. Ninety-eight percent of the live-action *Moana* film was shot in Atlanta. *Chief of War* completed a significant portion of its work in Aotearoa, where the currency conversion rate has ranged from NZ\$1.65–1.79 to US\$1 over the past year—and where physical, administrative, and cultural infrastructures far outpace ours. To remain competitive in a global market where other regions are aggressively investing in film, Hawai‘i must strengthen and stabilize its incentive program.

SB2580 represents a meaningful step toward ensuring that Hawai‘i remains a viable, attractive, and culturally grounded home for film and television production. It directly supports thousands of working families and helps preserve Hawai‘i’s voice in the stories being told about our islands.

I strongly support **SB2580**, and I respectfully urge your committee to do the same.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,

Kecia Littman

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 11:33:12 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alexander Sundquist	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I have worked locally in the film industry since 2011. Some of the most talented people in the world live here. I began as a PA and worked myself to a Key Assistant Location Manager and local member of Teamsters Union 996. I met my wife while working on the set of Hawaii 5-0, I have a baby girl born in Hawaii. I owe my life to this industry. My passion became my career. We've lost so many crew as they cannot survive the periods of no production work. The industry is nowhere near as steady as it once was and Hawaii and its residents have suffered. This bill would keep us all home and help to continue to provide for our families while re-investing all back into Hawaii's economy. People come to Hawaii and spend money to see what they saw on TV and in theatres. Lost, H50, Jurassic Park, Magnum PI, Hunger Games, Lilo & Stitch the list goes on and on. 27/32% is crucial for us to stay competitive in global markets with a sunset date on 2037 to give us future stability. Thank you for hearing my testimony. Whatever is invested to keep studios coming to Hawaii with tax breaks will only benefit Hawaii exponentially. Aloha.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 10:15:31 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
O. Carr	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha! I am a Native Hawaiian actor writing in support of SB 2796. The passage of this bill will help draw productions back to Hawai'i, boost our economy, uplift local talent and help the thousands employed in Hawai'i film industry get back to work.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 11:36:54 PM

Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noelani Willis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:



SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 11:40:14 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Frances Kealoha	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Frances Kealoha, and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of my family and countless others who have built their lives around the film and television industry.

For more than a decade, the majority of my immediate and extended family have worked steadily in this industry. My brother, cousins, their spouses, and even my nephews have held careers across different departments—skilled, professional work that allowed them to support their families, pay mortgages, and contribute to their local economies. These were not temporary or casual jobs. These were long-term careers.

Over the past year, every one of them has been laid off.

This was not due to lack of experience, poor performance, or unwillingness to work. It was the result of industry-wide shutdowns and instability that have left thousands of qualified workers without income. Families who once had reliable paychecks were suddenly forced into survival mode. Parents scrambled to find any available work—often outside their field and at significantly lower wages—just to keep food on the table and avoid losing their homes.

The impact has been devastating. Mortgages are at risk. Savings have been depleted. Health insurance has been lost. Career momentum built over decades has stalled, and in some cases disappeared entirely. The emotional toll—stress, anxiety, and uncertainty—has been immense, not just for the workers themselves but for their spouses and children as well.

The film and television industry is often discussed in terms of entertainment or luxury, but the reality is that it is a labor industry made up of middle-class workers: technicians, craftspeople, drivers, coordinators, editors, and support staff. When the industry shuts down, entire communities feel the consequences—restaurants, small businesses, rental markets, and local tax bases all suffer alongside these families.

I urge this legislature to recognize that what is happening is not temporary discomfort, but a prolonged economic crisis for a skilled workforce that wants to work and has a proven history of doing so.

These workers are not asking for special treatment. They are asking for the opportunity to return to work, to support their families, and to continue contributing to the economy as they have for years.

Thank you for taking the time to hear these voices and for considering the real human impact behind these numbers.

Respectfully,

Frances Kealoha

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 11:44:30 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Flordeliza Gainey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The film industry needs to stay strong in Hawaii. Increasing the tax incentive will bring more filming to this beautiful island. There is so much talent here who need work and experience and crew members need work!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:02:44 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicholas Myers	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Nicholas Myers. I am an actor within Hawaii's vast network of performing artists. This industry means everything to me, and I strongly support this bill because the film industry has always allowed me to work and express myself as an artist when I haven't been able to otherwise. Co-star and background work have allowed me to catch up on my financial stability, and further my career and creative freedom as an actor in Hawaii. It would be a great amiss to see less opportunity for actors like myself to receive less income and opportunity from higher quality film and TV production. So this is why I support SB 2580, as it will protect and provide more local jobs for Hawaii's creative workforce.

sincerely,

Nicholas Paul Myers

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:08:41 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alice Dorgans	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Bring back tv shows, series. Movies to the Hawaiian Islands. Many of us depend on these to make a living and feed our families.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:16:40 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Luis Linares	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Is already enough of a disgrace that the Hawai'i community was robbed from the opportunity to create such a historical project like "Chief Of War" because the city counsel failed to do its job of looking out for the best interest of the people of Hawai'i and chose not to make Hawai'i competitive in the industry therefore causing me and thousands of others to loose our jobs, our livelihoods and robbed the youth of Hawai'i from the possibility of pursuing a career in a such a creative field with so many different avenues of growth and the possibility to influence the world. Let's make sure this doesn't happen again and pass this bills. (SB2796 & SB2580) Invest into the future of Hawai'i and build a prosperous film industry for the islands. Mahalo. Aloha.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:31:13 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noriko Heward	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please save Hawaii's film industry! We have so many talented people in our community. Hawaii deserves a to be seen on the big screen across the world. Please help us!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:31:54 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ty Sanga	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

The film industry is a major part of Hawai‘i’s economy and has proven to impact the lives of many Hawai‘i residents. This bill will ensure the growth of Hawai‘i’s film community and keep our work force in the islands.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 1:12:06 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Larry O'Brien Jr.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I have not been working for 2 years since the last time I worked as an background with NCIS: Hawaii when the show ended.

I was working on NCIS: Hawaii, MPI, lilo and Snitch before the Hollywood Strike 2023 and worked two more episodses of NCIS: Hawaii before the cancellation of NCIS: Hawaii in 2024.

It been hard for me to get work after the film industry in Hawaii cutting jobs and moving away from Hawaii.

SB 2580 — Film Tax Credit Modernization

Submitted by: Brian Keaulana

Position: STRONG SUPPORT

Date: February 02, 2026

Chair and members, aloha mai kākou.

My name is Brian Keaulana. I submit testimony in strong support of SB 2580, which raises the base credit to 27%/32%, sets the annual cap to \$60 million, keeps the \$17 million per-production cap unless qualified spend is over \$60 million (then the cap goes away), and extends the sunset to January 1, 2038.

This bill helps Hawai'i build what we need most: a stable, predictable industry that supports local jobs, local vendors, and long-term workforce advancement. A stable pipeline is what allows us to train and promote local people into higher-skill departments and justify building out the infrastructure Hawai'i needs — including world-class stages, post capacity, and a modern, insurable water tank so we can keep more ocean and water work safely at home.

I respectfully encourage the Legislature to pair SB 2580 with clear "benefit Hawai'i" expectations: measurable local hiring, workforce development pathways, and community/cultural stewardship standards.

Mahalo for your consideration and support.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 1:50:14 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Toi Nofoa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Im for this BILL

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 2:07:49 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Malia Kalai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB2580

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 2:18:20 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
fabienne lequertier	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To the Hawai'i State Legislature,

During the 2025 legislative session, I submitted testimony emphasizing the urgent need to support the requests of Hawaii's film and television industry.

This support is vital for a significant portion of your constituents, and it is equally vital for Hawaii's tourism industry. Film and television provide a powerful window into Hawaii's extraordinary culture, the beauty of the islands, and the kindness and generosity of its people.

Do you fully realize the economic contribution that the film industry brings to the State of Hawai'i?

As a member of the *Magnum P.I.* fandom, I had the opportunity to discover Hawaii during two visits in 2023 and 2025, and I will be returning again in August 2026. *Magnum P.I.* is a series that strongly conveys Hawaiian values, and that impression is confirmed within the very first moments spent on your beautiful islands.

The connection between what is portrayed on screen and what is experienced in reality is undeniable. Film productions not only create jobs and economic activity, but they also inspire visitors from around the world to come to Hawaii and engage respectfully with its culture and communities.

I respectfully urge you **not to reject Bill SB2580**. Supporting this legislation means supporting local workers, local businesses, and the long-term strength of both Hawaii's creative economy and its tourism industry.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

With respect,
Fabienne Lequertier

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 2:19:51 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Earl Louis Williams	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I Support SB2796.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 2:20:29 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leyla	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We need to Malama the culture, the aina, the language, the traditions, all of it. Let's stop erasing what we stand for and what we love. Mahalo

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 2:39:11 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bianca Matthews-Inofinada	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

👉 I support SB2580.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 3:29:14 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mikiala Akau	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support keeping film making in Hawaii and lessening the burden on our local films n makers!!
We need to diversify our economy, and this helps.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 3:35:38 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chanel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill and want the Hawai'i film industry to be successful and to help those that have worked so hard to support their families in a tough field.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 4:32:55 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anthony Czumalowski	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please seriously consider expanding the tax credit incentives to increase the chances for more productions and opportunities for the state of Hawai'i. I believe this would help prevent losing productions overseas/internationally AND provide opportunities for more work and cash flow on the islands.

This would be a step in the right direction for bringing a thriving industry to locals and the state, and quite possibly a chance for those "Priced out of Paradise" to return home.

Yes on SB 2580!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 4:35:33 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Matthew Yokota	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

message:

“Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the committee. My name is Matthew Yokota, I’ve worked in the industry for 3 years. I stand on my written testimony in support of SB2580 as it helps me support my family any time there is work available. Please consider lots of family’s in Hawaii could benefits greatly from this job Thank you for the opportunity to testify”

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 4:37:30 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Haupi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:



SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 5:05:05 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Weylene Brown	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill and approve to keep the Hawai'i movie industry going!!!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 5:57:37 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lauren Ballesteros-Watanabe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair DeCoite and Vice-Chair Waikai and members of the Committee,

I am writing in **support of SB2580**. As an actor and indie filmmaker, I have had the extreme pleasure of working on local and national projects filmed in Hawai'i. Every time, the local crew are what makes the work special. That comes after knowing what it is like filming elsewhere. SB2580 is a critical measure to **ensure local film jobs are supported and the local film industry can become sustainable and diversify our economy** while also supporting tourism. SB 2580 is important because it will:

- Raises the film tax credit
- Keeps Hawai'i competitive with other production hubs
- Brings large productions AND local jobs here
- Supports crew, actors, vendors, small businesses, and families
- Strengthens our economy beyond tourism

If the state can please help usher in more productions with this measure, ultimately all of Hawai'i benefits, we have a whole ecosystem of industry workers that live, work, and circulate money in our local economy.

Please help bring the film industry back in Hawai'i by passing SB2580. Mahalo!

Me ke aloha,
Lauren Ballesteros-Watanabe

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 6:13:51 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jenn Alshemary	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Jennifer Alshemary — In Support of SB 2580

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jennifer Alshemary, and I respectfully submit this testimony in support of SB 2580, which strengthens Hawai‘i’s motion picture, digital media, and film production income tax credit. This bill increases the tax credit to 27 % of qualified production costs in higher-population counties and 32 % in smaller counties, raises the overall annual cap to \$60 million, and modernizes the program to better reflect current market realities — including provisions to encourage long-term and major productions.

I support this bill because it will attract more film and media projects to Hawai‘i, bringing new investments and economic activity to our islands. By enhancing the tax credit and offering predictability and competitiveness, we can draw larger productions that create stable, well-paying jobs for our local cast, crew, and support businesses. This helps build career opportunities in Hawai‘i’s creative workforce and keeps more creative talent living and working in our communities.

Furthermore, expanding this credit supports small businesses and local vendors that provide goods and services to production crews — from catering and transportation to lodging and equipment rentals — boosting economic benefits beyond the film industry itself.

For these reasons, I urge you to support SB 2580 and invest in Hawai‘i’s creative economy, workforce, and future growth.

Mahalo nui loa.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 6:15:40 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kelly Kraynek	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha chair, vice chair and members of the committee my name is Kelly Kraynek I've worked in the film industry for 23 years here in Hawaii. I stand on my written testimony to support SB2796. thank you for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 6:29:39 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lacie Komatsu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:



SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 7:13:13 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nigel Nally	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 7:18:47 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kyra Ah Sam	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:



SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 7:24:15 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kevin Kersting	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and members of the Senate committee,

My name is Kevin Kersting. I'm a member of IATSE Local 665, the union representing technicians and artisans in the entertainment industry in Hawai'i. **I strongly support SB2580**, Relating to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit.

This bill is a direct investment in stable, middle-class jobs for Hawaii's creative workforce. The changes proposed in SB 2580 will significantly increase Hawai'i's ability to attract lasting work with thriving wage jobs to stabilize the long-term health of this vital industry. I thank the legislature for their foresight in proposing the increase of the overall cap, the increase of the per production percentages, the inclusion of "streaming platforms" as qualified productions, and the extension of the sunset date will make great strides in supporting the thousands of local working families that are supported by this industry. Excluding companies that incur more than \$60 million in qualified expenditures from the "per production" cap will encourage long-term projects towards our islands.

Hawai'i's film industry supports thousands of working families in the state of Hawai'i. These thriving wages are irreplaceable by other industries. When the film tax incentive is empowered, this industry generates significantly to state GDP, earnings, and even visitor spending. When the film tax incentive is restrained, we not only lose the economic benefits of the industry, but we also lose the ability to tell our own stories. To remain competitive in the global market, it is imperative that Hawai'i strengthens and stabilizes the film tax incentive program. SB 2580 will take meaningful steps to empower our film tax incentive program, and will support thousands of working families in Hawai'i.

I strongly support SB 2580. I urge your committee to do the same. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,

Kevin Kersting

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 7:24:35 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Frank Mitchell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB 2580 to keep the people who are telling Hawaii stories here!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 7:33:31 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hualalai Chung	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha my name is Hualālai Chung and I am writing in support of SB 2796. As a Native Hawaiian actor born and raised here in the islands, my biggest drive is to continue story telling as our ancestors before us. The film industry here in Hawaii has been a strong economic contributor to the growth of work opportunities for our local communities, in addition to giving folks like myself the opportunity to tell stories as our kupuna had.

Mahalo for the consideration and for your support of our film industry!

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB2580

Submitted by: Katie Doyle

Position: Support

2.2.26

Thank you for taking the time to consider my written testimony in support of SB2580.

I am an Emmy Award winning (season one, *The White Lotus*) Location Casting Director, a Teamster with Local 996, a long time member of SAG-AFTRA, and one of only two (2) Casting Directors in Hawaii who have been inducted into the Casting Society of America. Prior to my tenure as a Casting Director, I was an actress who made a living in the industry appearing in dozens of commercials, television programs and feature films. My husband and I have lived on Oahu for over 30 years and our only son was born at the Queen's Hospital in October of 2000.

Through my work as a Location Casting Director, and we are just one small department among many on productions such as *The White Lotus*, *Chief of War*, *The Wrecking Crew*, *Protecting Jared*, *Big Eyes*, *Godzilla*, *Jurassic World*, *Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom*, *Snatched*, *Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle*, *Jungle Cruise*, *Triple Frontier*, *Midway*, *Hobbs & Shaw* and *The Wrong Missy*, to name a few, we have been fortunate to hire thousands of local actors as Principal or Extra talent. Our department has generated dozens of additional jobs for local people as Stand Ins and Production Assistants. Over the years, we have been grateful to see an increase in the scope and number of Principal Roles we are being asked to cast locally rather than flying someone in from LA or NY. This is indicative not only of the growth of the industry here in Hawaii but of the increased quality of the training and experience our local talent is being afforded. The hard work and dedication of many is just now beginning to pay off for us literally and figuratively. As numerous producers and their teams have taken great pains to explain to our administration, this growth will not continue with the current cap in place. The most relevant and personal experience for me has been watching the demise of the film industry in New Orleans where mistakes about a tax cap were clearly made and the incredible boom in Atlanta, where it seems wiser heads prevailed.

There are myriad of examples and statistics to prove how our industry brings in millions of dollars to our local economy directly and indirectly through the catering industry, hotel industry, local shops, etc etc... but for me it's much more personal. The people in my industry are solution oriented and, in general, they are among the most generous people in the world. We all gain when these people come into our communities with fresh ideas and willingness to jump onto community boards, put their kids into our public schools, open up their own businesses, volunteer, make donations to local non profits. I have been privileged to work on all of our islands and whenever a production comes in, they are seeking ways to benefit the community that will host them - sometimes for a year at a time. I was a Girl Scout and these guys follow our motto of always leaving a place better than how they found it.

Lastly, I humbly suggest that we who live and work here in the film and television industry are an asset to our state. My husband is a teacher and a social worker working with our most challenge houseless population. We make efforts to volunteer to make our neighborhood a better and safer place for all. Personally, I don't know anyone in our industry who doesn't put in work

hours that would make most “normal” people collapse while continuing to contribute volunteer time for many projects. We pay taxes, contribute to our community in many ways and understand the gravity of what will happen if we don’t make it more attractive to bring in film productions.

Respectfully Submitted,

Katie Doyle-Hummel, Local 996, CSA
Location Casting Director
katiedoylecasting@gmail.com
808.258.7185

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 7:39:53 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Katrina Turner	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Everyone talks about brain drain in Hawai'i. This bill is an opportunity to bring jobs here so our talent can stay here in Hawai'i instead of moving to the continent just to pursue their careers. We need to be diversifying the types of jobs available on the island that can provide a living wage so our people stop having to move away. There are so many talented locals that would benefit greatly from encouraging filmmakers to come here. From the actors to technicians, to the general economy that would benefit from income other than tourism. Not to mention, we would be able to tell our stories here, where they happened.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 7:49:13 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Caitlin Bright	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am Caitlin Bright, a Native Hawaiian actor. Supporting this bill is supporting the Hawaiian community. This not only helps our economy outside of tourism, but also helps supply jobs to the local community. Our voice as a Hawaiian community has consistently tried to be silenced. The film and television industry is another avenue to share our voice, our culture, our story and with our people. This bill will help echo the voice of our culture, history and people.

Mahalo.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 7:58:02 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
claudia kühn	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

ich möchte die Filmindustrie auf Hawaii mit dieser Eingabe unterstützen

es hängen viele Arbeitsplätze daran und es leben viele Menschen

davon.

Danke

c.Kühn

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 7:58:52 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Mitchell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Lisa Lee Mitchell, and I am a proud member of **IATSE Local 665**, representing the technicians and artisans who form the backbone of Hawai'i's entertainment industry. I am writing to express my strong support for SB 2580.

This bill represents a vital investment in the creative workforce of our islands. The proposed changes will significantly enhance Hawai'i's ability to attract consistent, high-quality work and stabilize the long-term health of our industry. Specifically, I would like to highlight several key provisions:

- **Increased Caps and Percentages:** Raising the overall cap and per-production percentages is essential for Hawai'i to remain competitive in a global market.
- **Streaming Modernization:** Including "streaming platforms" as qualified productions reflects the current reality of the industry and opens new doors for local work.
- **Long-Term Project Incentives:** Excluding companies with over \$60 million in qualified expenditures from the "per production" cap will directly encourage the kind of sustained, multi-year projects that provide true stability for working families.
- **Sunset Extension:** This provides the predictability necessary for studios to choose Hawai'i for their long-term production cycles.

On a personal note, I had the privilege of working on **Hawaii Five-0 for ten years**. That single production provided a decade of stable, high-quality employment for myself and hundreds of other local crew members. It allowed us to plan for our futures, support our families, and contribute to our local economy consistently. SB 2580 is vital because it creates the environment necessary to attract more of these multi-year, 'anchor' productions to our islands.

Why this matters for Hawai'i: The film industry supports thousands of local families with wages that are irreplaceable by other sectors. When our film tax incentive is empowered, it generates significant returns in state GDP, local earnings, and visitor spending. Conversely, when these incentives are restrained, we lose not only the economic benefits but also our ability to tell our own stories on a global stage.

To remain competitive, Hawai'i must strengthen and stabilize this program. **SB 2580** is a meaningful step toward that goal.

I strongly support SB 2580 and respectfully urge your committee to pass this measure. Mahalo for your time and for your support of Hawai'i's working families.

Sincerely,

Lisa Mitchell

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 8:02:50 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barrie Kealoha	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am Barrie Kealoha, a local actor and performer on O'ahu. Tax credits need to be restructured here in order to entice movies and TV shows with Hawaiian stories to be shot here on the 'Āina. There are too many talented people here who deserve to tell their own stories, that we shouldn't have our talent outsourced to New Zealand or the mainland.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 8:05:32 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ixchel Lopez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha. My name is Ixchel López and I am a filmmaker, actor, and Hawai'i resident. I support this bill because I support local jobs, a creative economy, and our people. An alarming number of locals in creative careers, some who have been born and raised here through generations, are forced to leave the island to find work. Creating a better environment and incentive for film and television work to operate here is a benefit for everyone. It boosts our economy and is a reflection of the creative talent here.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 8:07:20 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Thomas h. Penny	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Thomas H. Penny. I'm a member of IATSE Local 665, the union representing technicians and artisans in the entertainment industry in Hawai'i. **I strongly support SB2580**, Relating to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit.

This bill is a direct investment in stable, middle-class jobs for Hawaii's creative workforce. The changes proposed in SB 2580 will significantly increase Hawai'i's ability to attract lasting work with thriving wage jobs to stabilize the long-term health of this vital industry. I thank the legislature for their foresight in proposing the increase of the overall cap, the increase of the per production percentages, the inclusion of "streaming platforms" as qualified productions, and the extension of the sunset date will make great strides in supporting the thousands of local working families that are supported by this industry. Excluding companies that incur more than \$60 million in qualified expenditures from the "per production" cap will encourage long-term projects towards our islands.

Hawai'i's film industry supports thousands of working families in the state of Hawai'i. These thriving wages are irreplaceable by other industries. When the film tax incentive is empowered, this industry generates significantly to state GDP, earnings, and even visitor spending. When the film tax incentive is restrained, we not only lose the economic benefits of the industry, but we also lose the ability to tell our own stories. To remain competitive in the global market, it is imperative that Hawai'i strengthens and stabilizes the film tax incentive program. SB 2580 will take meaningful steps to empower our film tax incentive program, and will support thousands of working families in Hawai'i.

I strongly support SB 2580. I urge your committee to do the same. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo, Thomas Penny

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 8:12:55 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melinda Santhany	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In SUPPORT of this bill! Mahalo!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 8:19:37 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amy Hanaialii Gilliom	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It is extremely needed for this Bill to pass. I have been with my Attorney Bill Meyer for the very beginning. Who introduced to the first Tax incentive Bill.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 8:20:01 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ANTHONT DANIEL	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

i have been lucky to work in this industry for many years an feel its a privilage that i respect so much ,change is a good thing means growth and with that we enrich our lives and the lives of the people in Hawaii, we need a clean bill to make working in the islands attractive to investors and keep local people gainfully employeed ,everytime hawaii is shown in a movie tv show or online its a postive impact for all hawaiian islands and mosly brings great memories for all watching there is no other state that can reproduce the aloha we share visually spiritually and emotionally ,please make SB2580 a positive reallity for all in Hawaii.,lights camera ACTION

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 8:21:18 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chanielle Feliciano	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of SB2580. This measure supports local jobs and helps keep Hawai'i competitive in attracting film and media production. I respectfully urge your support.

Mahalo.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 8:21:46 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
S Yamashita	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support this Bill to keep Film and Television jobs in Hawaii. My daughter is forced to live out-of-state part time due to the lack of job opportunities here, the home she was born and raised. Mahalo for hearing me out.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 8:21:55 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shelly Sakuma	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e, my name is Shelly,

I am in full support of this bill and would like to see it passed. I support the film industry here in Hawaii to keep our jobs here in Hawaii because it supports our local families. I'm supporting this bill in hopes that my son whom lives on the continent and is very involved in the film industry may one day be able to come home to a prosperous industry instead of having to go elsewhere to continue in his career. Please pass this bill.

Mahalo Nui Loa,

Shelly Sakuma

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 8:23:16 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sally "Kalei" Davis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am Sally "Kalei" Davis.

I support this bill. I have worked in the film industry in Hawai'i since the late 1980's. This is the worst it has been. I remember a legislator from last year saying "Hollywood needs to pay their fair share". I told him he would get 0% of 0. Production chases Tax Incentives.

Mahalo nui,

Sally "Kalei" Davis

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 8:44:59 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Vincent Laurent Loïc LEQUERTIER	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To the Hawai‘i State Legislature,

During the 2025 legislative session, I testified to stress the importance of continuing to support Hawaii’s film and television industry. This industry matters deeply to local workers and businesses, and it plays a meaningful role in sustaining Hawaii’s broader tourism economy.

I speak not only as an observer, but as a fan of *Magnum P.I.*. The series first inspired me to visit Hawaii, and I have since traveled to the islands twice, in 2023 and 2025, with another visit planned for 2026. What I experienced there matched what I saw on screen: a unique culture, extraordinary natural beauty, and a spirit of warmth and generosity that left a lasting impression.

Film and television productions do more than create direct and indirect jobs. They give Hawaii global visibility, attract respectful visitors, and encourage long-term economic activity across multiple sectors. For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to support—rather than reject—SB2580, and to continue providing strong fiscal support to Hawaii’s film industry for the benefit of its people, its economy, and its future.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

With respect,

Vincent LEQUERTIER

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 8:45:13 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Beatriz Talerico	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Beatriz Talerico, and I submit this testimony in strong support of the measure to expand and modernize Hawai‘i’s Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit.

I am a professional writer developing film and television projects for both traditional studios and streaming platforms. This bill reflects how content is made today and ensures Hawai‘i remains competitive in a rapidly changing industry.

Increasing the credit to 27 percent for counties with populations over 700,000 and 32 percent for counties with smaller populations will encourage productions to film across the state. When productions come to Hawai‘i, they create jobs beyond filming, including writers’ rooms, development roles, and long-term creative opportunities for local talent.

Including streaming platforms as qualified productions is essential. Many of today’s most impactful projects are developed for streaming, and this update allows Hawai‘i to compete for those productions.

Raising the annual cap to \$60 million and excluding productions with at least \$60 million in qualified costs from the per-production cap provides the predictability needed for projects to move forward. Writers are often attached early in development, and stable incentives help keep projects based in Hawai‘i.

The requirement for independent third-party certification strengthens transparency and public trust while maintaining program integrity.

Extending the sunset date to January 1, 2038 provides long-term certainty. Creative projects take years to develop, and stability allows writers and producers to build lasting relationships and invest locally.

This measure supports a sustainable creative economy, strengthens Hawai‘i’s workforce, and ensures local stories can be developed and produced here.

I respectfully urge you to support this bill.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 8:56:03 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Meredith Bechirian	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I submit testimony in support of the proposal to increase Hawai‘i’s Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit.

This tax credit is a proven economic development tool that creates local jobs, supports small businesses, and attracts production spending to Hawai‘i. The tiered structure encourages filming on the neighbor islands while keeping Hawai‘i competitive with other states and countries offering similar incentives.

Because the credit is performance-based and tied to qualified production costs, it provides measurable economic benefits while promoting long-term industry growth and statewide economic diversification.

For these reasons, I strongly support passage of this measure.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Meredith Bechirian

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:02:32 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ishmail Hills	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Ishmail Hills. The tax credits will bring more jobs to Hawaii and keep locals here in the state. Plus the film industry will also support local businesses.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:02:48 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Edward C Lou-Goode	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

More tv and movies made in Hawaii helps supports the local community and tourism!!!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:05:26 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John C. Meier	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am John C. Meier. I have been working as stuntman here in Hawaii since 1982. I support this bill.

Mahalo,

John C. Meier

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:06:49 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Self	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Representatives,

This is an investment in your Keiki's Future.

I am now retired from my 35 year, Union Motion Picture Career, and the one thing I know is this:

IT TAKES MONEY TO MAKE MONEY!

If you Pass these resolutions, your Keiki will be working in media for the rest of their lives!

Warmest Regards,

William A. Self

Full time Resident of Hawai'i since 2002.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:11:08 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bradley Jackson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello, Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the committee. My name is Bradley Jackson, I've worked in the industry for 18 years.

This bill is a great opportunity to keep the Hawai'i economy strong, keep people off unemployment, and create a viable option for productions to continue to make big films in Hawaii.

I stand on my written testimony in support of SB2580. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Aloha,

Bradley Jackson

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:11:19 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rachel Raquino	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Rachel Raquino, and I am a resident of Hawai‘i. I am writing in strong support of SB 2580 and respectfully urge the Legislature to advance this bill.

While my husband works in this industry, my support for SB 2580 extends far beyond any one employer or group. This legislation is about protecting local jobs, strengthening Hawai‘i’s economy, and ensuring long-term benefits for residents across our state, whether or not they work directly in the industry.

The industry impacted by SB 2580 plays a critical role in Hawai‘i’s economic ecosystem. It provides stable, well-paying jobs for local families, supports small and locally owned businesses, and generates tax revenue that helps fund essential public services. These are not abstract benefits. They show up in our schools, infrastructure, healthcare systems, and community programs.

Importantly, this industry also creates significant indirect economic activity. From local vendors and service providers to transportation, logistics, and professional services, many sectors rely on the stability and continuity this work provides. When the industry is supported, the ripple effects strengthen communities statewide.

SB 2580 helps ensure that Hawai‘i remains a place where local workers can build careers, not just temporary jobs, and where businesses can plan, invest, and grow responsibly. Stability and clarity in policy are essential for maintaining a strong workforce and avoiding unnecessary disruptions that ultimately affect consumers and taxpayers alike.

At a time when Hawai‘i faces high costs of living and increasing economic pressure on families, it is more important than ever to support legislation that:

- Keeps jobs in Hawai‘i
- Supports local economic circulation
- Encourages responsible, well-regulated industry activity
- Benefits the broader public, not just a single sector

SB 2580 represents a thoughtful approach that balances economic vitality with public interest, and I strongly encourage its passage.

Mahalo for your time, consideration, and commitment to the people of Hawai‘i.

Respectfully,

Rachel Raquino

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:16:48 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bobby Silva	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in Support of SB2580

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:18:45 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Johnathon Johnson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I write in full support of SB2580, as well as SB 3088 and companion bill HB 2269. Thank you, Senators, for listening to our concerns and for addressing specific issues related to Hawai'i film production.

I am a member of the Directors Guild of America and was the unit production manager on Doogie Kamealoha, MD and Red One, and production supervisor on Moana. Currently, I am the unit production manager on Protecting Jared, a Netflix film that will begin shooting later this month.

Hawai'i's film tax incentive has been a huge success in the past, but has fallen behind in the past two years. Most other states with thriving film production have incentives above 30%. My community is now suffering because in 2025, there was nearly zero production work on the Islands.

These bill help address four major concerns for film workers: **increasing the overall percentages, allowing larger projects to have a larger per-production cap, increasing the over all cap, and increasing the sunset date.**

Increasing the base rate to 27%/32% is the single best move we can make to bring mainland production spending into our economy. The studios have departments dedicated to judging incentives against one another. Hawai'i is often overlooked from the start because of its current 22% base rate. This increase will help all productions, but will mostly help smaller local production or shorter jobs coming from the mainland that do reach the production cap.

Allowing productions that spend more than 60 million to exceed the per-production cap is exactly what is needed to bring larger and long-term productions. Long-term television series and big-budget studio features will be able to shoot exclusively in Hawai'i rather than the current

standard - where shows shoot exteriors for a couple of weeks, then shoot another location that passes for Hawai'i.

Increasing the overall cap is a commitment to finding success in this plan. The current \$50 million cap has not increased in several years. Raising it to \$60 million is a modest increase in line with inflation since the last increase. These bills are not about giving a handout to corporate studios; they enable the state and production companies to work as investment partners, adding to the local economy.

Extending the sunset date on the tax incentive is a strong message to producers and studios that Hawai'i is a committed investment partner. Television series have been the true stimulus in building the film community on Island. Television series producers need to know that they can create multi-year productions before committing to shoot in Hawai'i.

These bills will help bring mainland production money to the islands and distribute it to local vendors and workers; that's why they have my support. If enacted in conjunction with the other bills focused on improving the terms of our film tax incentives, they send a strong message that Hawai'i is a film-friendly state.

Thank you, Senators, for your stewardship and partnership.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:20:24 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dennis Garber	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

All of Hawaii benefits from these tax breaks. It puts more people to work here. Hotel workers, caterers, taxi drivers, restaurants, dry cleaners, etc.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:20:42 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Romano	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I Lisa Romano a long standing Sag/Aftra ask humbly for your support of this bill! Our industry our island and her people need this bill to continue to create and earn a decent living! Mahalo Nui Loa , Lisa Romano .

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:23:47 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Arika Murphy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

have been in multiple shows and movies filmed here in Hawai'i. I know at least 100 local people that benefit from this industry to live and support their families here on multiple islands. Please pass these bills to improve our economic future for this industry.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:24:21 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Debra Grey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To the Hawai‘i State Legislature,

During the 2025 legislative session, I submitted testimony emphasizing the urgent need to support the requests of Hawaii’s film and television industry.

I fully support SB 2580. This support is vital for a significant portion of your constituents, and it is equally vital for Hawaii’s tourism industry. Film and television provide a powerful window into Hawaii’s extraordinary culture, the beauty of the islands, and the kindness and generosity of its people.

Do you fully realize the economic contribution that the film industry brings to the State of Hawai‘i?

As a member of the Magnum P.I. fandom, I had the opportunity to visit Hawaii in 2023 when the show was reinstated. I will be returning again in August 2026 for a Fandom event. Magnum P.I. is a series that strongly conveys Hawaiian values, and that impression is confirmed within the very first moments spent on your beautiful islands.

The connection between what is portrayed on screen and what is experienced in reality is undeniable. Film productions not only create jobs and economic activity, but they also inspire visitors from around the world to come to Hawaii and engage respectfully with its culture and communities.

Supporting this legislation means supporting local workers, local businesses, and the long-term strength of both Hawaii’s creative economy and its tourism industry.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

With respect,
Debra Grey

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:25:00 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Phyllis Bruce	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am full support of this bill. Anything you can do to bring the film industry back to Hawaii is greatly appreciated by so many! You not only have a beautiful state, but a beautiful culture. The industry helps so many and provides so much to those of us who can only view through tv shows and movies! Please do the right thing and support this bill!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:26:09 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aileen Lily	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I grew up in Hawaii's film industry and have provided jobs through my training of our local community. We need this industry to survive and thrive.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:26:36 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Julian Rojas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB 2580 because film and television productions have historically supported small businesses and jobs in West O'ahu. With no series currently filming in Hawai'i, local businesses and workers are being impacted. Strengthening film incentives will help bring productions back and support our local economy.

Mahalo for your consideration.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:30:21 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Charles Prescott	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, My name is Charlie I am a filmmaker in Hawaii. I am in favor of giving more funds to our film industry in Hawaii. I have seen so many of our filmmakers come together to help our films further production. I know by giving us more tax incentives I know it will help our state create more jobs and opportunities. Our people are collective and only want our stories to be told by our own voices.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:31:22 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
devon nekoba	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass this bill. The film and television industry in Hawaii Is such a huge part of our economy here, and right now many are suffering because places that LOOK like Hawaii are filming shows SET in Hawaii purely because it's cheaper there. Why don't we make it EASIER for people to shoot here? Please help! Mahalo, Devon Nekoba

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:36:08 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Moku Durant	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha!

My name is Moku Durant and I am a proud Native Hawaiian born and raised on my beautiful island home of O‘ahu. I am an actor who this bill will directly benefit, as the film industry provides many opportunities for Native Hawaiians as well as Hawaii locals with the opportunity to tell stories based in our island home, while showcasing the natural beauty of our ‘aina. Even looking outside of myself, the myriad of jobs that productions bring to local crew members has, for decades, given them stable work that allows them to work in this industry, while not needing to relocate to the continent. The film industry is so important not only for showcasing the islands, but for supporting the livelihood of so many of its inhabitants.

With SB2580, we could breathe much needed life into an industry that can support the locals as well as the local economy. With the ever changing landscape of traditional content consumption, we need to be able to pivot and provide incentives for productions to want to film here. After the cancellation of Rescue: HI Surf, we were, for the first time in literal decades, a state with not large productions. The reason for this is because we simply do not offer to financial incentives that would entice production companies to even want to film here. It especially hurts to see stories set in Hawaii (Chief of War, The Wrecking Crew) filmed in New Zealand. I believe Hawai‘i could be the hub for pacific stories and I would love to live in a world where there are a multitude of productions filming on the island.

Aside from the benefit that the film industry would provide for those who work within it, the local economy in industries outside of the film industry. Local businesses would get a boost from the many individuals coming to our islands to film, plus the hospitality industry could have an influx due to people needing somewhere to stay. I’m FAR from knowledgeable about these things, but it is something I figure would naturally happen when you bring visitors from outside of Hawaii to our islands.

I support this bill and believe that it would give Hawaii a lucrative industry outside of tourism. Plus, as a born and raised Native Hawaiian, I would love to tell stories set here as well as showcase my island home.

Mahalo for your time,

Moku Durant

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:38:53 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Erin Chung	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Film Industry is a critical asset to the economic wellbeing of the State. SB2580 will entice more productions to the islands, contributing to economic stimulation, creating and sustaining jobs and ensuring Hawai'i's stories are told from Hawai'i's shores. Pass SB2580 today for a healthy and thriving film industry in Hawai'i!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:43:42 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kamaka Fernandez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB 2580 and the continuation of the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit in Hawai‘i. Film and media productions bring real economic activity to our islands, create jobs for local residents, and support small businesses and communities statewide.

Beyond economics, these projects share our culture, landscapes, and stories with the world, while opening doors for local talent in creative and technical fields. Continuing to attract responsible productions helps ensure that opportunities, skills, and storytelling can grow here at home for generations to come.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:43:52 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mark Hack	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Working as a Background actor and a current member of SAG-AFTRA, I support this bill. It will support our film industry, crew, actors, hospitality, transportation, and so much more.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:50:19 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lysa Kama-Carr	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in full support of SB2580.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:52:41 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicholas Gianforti	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill and how it will positively affect Hawai'i's economy and creative workforce..

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:53:00 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amanda Finn	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I **strongly support SB2580**, which would strengthen Hawai'i's motion picture, digital media, and film production tax credit. As someone who has worked in the Hawai'i film industry for nearly **20 years**, I have seen firsthand the positive impact it brings to our islands – both culturally and economically. The incentives in this bill help keep production in Hawai'i by making us more competitive with other states and countries, encouraging filmmakers to choose our home for major projects. This directly translates into jobs and real income for local crew, actors, service providers, small businesses, and families who depend on this work.

While I don't rely solely on the industry, many of my friends, family, and colleagues do. When productions come here, money is spent locally on housing, food, transportation, equipment rentals, and services – infusing our communities with revenue and opportunity. It also brings pride to Hawai'i residents by showcasing our unique landscapes and stories on a global stage.

With competition for film and TV productions increasing across the nation, strengthening our tax incentives makes good sense for Hawai'i's economy and workforce. Supporting SB2580 is not just about helping creators – it's about supporting the future of an industry that has helped sustain families here for decades.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:53:55 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Angelica Quinn	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Hawai‘i State Legislature,

Thank you for this important information regarding SB 2580. I understand the urgency and the positive impact this bill would have on our local film industry here in Hawai‘i.

I will submit my testimony in support of SB 2580 today. I am supporting these bills, to help families by employing our local crew so that they can continue to support their ohana and not have to move to find work elsewhere, to help local actors such as myself continue to work in the island we all love and call home, and encourage other productions to invest their projects to be filmed here on our Hawaiian Islands and fortify our filmmaking industry.

Thank you for your continued advocacy.

Sincerely,

Angelica Quinn

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:54:39 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elexis Draine	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Elexis Draine, and I am a working actor based in Hawai‘i. I respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of SB2580.

SB2580 proposes meaningful updates to Hawai‘i’s Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit by increasing the credit to 27% on O‘ahu and 32% on neighbor islands, raising the annual credit cap, expanding eligibility to certain streaming productions, and extending the program’s sunset date. These changes are critical to maintaining Hawai‘i’s competitiveness in an industry where productions often choose filming locations based on available incentives.

As a local actor, I have witnessed firsthand how film and television productions create real opportunities for residents. When productions come to Hawai‘i, they do more than capture our landscapes—they invest in our people. Actors, crew members, musicians, drivers, caterers, small businesses, and countless other local vendors benefit from the economic activity generated by these projects. Stable production activity allows creative professionals like myself to build sustainable careers without being forced to relocate to the continent.

The film industry is not only about entertainment; it is an economic driver that supports jobs and workforce development across the state. Strengthening this tax credit helps attract large-scale productions, encourages repeat business, and signals that Hawai‘i is committed to supporting its creative economy. Without competitive incentives, productions will simply choose other locations, taking jobs and revenue with them.

Additionally, expanding the credit supports neighbor island economies and helps distribute opportunity more equitably across the state. For many local artists and technicians, consistent production work can mean the difference between remaining in Hawai‘i or leaving due to limited career pathways.

I respectfully urge the Legislature to pass SB2580 to ensure that Hawai‘i remains a premier destination for film and digital media production while continuing to create opportunities for local talent. Supporting this measure is an investment in our workforce, our economy, and the future of Hawai‘i’s creative industries.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify and for your continued commitment to supporting local workers.

Sincerely,

Elexis Drainie

Hawai‘i Actor

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:55:48 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jorin Young	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in strong support of **SB2580**, which proposes critical updates to Hawai‘i’s Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit.

SB2580 strengthens one of Hawai‘i’s most impactful economic and workforce-development tools. The bill increases the refundable credit to **27% in counties with populations over 700,000 and 32% in counties with smaller populations**, a change that reflects modern production costs and maintains Hawai‘i’s competitive edge among global filming destinations.

The measure also **raises the annual statewide cap to \$60 million and exempts productions with at least \$60 million in qualified expenditures from the \$17 million per-production cap**, ensuring that Hawai‘i can attract large-scale productions that bring significant spending, local hiring, and long-term industry investment.

Importantly, SB2580 **requires independent third-party CPA certification** of reported costs and hiring data, strengthening accountability, transparency, and public trust in the program. This safeguard ensures the State receives reliable reporting while maintaining an efficient claims process for production companies.

As someone who works directly with NH keiki and developing their passion into creative careers, I see the impact that a robust film industry can have on Hawai‘i’s youth. Increased production activity translates into job shadowing opportunities, student mentorships, internships, school partnerships, and exposure to creative professions that are typically inaccessible in island communities. A thriving film sector directly supports the development of the next generation of storytellers, performers, technicians, and cultural bearers.

The bill also modernizes Hawai‘i’s approach by **including certain streaming productions in the definition of “qualified production,”** ensuring our state remains aligned with current industry realities. This update recognizes that today’s media landscape is driven largely by streaming platforms, whose investments can significantly boost local economies

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to pass **SB2580**. Mahalo for your consideration and for supporting opportunities that uplift Hawai‘i’s creative workforce.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:56:02 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Malosi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The motion picture and digital media industry has a real and measurable impact on my livelihood and the livelihoods of many people I work alongside. When productions come to Hawai‘i, they do not just hire actors and crew, they rely heavily on local small businesses for catering, transportation, equipment, lodging, and services. My food truck has directly benefited from these opportunities, allowing us to employ people, purchase local supplies, and reinvest money back into our community. SB 2580 helps ensure Hawai‘i remains competitive with other states and countries that are aggressively attracting productions through strong incentive programs. Without a competitive tax credit, Hawai‘i risks losing projects and when projects leave, so do jobs, contracts, and income for local workers and small businesses like mine. This bill also supports long-term industry stability. When productions return consistently, it creates sustainable career pathways for local residents, encourages training and skill-building, and strengthens the overall creative and economic ecosystem in Hawai‘i. The proposed updates in SB 2580 help balance accountability while continuing to attract projects that bring meaningful economic activity to our islands.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:57:39 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jason Fong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SB 2580 to expand the Film Tax Credit.

By increasing the cap and extending the program, this bill helps attract larger, long-term productions that provide steady, reliable work for local talent. Including streaming projects also reflects where our industry is going. Having predictability through 2038 gives actors, crew, and all creative professionals confidence to build our lives and careers here in Hawaii.

Mahalo for considering this important investment in Hawaii's creative workforce.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:58:07 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michelle Mazzetti	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha! I grew up in Kamuela on Hawai'i Island and was inspired to move away to film school for college. Thanks to the local Hawai'i State Film Industry, I had the opportunity to move home after college instead of having to relocate after to another place that could support my career. Allowing me to stay has allowed me to raise a family and also participate in volunteering in many other aspects of our local community. My story is one of multitudes of professionals all across the state in my same position-- please support these bills and prevent the diaspora of professionals out of Hawai'i. Not only is it good for the economy, it is good to keep families together for a stronger Hawai'i. This is why I support SB2580.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:03:14 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dylan Sheldon	Testifying for SAG/AFTRA	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a SAG union actor living here in Hawaii for 10 years now. I strongly support SB 2580 and SB 2796 to help sustain Hawaii's film industry and middle-class union jobs.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:08:22 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill supports:

- **Local jobs** in film, trades, technology, and creative fields
- **Small businesses** that benefit from production spending
- **Workforce development** for Hawai‘i residents seeking careers in media
- **Diversification of the economy**, reducing reliance on tourism
- **Opportunities for local storytellers** to participate in a global industry

The motion picture and digital media sector has already proven its value to Hawai‘i. Strengthening this credit ensures that our state remains a competitive, attractive, and sustainable home for production.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to pass this measure.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:09:33 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pono Cummings	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill in order to get more films made here in Hawaii. This will only benefit our people for generations to come.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:09:51 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kuuipo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I SUPPORT Hawaii Films & to keep continuing in making more movies on the islands.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:09:53 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mihyun (aka.Daisy) Murakami	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Position: SUPPORT

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in strong support of SB 2580.

I am a Hawaii-based actor and producer working in film, media, and live productions. A stable and competitive film tax credit is essential for attracting long-term productions that provide consistent employment for Hawaii's creative workforce.

SB 2580 strengthens Hawaii's film tax credit by increasing the annual cap, modernizing eligibility to include streaming platforms, and extending the program's sunset date to 2038. These changes provide the long-term predictability that productions need when deciding where to invest, while ensuring Hawaii remains competitive with other production hubs.

This bill is a direct investment in stable, middle-class jobs for local cast and crew, and it helps keep production spending, talent development, and economic benefits within Hawaii. I respectfully urge you to support and pass SB 2580.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Daisy Kim Murakami
Actor / Artist
Honolulu, Hawaii

Aloha  Daisy Kim Murakami

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:10:30 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Darian Keanu Aquino	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello,

My name is Darian Keanu Aquino, a local performer of the arts on O'ahu. I support this bill in terms of support for the Entertainment industry. It creates job opportunities to local actors who want to get into the business of film. It also brings an significance to creating stories about Hawai'i or Polynesian culture accurately and scout to find real and raw local talent.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:10:56 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Myers	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and members of the Senate committee,

My name is Michael Myers. I'm a member of IATSE Local 665, the union representing technicians and artisans in the entertainment industry in Hawai'i. **I strongly support SB2580**, Relating to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit.

This bill is a direct investment in stable, middle-class jobs for Hawaii's creative workforce. The changes proposed in SB 2580 will significantly increase Hawai'i's ability to attract lasting work with thriving wage jobs to stabilize the long-term health of this vital industry. I thank the legislature for their foresight in proposing the increase of the overall cap, the increase of the per production percentages, the inclusion of "streaming platforms" as qualified productions, and the extension of the sunset date will make great strides in supporting the thousands of local working families that are supported by this industry. Excluding companies that incur more than \$60 million in qualified expenditures from the "per production" cap will encourage long-term projects towards our islands.

Hawai'i's film industry supports thousands of working families in the state of Hawai'i. These thriving wages are irreplaceable by other industries. When the film tax incentive is empowered, this industry generates significantly to state GDP, earnings, and even visitor spending. When the film tax incentive is restrained, we not only lose the economic benefits of the industry, but we also lose the ability to tell our own stories. To remain competitive in the global market, it is imperative that Hawai'i strengthens and stabilizes the film tax incentive program. SB 2580 will take meaningful steps to empower our film tax incentive program, and will support thousands of working families in Hawai'i.

I strongly support SB 2580. I urge your committee to do the same. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,

MICHAEL MYERS

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:11:47 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Terrianne Zonca	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Keeping film and tv jobs here in Hawai‘i is so important for cost of living and our tourism. Films being made about Hawai‘i and our culture should be filmed here instead of having to choose places that "look like Hawai‘i".

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:12:52 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Donato	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill. Please help our industries thrive again.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:14:11 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mahealani Kahala	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Mahealani Kahala. I have worked in the film industry for the last 8 years and have watched the ebbs and flows of the work coming into the state. I support this bill, in the hopes that it will make Hawaii a desirable filming location once again, providing sustainable income to many Hawaii families.

Mahalo nui,

Maheia K.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:15:55 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeongbin Won	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and Committee Members,

I am writing in strong support of SB 2580. As a young professional working in Hawaii's financial and creative sectors, I believe this bill will spur Hawaii to not only meet global competition but also become a landmark creative and production hub.

Hawaii is renowned for its beauty and distinctness, yet we have not consistently attracted the level of studio investment one would expect. A major factor in this is that our tax credit structure is insufficient. Increasing the credit percentages to 27% and 32% is a vital step into pushing Hawaii into the global market. This shift allows investors and studios to materialize a higher ROI, making Hawaii a desirable and fiscally sound choice for production. Additionally, raising the annual cap to \$60 million and removing the per-production ceiling for large-scale investments would signal that Hawaii is open for major, year-round business as opposed to one-off location shoots.

Most importantly, moving the extension of the sunset date to 2038 is crucial to the longevity of and stability that creatives could trust. A few years doesn't provide enough security to build a life here. A 12-year window, on the other hand, provides a generational anchor. It gives local creatives and professionals the confidence to invest in equipment, training, and permanent homes in the islands, effectively allowing local talent to stay and grow at home instead of being driven to the mainland.

SB 2580 transforms a temporary incentive into a permanent pillar of our economy. I respectfully encourage the committee to pass this measure to ensure our local talent has a stage to perform on right here at home, and that we support Hawaii's potential as a global creative leader.

Mahalo for your time and for your leadership on this issue.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:17:54 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Erin Stamos	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and members of the Senate committee,

My name is Erin Stamos, I live in Pahoa, HI, and I'm a member of IATSE Local 665, the union representing film & television crew workers in the entertainment industry in Hawai'i. **I strongly support SB2580**, Relating to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit.

This bill is a direct investment in stable, middle-class jobs for Hawaii. If passed, it will restore our ability to attract the work for which we are skilled, and stabilize the long-term health of this vital industry. All of the changes as written are badly needed - the increase of the overall cap, the increase of the per production percentages, the inclusion of "streaming platforms" as qualified productions, and the extension of the sunset date.

The film and television industry can support thousands of working families across our state, including those, like myself, on neighbor islands to Oahu. When running, the film industry has many positive ripple effects on the economy. To remain competitive in the global market, it is imperative that Hawai'i strengthens and stabilizes the film tax incentive program.

I strongly support SB 2580 and I urge you to do the same. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,

Erin Stamos

Pahoa, HI 96778

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:18:57 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members,

My name is Ryan “Oki” Okinaka, and I am a professional actor based here in Hawai‘i. I submit this testimony in strong support of SB2580.

Film and television work is not a side hustle for me — it is how I survive here in Hawai‘i. Like many local actors, I rely on steady production work to pay rent, support my family, and remain rooted in the place I call home. When productions leave Hawai‘i because our incentives are no longer competitive, the impact is immediate and personal: fewer auditions, fewer days of work, and fewer opportunities to sustain a life here.

SB2580 helps keep Hawai‘i competitive with other states and countries that aggressively court film and television productions. When productions choose Hawai‘i, they don’t just bring cameras — they bring jobs. For actors, that means speaking roles, background work, union days, health benefits, and the ability to build a sustainable career without having to leave the islands.

Film work also supports a much larger ecosystem: crew members, casting offices, local vendors, educators, and small businesses. Strengthening this tax credit helps ensure that the stories of Hawai‘i can continue to be told by people who actually live here, rather than forcing local talent to relocate to the mainland to survive.

I love Hawai‘i and want to continue living and working here. SB2580 is an important step toward making that possible for me and many others in the local creative community.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Ryan “Oki” Okinaka

Actor | Hawai‘i

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:23:22 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dorlene Kolina Silva	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of SB2580

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kolina Silva, and I am writing in strong support of SB2580.

I am a mother raising an aspiring young actress here in Hawai‘i. For families like ours, the local film and television industry represents more than jobs—it represents hope, opportunity, and the ability to raise our children pursuing their dreams without having to leave the place we call home.

When productions come to Hawai‘i, they create real opportunities for local keiki and families. My daughter dreams of telling stories on screen that reflect our culture, our people, and our islands. Without continued support for the film industry, those opportunities disappear, forcing families to choose between their children’s dreams and staying in Hawai‘i.

SB2580 is essential to keeping Hawai‘i competitive and ensuring that local talent has a future here. This bill helps protect jobs, supports small businesses, and allows our keiki to see that their dreams are possible right here at home.

Please support SB2580 and help preserve an industry that uplifts Hawai‘i’s families, culture, and future.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Kolina Silva and the Silva Keiki

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:26:32 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
CHIN Edward	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

A larger, expanded and longer tax credit cap would bring more film and television projects creating jobs for Hawai'i across the entire economic spectrum.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:26:46 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Samuel Pablo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha!

My name is Samuel Pablo and I am a professional actor and creative working in film, television, and digital media. I am writing to express my strong support for SB 2580 and SB 2796.

I have spent many years working in California, where a large portion of film and television production is based. While I am grateful for the opportunities I've had there, I would love the chance to work more consistently in Hawai'i. Like many professionals in this industry, I go where the work is. Increasing the number of productions filming in Hawai'i would make it possible for more creatives and crew members to work in the islands rather than having to relocate elsewhere to sustain their careers.

Tax incentives are a critical factor in where productions choose to film. Hawai'i competes directly with other states and countries that aggressively court productions with competitive incentives. Without a strong and reliable tax credit program, many projects simply cannot justify filming here, even when Hawai'i is creatively the perfect choice. Strengthening these incentives helps ensure Hawai'i remains competitive and continues to attract high-quality productions that provide long-term economic benefits.

I support this bill because it helps keep jobs in Hawai'i, encourages investment in local talent, and allows the state to continue telling stories that showcase the islands to the world. Film and television not only generate revenue, but also promote tourism, cultural visibility, and workforce development in a sustainable and meaningful way.

Thank you for your time and for considering this testimony. I respectfully urge you to support this legislation and the continued growth of Hawai'i's film and television industry.

Mahalo, Samuel Pablo

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:27:29 AM

Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Randy Bredehoft	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii needs to be competitive to other mainland and world locales in attracting film productions, otherwise our precious asset of creating film projects here will be lost. The result is economic damage to the state and personal loss for many industry professionals, including me as a union actor.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:27:29 AM

Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Randy Bredehoft	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii needs to be competitive to other mainland and world locales in attracting film productions, otherwise our precious asset of creating film projects here will be lost. The result is economic damage to the state and personal loss for many industry professionals, including me as a union actor.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:27:32 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
brandon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the committee. My Name is Brandon Tapati, I've worked in the film and television industry for 15 years. I Stand of my written testimony in support of SB2580. This Industry has given me purpose and allowed me to provide for my family and their future. It has also allowed me to pay it forward on many occasions giving back to my community and uplifting my Lahui. I am proud to be part of this industry and hope to have a long career here at home in hawaii. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:30:54 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Graciella Butler	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The acting industry in Hawai‘i is important. It has shown many people in the islands that their dreams are not out of reach. I never had luck breaking into the industry when I lived on the continental US, in Hawai‘i I felt like people actually believed in me.

Not only does it help dreams come true, it supports the local economy and connects the community through storytelling.

I have seen the negative impact on our community when we don't have jobs to do. I have been so incredibly lucky to work in this industry and meet so many talented individuals in cast, crew and production.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:36:45 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jonathan Reyn Afaga	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Jonathan Reyn Afaga, and I am an actor and performing artist in Hawai'i. The film and media industry provides invaluable resources and opportunities for myself and the arts community in Hawai'i. I support SB2580 relating to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit in hopes that it will allow our film and media industry to thrive, creating more opportunities for our local artists and boost Hawai'i's economy.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:36:56 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stephanie Kawasaki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support SB2580 that would benefit our local businesses. The film industry touches all parts of our state! I have personally seen the benefits of all different industries, food, catering, sites, transportation, security, and all aspects of creative filmmakers, actors. Our state has so much to offer in terms of 'ohana, rich culture of working together, and ideal weather conditions that support filmmakers. I support SB2580.

Mahalo, Steff Kawasaki

Actor (Bliss Model and Talent)

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:38:48 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lahaina Grance	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support our film industry professionals and keep Hawaiian families in Hawaii! So many native families depend on the film industry and supporting them enables them to stay here, work here and raise their families here!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:42:16 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jubilee Johanna	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please make Hawai'i film industry friendly

Aloha, my name is Richard Aiwohi-Kim, I am a 2024 graduate of UH Mānoa's art and digital cinema majors. I am writing this testimony in support of SB2580 because I feel it is vital for the local Hawai'i film industry in bringing productions to the islands, providing jobs and supporting the local economy. When I first got into the film community during college, *NCIS Hawaii* had just been cancelled and most productions left the island and morale became abysmal. My mental health is deteriorating and I've been struggling to find jobs in my field (specifically media and film production).

The increase in the tax credits and incentives will bring more productions here in the islands and encourage better job security and more job opportunities for people and thus bring better morale to the community. To me, it would give me a better chance of gaining experiences in the industry, connecting with friends, and being a part of incredible projects/productions.

This bill also helps the local community to adapt to the new streaming industry like that of Disney plus, and Netflix and Prime. This will encourage even more films and streaming shows to bring more content here and more jobs. The rise of streaming shows how much the state needs to adapt to the new medium and thus will increase revenue to the state and attract more visitors here. Shows like *Lost*, *ER*, *Hawaii Five-O*, bring in people and good attention to the islands. Lately *Chief of War*, helps to bring our indigenous history to the world stage. Introducing them to Hawaiian history that people need to know about. Having Hawai'i as the main place to film series like these will again bring the jobs and help to support local business like caterers, set decorators, construction, costume, make-up and technicians that will help bring these projects to life.

I support bill SB2580 because of how much production and jobs will be on the islands. That i'll help to give chances to locals to produce media and content that will support the local

economy, so that we don't need to move to the mainland to get these jobs. Rather, this bill helps to keep productions here in the islands, increase morale, job security, and diversifying the economy from tourism and helping to bring more revenue to the community, the people, and giving us the chance to fund our own indigenous projects.

Sincerely,

Richard Aiwohi-Kim

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:44:18 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janice Morimoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

There are so many wonderful and talented actors that have moved back to Hawaii to help take care of family/parents. We would appreciate the work that will come here with the tax breaks!
Mahalo & Aloha!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:44:26 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Becky Maltby	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The film industry is a vitally important one for our island community. Our state has lost work last year with other locations doubling as Hawai‘i. Nobody wants this. The film industry employs thousands of residents and keeps us relevant as a viable location to do quality production work. It greatly helps tourism as well, with tours still regularly held at old filming sites. Bring back the work!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:46:16 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daesha Johnson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The film industry plays a vital role in Hawai‘i’s economy, acting as both a cultural storyteller and a powerful job creator. Every production that comes to the islands generates work across many layers, from high-profile main roles to supporting actors and extras, and far beyond the camera. Crews rely on local talent for production assistants, camera operators, sound technicians, costume and makeup artists, set builders, drivers, security, caterers, and background labor. These jobs provide steady income, hands-on training, and career pathways for residents, allowing local families to participate directly in a global industry without leaving home.

Equally important is how film production ripples outward into the broader economy. Hotels, restaurants, transportation companies, rental houses, and small local vendors all benefit when productions are on island. This keeps money circulating locally and supports businesses that are not traditionally tied to entertainment.

The state income tax credit is a cornerstone of this ecosystem. It makes Hawai‘i competitive with other filming destinations by offsetting the high costs of production in the islands. Without it, many projects would simply choose to film elsewhere. With it, productions are incentivized to hire local workers, use local services, and invest directly in the community. The result is more jobs, stronger economic stability, and continued opportunities for Hawai‘i residents to share their stories, landscapes, and talent with the world.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:47:20 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Malia Aiello	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and members of the committee,

My name is Malia, and I am a Hawai‘i resident working in the film and media industry. I am writing in strong support of SB2580.

Film and television productions provide meaningful employment for local residents while supporting small businesses across the islands. When Hawai‘i remains competitive, productions stay longer, hire locally, and invest more in our communities.

SB2580 modernizes an existing program by increasing competitiveness, supporting neighbor island economies, and adding strong accountability measures. Most importantly, it helps ensure that local talent can continue building careers here at home rather than being forced to leave the state for work. It gives us more opportunities to tell our stories in our own light, with authenticity especially as native Hawaiians.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of SB2580.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:47:57 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keith Merritt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SB 2580. This is absolutely crucial for Hawaii's future.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:48:29 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Nelson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support SB2580. With the wealth of talent that Hawai'i offers you should be a leader in this industry. This is one encouraging step to stop the "talent drain" and benefit local small businesses that rely on this industry.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:49:01 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brigitte Leilani Axelrode	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in strong support of this bill. This bill is a direct investment in stable, middle-class jobs for Hawaii's creative workforce. We need more industry in Hawai'i other than tourism and this is an avenue for us to do that.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:53:05 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Don Dailey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As we have all now seen, last year's non-increase of the tax credits was a debacle at best. So many people in the industry suffered greatly with either no work or the loss of jobs because of it! Gov. Green has come out supporting the increase this year and I strongly support it also. Let's get the Hawai'i film industry moving in the right direction again this year!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:53:09 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stephanie Tull Coscina	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senators and The Legislature,

I write in full support of SB2580, as well as SB 3088 and companion bill HB 2269. Thank you, Senators, for listening to our concerns and for addressing specific issues related to Hawai'i film production.

I am a member of the Directors Guild of America and was the Key 2nd Assistant Director on Lilo and Stitch. I am currently the Key 2nd AD on the Netflix film Protecting Jared starring Jason Momoa and Andy Samberg.

Hawai'i's film tax incentive has been a huge success in the past, but has fallen behind in the past two years. Most other states with thriving film production have incentives above 30%. My community is now suffering because in 2025, there was nearly zero production work on the Islands.

These bill help address four major concerns for film workers: **increasing the overall percentages, allowing larger projects to have a larger per-production cap, increasing the over all cap, and increasing the sunset date.**

Increasing the base rate to 27%/32% is the single best move we can make to bring mainland production spending into our economy. The studios have departments dedicated to judging incentives against one another. Hawai'i is often overlooked from the start because of its current 22% base rate. This increase will help all productions, but will mostly help smaller local production or shorter jobs coming from the mainland that do reach the production cap.

Allowing productions that spend more than 60 million to exceed the per-production cap is exactly what is needed to bring larger and long-term productions. Long-term television series and big-budget studio features will be able to shoot exclusively in Hawai'i rather than the current standard - where shows shoot exteriors for a couple of weeks, then shoot another location that passes for Hawai'i.

Increasing the overall cap is a commitment to finding success in this plan. The current \$50 million cap has not increased in several years. Raising it to \$60 million is a modest increase in line with inflation since the last increase. These bills are not about giving a handout to corporate

studios; they enable the state and production companies to work as investment partners, adding to the local economy.

Extending the sunset date on the tax incentive is a strong message to producers and studios that Hawai'i is a committed investment partner. Television series have been the true stimulus in building the film community on Island. Television series producers need to know that they can create multi-year productions before committing to shoot in Hawai'i.

These bills will help bring mainland production money to the islands and distribute it to local vendors and workers; that's why they have my support. If enacted in conjunction with the other bills focused on improving the terms of our film tax incentives, they send a strong message that Hawai'i is a film-friendly state.

Thank you, Senators, for your stewardship and partnership.

Sincerley,

Stephanie Tull Coscina

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:53:52 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
TJay Thompson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:



SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:54:29 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Geoffrey Lau	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Film industry is in dire need of better Tax Credits. Many local families are struggling to put food on the table due to lack of productions coming to Hawai'i.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:54:55 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cindy Lee Neighbors	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of SB2580

To: The Hawaii State Legislature

From: Cindy Lee Neighbors, MD

Position: SUPPORT

Testimony:

To the Honorable Members of the Legislature,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of **SB2580**, relating to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit.

As a professional actress and a member of SAG-AFTRA, I am writing to urge your support for this critical legislation. A robust and stable incentive program is a cornerstone of Hawaii's economic future. It doesn't just support the creative arts; it creates living-wage jobs and provides a necessary path for diversifying our economy.

I have seen the direct benefits of these incentives through my own work in the industry. I have had the privilege of working as a background actress on several major productions filmed right here in the islands, including the **Lilo & Stitch** live-action feature, **The Wrecking Crew**, and the television series **Rescue: HI-Surf**.

When projects of this scale come to Hawaii, they do more than tell stories—they employ local residents, support small businesses, and showcase our home to the world. Increasing the tax credit percentages and raising the annual cap to \$60 million, as proposed in SB2580, ensures that Hawaii remains globally competitive and can continue to attract these high-impact productions.

Furthermore, updating the language to include streaming platforms is essential. Much of the high-quality work being produced today lives on these platforms, and our laws must reflect the modern reality of how media is created and consumed.

Supporting SB2580 is an investment in the thousands of local workers, like myself, who help bring these productions to life. I urge you to pass this measure.

Thank you for your time and for your continued support of the Hawaii film and television community.

Sincerely,

Cindy Lee Neighbors, MD

SAG-AFTRA Member

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:55:47 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaipu Seales	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and members of the Senate committee,

My name is Kaipu Seales. I'm a member of IATSE Local 665, the union representing technicians and artisans in the entertainment industry in Hawai'i. **I strongly support SB2580**, Relating to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit.

This bill is a direct investment in stable, middle-class jobs for Hawaii's creative workforce. The changes proposed in SB 2580 will significantly increase Hawai'i's ability to attract lasting work with thriving wage jobs to stabilize the long-term health of this vital industry. I thank the legislature for their foresight in proposing the increase of the overall cap, the increase of the per production percentages, the inclusion of "streaming platforms" as qualified productions, and the extension of the sunset date will make great strides in supporting the thousands of local working families that are supported by this industry. Excluding companies that incur more than \$60 million in qualified expenditures from the "per production" cap will encourage long-term projects towards our islands.

Hawai'i's film industry supports thousands of working families in the state of Hawai'i. These thriving wages are irreplaceable by other industries. When the film tax incentive is empowered, this industry generates significantly to state GDP, earnings, and even visitor spending. When the film tax incentive is restrained, we not only lose the economic benefits of the industry, but we also lose the ability to tell our own stories. To remain competitive in the global market, it is imperative that Hawai'i strengthens and stabilizes the film tax incentive program. SB 2580 will take meaningful steps to empower our film tax incentive program, and will support thousands of working families in Hawai'i.

I strongly support SB 2580. I urge your committee to do the same. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,

Kaipu Seales

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:57:53 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keikilani Grune	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The film industry is an important part of Hawaii. For many years the film industry provided work for me in an industry that I love and plan to be a part of for the rest of my life. I earned enough with SAG Aftra to take advantage of their health plan for my entire family. Since NCIS Hawaii was cancelled, I have been picking up odd jobs, lost our medical coverage and am holding on for the next project to come through. The film industry boost the economy & tourism. The money that these projects have brought in has given hundreds of families the means to live a better life and have supported numerous small business. I urge you to say yes and pass this SB2580. Thank you.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:59:02 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Candace Morita	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a member of the film community, modernizing Hawaii's film tax credit is essential to keeping productions local and sustaining jobs for residents. This bill would allow creative like me to keep telling creating stories here instead of taking our work elsewhere.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:59:27 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Austin Paz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii film industry.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:59:56 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Darlene Faaumu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:01:36 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keith Ordonez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

One of the loudest reasons for little support for film productions outside of Hawai'i is the tax credits. The current news has been showing that film industry productions have been trying hard to find other states to work in besides California, and consistently they bring their business to states with favorable tax credits.

Hawai'i has a long history of supporting the film industry, dating back to movies such as "From here to Eternity" and the "Charlie Chan" TV series. Our history continues to show that one of the founding business that help build our modern state economy has not been tourism but Self-Sustaining Agriculture, Properties, and Film. In these coming fiscal years, we should honor our history and do our best to build up and support our position as a film industry based state, on order to attract more outside film business to help support ours.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:02:01 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melissa Shipman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of SB2580. I have worked in film, television, and commercial production in Hawai‘i for over 20 years, and I am a local film crew professional who depends on a stable production industry to make a living here at home.

This is my career and my primary source of income. When production is consistent, my colleagues and I are able to support our families, stay in Hawai‘i, and continue building long term careers without having to leave the state for work.

Legislation like SB2580 is critical because it helps keep Hawai‘i competitive as a production destination while prioritizing local workers. Hawai‘i is a beautiful location, but large scale productions can find similar landscapes in other parts of the world that offer competitive incentives. If we do not do our best to stay competitive, productions will go elsewhere, and the industry here could disappear. A strong and predictable production environment gives studios the confidence to commit to projects here.

The film industry also has a significant ripple effect throughout Hawai‘i’s economy. Productions support local vendors, small businesses, hospitality, transportation, construction, and food service, often in ways that are immediate and measurable. Working in the locations department, I see firsthand how a single production can give dozens of local businesses needed opportunities.

SB2580 represents an investment not just in an industry, but in people across our state. Supporting this measure helps ensure that local crew members are not replaced by outside labor and that the economic benefits of large scale productions remain in our communities and our state.

I also strongly support SB2580’s provision to exempt projects under \$1 million from mandatory third-party CPA reviews. While financial accountability is important, requiring costly third-party audits for smaller productions creates an unnecessary burden that can discourage these projects from filming in Hawai‘i at all. For lower-budget productions, the cost of a CPA review alone can be the deciding factor in whether a project comes to Hawai‘i. This requirement can also discourage smaller productions from applying for the incentive altogether, reducing the very economic activity the program is meant to support.

For all of these reasons, I respectfully urge you to support and pass SB2580.

Thank you for your consideration.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:02:42 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kelly Nitta	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kelly Nitta. I am a young adult born and raised in Honolulu, Hawai‘i, and I am writing in **strong support of SB2580**.

I am actively working to build a career in the film and television industry here in Hawai‘i. Unfortunately, despite my strong desire to stay home, I am preparing to move to Los Angeles because there are simply not enough consistent opportunities locally. This is a reality many young creatives and veteran workers in this industry face. We *want* to stay, but the current system makes it difficult to build a sustainable career here while meeting basic financial and professional goals.

SB2580 would help strengthen Hawai‘i’s local industry by making it more viable for productions to operate here and invest in local talent. Measures like this can create more jobs, provide greater continuity, and give productions more reason to hire and retain Hawai‘i-based workers rather than bringing people in from outside the state. Hawai‘i has a thriving community of extremely hardworking individuals who are ready and willing to put in the time, effort, and passion to grow this industry locally.

If bills like **SB2580** pass, people like me and many others in this field would have a *real* chance to stay, work, and build our futures here at home instead of feeling forced to leave. I have met countless people of all ages and backgrounds who want to work but simply cannot afford to go extended periods without a steady income. Supporting this bill is a meaningful step toward keeping local talent in Hawai‘i and growing our creative economy.

I respectfully urge you to pass SB2580. I promise this is a decision you *will not* regret.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
Kelly Nitta
Honolulu, Hawai‘i

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:04:13 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Katie Pere	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I have been lucky enough to work in the film industry in Hawaii for 26 years. This past year has been my worst year and most worrisome for my family. We are desparate for the industry to be back in full force.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:05:42 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Katherine Murphy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please keep film production in Hawaii by approving the tax credit

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:09:49 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sarah Elizabeth Biehler	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SB2580.

As a working actor and professional in the film and television industry represented in Hawai‘i, I have seen firsthand how competitive production incentives directly affect whether projects choose to film in the state. When incentives are strong and predictable, Hawai‘i becomes a viable option; when they are not, productions take jobs, spending, and long-term opportunities elsewhere.

SB2580 strengthens Hawai‘i’s motion picture tax credit in a way that keeps the state competitive with other film-friendly jurisdictions while also encouraging productions to hire local crews, talent, and vendors. Increasing the credit percentage, raising the annual cap, and extending the program’s sunset date provide the stability that studios and independent producers need to commit to Hawai‘i for both short- and long-term projects.

Film and television production creates well-paying jobs, supports small businesses, and generates economic activity across multiple sectors including hospitality, transportation, construction, and post-production. These benefits reach far beyond the production itself and help sustain creative careers for Hawai‘i residents.

SB2580 also includes important accountability measures through reporting and third-party verification, ensuring transparency and responsible use of state resources.

Passing SB2580 will help Hawai‘i remain competitive, retain local talent, attract major productions, and continue to grow a sustainable creative economy. I respectfully urge the committee to support this bill.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:10:58 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amia Voluntad	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Amia Voluntad, and I am a young filmmaker living and working in Hawai‘i. I am testifying in strong support of SB 2580.

I chose to build my career here because Hawai‘i is home, but staying here as a creative professional is getting harder. When productions leave, local crew lose work, skills fade, and young artists like me are forced to move away.

SB 2580 gives our industry stability. Expanding the film tax credit, including streaming, and extending the sunset date will bring more consistent jobs, training opportunities, and real careers for Hawai‘i’s creative workforce, not just short-term gigs.

This bill isn’t just about movies. It’s about keeping young, working people in Hawai‘i and giving us a future here.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:11:04 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chauncy Williams	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and members of the Senate committee,

My name is Chauncy Williams. I'm a member of IATSE Local 665, the union representing technicians and artisans in the entertainment industry in Hawai'i.

I strongly support SB2580, Relating to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit.

This bill is a direct investment in stable, middle-class jobs for Hawaii's creative workforce. The changes proposed in SB 2580 will significantly increase Hawai'i's ability to attract lasting work with thriving wage jobs to stabilize the long-term health of this vital industry. I thank the legislature for their foresight in proposing the increase of the overall cap, the increase of the per production percentages, the inclusion of "streaming platforms" as qualified productions, and the extension of the sunset date will make great strides in supporting the thousands of local working families that are supported by this industry. Excluding companies that incur more than \$60 million in qualified expenditures from the "per production" cap will encourage long-term projects towards our islands.

Hawai'i's film industry supports thousands of working families in the state of Hawai'i. These thriving wages are irreplaceable by other industries. When the film tax incentive is empowered, this industry generates significantly to state GDP, earnings, and even visitor spending. When the film tax incentive is restrained, we not only lose the economic benefits of the industry, but we also lose the ability to tell our own stories. To remain competitive in the global market, it is imperative that Hawai'i strengthens and stabilizes the film tax incentive program. SB 2580 will take meaningful steps to empower our film tax incentive program, and will support thousands of working families in Hawai'i.

I strongly support SB 2580. I urge your committee to do the same. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,

Chauncy Williams

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:13:40 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rochelle Barcenilla	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB2580. I am a wife of a propmaker for the movie industry. My husband loves his job and the film industry community. This job not only provided my husband joy, it also supported our family of 5. It helped get my kids through college and fund all three of my sons' sports. We need this bill passed to help sustain the film industry along with the many people it employs.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:14:29 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Suzy Paradise	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The film industry in Hawaii provides jobs and opportunities for local residents. I support enabling more projects coming to hawaii!!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:15:10 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Moses Goods	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Productions want to film here! But time and time again they end up going with their second choice in filming location because of the weak tax credit. When that happens an actor like me is forced to temporarily relocate and pump thousands of my own dollars into someone else's economy. That isn't fair.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:16:24 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Moana Coloma Quintanilla	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Grateful and lucky to work in the film industry here in Hawai‘i. An industry that not only grants jobs to many here, but also provides entertainment for those who need that 30min - 2hr escape from reality.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:17:00 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ikaika Kincaid	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

ESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB2580
Relating to Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in **strong support of SB2580**, which are critical measures to sustain and grow Hawai‘i’s motion picture, television, and digital media industry.

The film and television industry provides thousands of local jobs, supports small businesses across multiple sectors, and offers meaningful career pathways for Hawai‘i residents—especially our young people—without requiring them to leave the state. These bills recognize the real economic value of the industry and take important steps to keep Hawai‘i competitive with other production hubs.

SB2580 strengthens and modernizes Hawai‘i’s film tax credit program, helping ensure that productions continue to choose Hawai‘i as a place to film. Increasing and extending the tax credit, updating eligibility to reflect current production models, and providing long-term stability gives studios the confidence they need to plan projects here. This directly translates into more local hires, more consistent work, and a healthier creative economy.

This bill is not a giveaway; it is **investments**. Productions bring in outside money, create union and non-union jobs, and support everything from hotels and restaurants to construction, transportation, and post-production services. When productions leave Hawai‘i due to lack of competitiveness, those jobs and economic benefits leave with them.

I respectfully urge you to pass **SB2580** to ensure Hawai‘i remains a viable, competitive, and sustainable home for film and digital media production.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your continued support of Hawai‘i’s creative workforce.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:17:57 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andy McDermott	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a working actor, I have relied upon production in Hawaii to help support my family for many years now. Please incentivize film and TV companies to return to Hawaii and resume production!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:19:14 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Edward	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Members of the committee. I am writing in support of Bill SB2580. As you may know, our business has been devastated by many causes, but some of our own making. In my 30 years as a film technician, it has never been this bad. States compete to get the film business to launch productions in their states, which creates skilled high-paying jobs. The film business is on its knees. We need this!

Mahalo Edward Tunney

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:19:40 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nathaniel Char	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and committee. I used to be a regular background actor in Hawaii Five-O and Magnum PI, while popping in now and then for a few other productions. A few of my friends also joined the film industry when other jobs didn't work for them. Thanks to union wages, my friends really thrived in our costly state.

They were hit really badly by the loss of film here in Hawaii, forced to take on multiple, lower wage jobs or side gigs. One if them is really struggling, behind on credit card payments.

Modernizing the tax credits will help make Hawaii more competitive with other major American film production locations. This will help bring back the good, higher paying jobs to help pay for the high cost of living here. And my friends will be allowed to thrive again.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:19:55 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrew Kamoku	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We have a very talented and unique film ohana in the islands and we need work. Ty for your time...

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:20:53 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Theresa Candelaria	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha!

Hawaii is the telling story state. We tell stories by dancing, writing, acting, writing just walking down the beach or on a surfboard.

keep tradition alive.
mahalo

theresa

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:26:40 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kim Healey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of this bill to help create a more stable, production-related workforce.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:26:51 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Catharine Incaprera	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support this Bill for the Hawaii Film Industry.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:27:57 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
seana kofoed	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii Film Tax incentive TESTIMONY - SB2580

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

Hawai‘i’s film and television incentive should be understood not as a stand-alone industry program, but as a tourism and economic resilience strategy.

Raising Hawai‘i’s film tax incentive base rate to 27 % statewide and 32 % for the outer islands could make the state far more competitive with other U.S. and global production locations, attract more large-scale film and television projects, support local jobs, and increase spending across hospitality, services, and creative sectors. Hawai‘i trails other markets that offer 30 %+ credits, contributing to a decline in productions in recent years.

According to DBEDT’s own analysis, film and television exposure drives approximately one billion dollars annually in visitor spending - about five percent of all tourism spending in the state. This kind of exposure extends Hawai‘i’s global marketing reach far beyond traditional advertising and generates additional revenue across lodging, food service, retail, and tours. Increasing the incentive could therefore not only keep productions here but amplify this film tourism market, stimulating broader economic growth.

What’s especially important is that film tourism has a long tail. The credit is a one-time cost, but the tourism it generates continues for years — often decades — as content circulates globally through streaming and international distribution. DBEDT’s data shows today’s film-motivated visitors are responding to productions filmed many years ago.

We also saw the value of this sector during COVID.

When tourism collapsed by more than seventy percent, film and television production was one of the few private industries still operating, injecting nearly two hundred million dollars into the local economy in 2020, employing local workers, supporting vendors, and reducing unemployment and Medicaid costs.

Employing just one hundred workers can avoid over one million dollars in unemployment payments and save the State approximately two hundred fifty thousand dollars annually in Medicaid costs through employer-sponsored health coverage.

In short, Hawai‘i’s film incentive delivers recurring tourism revenue, fiscal stability, and economic diversification at a relatively modest cost. It is not just an arts policy - it is a sound economic and budgetary investment.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

With aloha,

Seana kofoed, resident of Maunalua/Hawai‘i Kai

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:28:02 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ioane Goodhue	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing in support of 2580 SB RELATING TO THE MOTION PICTURE, DIGITAL MEDIA, AND FILM PRODUCTION INCOME TAX CREDIT.

I am a local actor who has seen the decline in the availability of meaningful work days in my industry. The film industry has experienced great changes over the past 12 months and our Hawaii market has felt the effects of these changes more than others. I have had the opportunity to work in film markets who keep with competitive incentives for film production companies, such as New Zealand, and have witnessed first hand the difference in not only quantity but quality of meaningful work days.

I please ask that this tax credit be considered and implemented to ensure a healthier film industry for our Hawaii region and our local people.

Mahalo,

ioane goodhue

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:29:56 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Russell Satele	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha!

My name is Russell Satele and I'm an actor based here on Oahu. I've been part of the film industry since 2016 and have seen the rapid decline of work over the recent years. A little back story of my personal life is I graduated from the University of Hawaii with my criminal justice degree back in 2017 and have been pursuing an acting career while trying to support my elderly parents. I've been fortunate enough to book some roles on some of the prominent tv shows and movies to come thru the islands and during these bookings I've met some of the greatest people with the biggest hearts. The people that are in the film industry here are extremely talented and can easily go toe to toe with any other outside companies, crew, and talent. The main reason that I support bill SB2580 is because I see that the film industry can help Hawaiis economy while at the same time providing jobs for so many who depend on the industry to be able to make ends meet. Every production that I've been apart of, I've personally seen them all support local brands and buisness when it comes to catering, locations, and even props. Even the small mom and pop shops are supported in a lot of these specific location shoots we've done. Since the pandemic, the film industry has not been the same and I'm seeing plenty of colleagues along with myself working multiple dead end jobs in order to make ends meet in hopes that one day our industry will be able to flourish again. Mahalo for considering my testimony and I hope that we are able to push this bill forward, have a great week.

Mahalo!

Russell Satele 

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:30:41 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kahiau Machado	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am an actor here from and based on O'ahu and want to see the tv/film industry thrive here and feel it would have an extremely positive impact on Hawai'i.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:31:26 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Spencer Turley	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support S.B. 2580 and the proposed increase to Hawai‘i’s Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit. Hawai‘i is one of the most expensive places in the world to produce film and television due to geographic isolation, shipping costs, housing, interisland travel, and limited local vendor capacity for large-scale productions. Production decisions are driven by financial modeling, and without a competitive incentive, Hawai‘i is routinely passed over in favor of jurisdictions offering higher effective credits and lower overall costs. Increasing the credit is essential to keeping Hawai‘i viable in an extremely competitive global market.

For the local industry, this increase directly translates to jobs, continuity, and workforce retention. When productions come to Hawai‘i, they employ hundreds of local crew members, rent local facilities, and spend heavily with Hawai‘i-based businesses across construction, transportation, lodging, and food service. When productions leave, those jobs disappear, skilled workers are forced to leave the state, and the local industry contracts. Increasing the tax incentive is not about attracting outside companies at the expense of the state. It is about preserving a stable, middle-class workforce and sustaining an industry that brings real, measurable economic activity to Hawai‘i. I urge your support of S.B. 2580.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:35:57 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Philip M Omara	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The film industry is a valuable resource for our communities. Please assist to make it easier for them to produce more high quality work.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:36:27 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tristyn Lau	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Tristyn Lau and I am a union film and television actor who has worked in Hawai‘i as a local hire on several network TV productions, including guest star and recurring roles. I'm writing to share my strong support for SB2580 and SB2796.

Hawai‘i's film and television industry provides a significant amount of jobs for hundreds of local workers, from actors and crew members to small businesses and support services. Incentive programs like those addressed in these bills are what help productions choose to film in Hawai‘i instead of relocating somewhere else.

I've witnessed firsthand how long-term, stable productions make a difference. They create consistency for union members and allow local talent to grow in their careers. These productions support not only actors, but also local crews, vendors, hotels, restaurants and families who rely on steady employment.

SB2580 and SB2796 would keep Hawai‘i rolling! Updating and improving the state's incentive structure will maintain it's ability to attract and keep film and TV projects here. By supporting longer-running and higher-quality productions, these bills help ensure that local workers are prioritized and that Hawai‘i remains a viable place where people can build a career in the entertainment industry.

I've experienced the positive impact of these productions as a local worker and truly believe these bills are an investment in jobs, economic stability, and the long-term sustainability of Hawai‘i's creative economy. I respectfully encourage you to support SB2580 and SB2796.

Mahalo nui for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Tristyn Lau - SAG-AFTRA Member

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:37:36 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tiffany Gatanis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Tiffany Gatanis and I am a local actor based in Oahu. I strongly encourage you to pass this bill because we need work, we need film, we need to tell stories and we all need to get paid.

In the past years, work for actors has become scarce. I'm lucky to even book 1 thing a year. I know bookings come from our individual talent of course, but the more opportunity, the more chance to book, the more work.

Extending this tax credit gives the industry continued stability that allows actors to actually build careers here, where many are born and raised. It will allow us to support ourselves, and continue contributing to the local economy.

There's a reason why majority thinks they have to go away to the mainland to make a living in the film industry. Let's put an end to that now. Let us continue to do what we love, on the island we love.

Mahalo for your time and attention to this matter.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:37:49 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mason McEwen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We desperately need this bill in order to keep productions here and to protect the local jobs it will provide. Like many individuals I know who work in film and live in Hawai'i, we've had to find supplemental jobs and many are moving away from the islands to find work elsewhere. Please help keep the film community alive and strong in Hawai'i by passing this bill. Please!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:38:04 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patrick Mullen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Bring back movies and tv production to hawaii please. We are suffering for work.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:39:19 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Renee Otis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha. My husband has been cast as a background actor multiple projects here in Hawaii Island including Chief of War. The financial windfall for our very rural communities was personally impactful for us. The deep bonds my husband shares with the cast and crew that shot the final episode here in Kalapana at Uncle will remain forever. Please help Hawaii maintain and expand upon the rich heritage of film and television productions shot locally utilizing local talent and enriching local businesses. This incredibly beautiful place has an enormous amount to offer the film and television industries including stunning locations, stunning local people and a rich collection of talent both in front of and behind the cameras. Mahalo for your time.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:42:00 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Edward Bishai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The creative professional community needs a lot more help from government to be able to earn a decent living by working on projects developed and produced here in Hawai'i. Please help!!!

TESTIMONY IN **STRONG SUPPORT** OF SB 2580
RELATING TO THE MOTION PICTURE, DIGITAL MEDIA AND FILM PRODUCTION INCOME TAX CREDIT

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

Thank you for the opportunity to share my testimony in strong support of SB 2580.

As you know, long-term film projects have been non-existent these past two years, and SB 2580 has key components that will immediately strengthen Hawai'i's film-friendly reputation:

- Removes the per production cap for films over \$60M. This is a necessity to incentivize large format films.
- Adds streaming language to embrace the digital platforms of distribution that make Hawai'i competitive. Films that go directly to streaming are now welcome to film in Hawai'i.
- Raises the overall film production cap to \$60 million dollars. The increase to the tax credit signals to the world that the State of Hawai'i supports film.
- Raises the base points to 27% for Oahu-based filming and 32% for neighbor-island filming. Getting over the 30% threshold across the state has been a goal of ours, so seeing this begin on the neighbor islands is a huge step in the right direction.

SB 2580 supports economic diversification at a time when Hawai'i must reduce overreliance on a single sector. Film and creative media production brings outside capital into the state, circulates dollars locally for at least 18 months before the credit is paid out, and enhances Hawai'i's global visibility in a way that aligns with cultural storytelling, place-based identity, and community pride.

My partner and I are both in the film and television industry here in Hawaii and our financial situation has been severely impacted over the last couple of years. I've had to seek employment in other states, leaving the State for long periods of time to support our family.

Our film history shows that two television series filming simultaneously build careers, stabilizes families, provides upward departmental promotion, promotes infrastructure growth, and deepens partnerships with local professionals and businesses.

These outcomes are essential to building a resilient industry that benefits residents first. The film tax credit does not just provide jobs for local residents. It is a reliable tax revenue source for the state. In 2022, tourists who came to Hawai'i because of a film they saw spent \$1 Billion dollars which generated \$121 Million in state tax revenue¹. Couple that with state taxes paid by film workers and supporting businesses, and you have a tax incentive that more than pays for itself year after year.

Sincerely,
M. Kristin Jackson

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:45:05 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alexandria Zinov	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The film and digital media industry in Hawai‘i is not only about cameras and scripts, it’s about real jobs, real people, and real economic opportunity. Productions hire local cast and crew, invest in services and vendors across our islands, and help diversify our economy beyond tourism. The motion picture and digital media tax credit has been a lifeline in attracting productions here, and it is vital to sustaining jobs and opportunities for Hawai‘i residents.

I strongly support SB2580 because it enhances Hawai‘i’s film production tax incentives raising credit percentages and ensuring the incentive structure keeps pace with industry standards nationwide. This bill also extends critical long-term predictability and adjusts the program to include streaming platform productions, positioning Hawai‘i to compete in a global market.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:45:39 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
amy quinlan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

i support bringing the film productions and projects back to hawaii as part of supporting a strong economy here.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:45:43 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cyndie Oneha	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:46:19 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Karen Agudong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Subject: Support for SB 2580

Aloha Chair and Members,

I strongly support SB 2580. Hawai'i has such incredible local talent and a workforce ready to support film and television production. When the industry comes to Hawai'i, it creates hundreds, if not thousands, of local jobs and supports numerous small businesses across the islands. There are so many people in Hawai'i that benefit from the film and tv industry coming here.

Unfortunately, many productions are being pulled away to other states and countries that offer better tax credits. Without competitive incentives, Hawai'i loses work that should be here. As a result, local actors and crew are forced to leave Hawai'i for work when productions choose other locations, or they are left on unemployment waiting for the next possible opportunity that may not happen. Keeping productions in Hawai'i keeps our talent here in the islands, preserves the culture, and helps keep our creative economy strong. It is an investment in Hawai'i and our communities and families. Mahalo for considering my support and my testimony.

Aloha,
Karen Agudong

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:46:20 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amy Nishihara	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Mahalo for allowing us to submit testimonials. As a local performer, it will provide jobs for us and boost the local economy!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:46:23 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Grace Hall	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in strong support of SB2580, which makes critical updates to Hawai‘i’s Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit to ensure our state remains competitive in a rapidly evolving global industry.

SB2580 appropriately raises the base credit to 27% and 32%, increases the annual cap to \$60 million, and allows streaming productions to qualify. These changes are not excessive—they are necessary.

The film and television industry has fundamentally changed. Streaming platforms now dominate content production, and states that have failed to modernize their incentive programs are being left behind. Without these updates, Hawai‘i continues to lose productions to other jurisdictions that offer more competitive and predictable incentives.

This bill directly supports:

- Local jobs across multiple sectors, including crew, hospitality, transportation, construction, food service, and small businesses
- Economic diversification, reducing reliance on tourism alone
- Workforce retention, allowing skilled local talent to remain in Hawai‘i rather than relocating to the mainland
- Long-term economic return, as film incentives generate significant in-state spending well beyond the credit itself

Importantly, film production incentives are performance-based—the state only provides credits after spending has already occurred locally. Raising the cap and credit rate does not guarantee increased cost to the state; it enables Hawai‘i to compete for projects that otherwise will not come here at all.

Hawai‘i has the talent, infrastructure, and global appeal to be a premier production hub, but without modernized incentives, those advantages are increasingly irrelevant. SB2580 acknowledges today’s industry realities and positions Hawai‘i to participate meaningfully in tomorrow’s economy.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to support SB2580 and help make Hawai‘i competitive again.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Grace Hall

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:48:05 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Natalie Donahue	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Bringing film back to Hawai'i benefits the Hawaiian people and families in Hawai'i. It allows for Hawaiian stories to be told for the future generations.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:56:19 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Suzanne Green	Testifying for Actor	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please make Hawaii a viable place for filming to take place as we are losing so much work and revenue for the state to places here and abroad who make it more fiscally appealing.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:56:47 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noah Cabello	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this.

We should encourage the film industry to invest in our islands to help the talented residents find work and bring jobs to our islands.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:57:33 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryan Shadeck	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

You have the power to help Hawaiis film and television industry stay afloat and compete with other hubs trying to steal work away. The amount of individuals who be impacted by this alone should be why you make the right decision. Do the right thing and keep local productions alive. You represent the beautiful land in many was as chairman, let the cameras continue to represent the beautiful land in film. Thank you.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:59:25 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carolyn Reid	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a SAF/AFTRA member, I totally support any measure to get the film industry in Hawaii back up and working again. The legislatores need to make it more attractive to producers to bring their projects here, rather than us losing them because other locations offer much better incentives, as in "allowances, rebates" etc, to go there. Our Hawaiian workers, whether they be actors, crew, background, techs, catering etc etc deserve to have our industry operational again, after over two years of basically NO PRODUCTIONS, putting us ALL out of works. Our Industry deserves better than that!!!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:59:37 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cheryl Ho	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm an actress & filmmaker in Hawaii. And I support bill SB2580. It's time for people to get back to work

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:01:41 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Thomas McCurdy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair, Vice-Chair, and Honorable Members of the Committee:

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **strong support** of *Senate Bill 2580* and *Senate Bill 2796*, legislation designed to expand and improve Hawai‘i’s film production tax incentives. As a working actor who has had the privilege of performing in multiple Hawai‘i-based productions — including **Hawai‘i Five-0**, **LOST**, and the feature film **Battleship** — I have experienced firsthand the tangible economic and community impact the film and television industry brings to our islands.

Productions like these do far more than capture Hawai‘i’s natural beauty on screen; they employ **local union crews, vendors, hospitality staff, and support workers**, and they deliver **real dollars into our local economy**. When I worked on these shows, the infusion of production spending supported **hotel stays, equipment rentals, catering services, transportation, wardrobe, and experienced union professionals** — reinforcing jobs that sustain Hawai‘i’s middle class.

However, Hawai‘i’s film industry is at a critical juncture. In 2024, the state issued **an estimated \$24.5 million in film tax credits** to 28 productions. These projects generated only about **\$20 million in state tax revenue**, a drastic downturn from previous years.

While comprehensive up-to-date independent figures are still being compiled, past economic assessments have shown that Hawai‘i’s production spending once climbed from about **\$128.2 million in 2007** to over **\$355.6 million by 2019**, illustrating how impactful this industry can be when supported.

Yet more recently the industry’s on-location activity has declined — even for projects tied to our local culture and stories — largely because other regions can *stretch production dollars further*. This decline directly affects middle-class **union workers, technicians, local small business owners, tourism operators, and service providers** who depend on predictable film-related work.

While Hawai‘i currently offers a refundable tax credit of **22% on O‘ahu and 27% on Neighbor Islands** for qualified production costs, those rates are **now comparatively low against other states and international incentives**.

By contrast, places like **New Zealand** offer incentives that exceed Hawai‘i’s base credit structure, including:

- A **20 % baseline cash rebate** on qualifying production expenditure for international productions, with **an additional 5 % uplift** available for projects that demonstrate broader economic benefits to the country’s creative sector.

In real terms, this means New Zealand can return **a larger share of qualifying spend directly to production budgets — often as a *cash rebate* — boosting the economic efficiency of filming there**. As a result, productions that are *narratively set in Hawai‘i*, but are seeking the most financially advantageous shooting locations, have increasingly chosen New Zealand. Productions like **God of War** and **The Wrecking Crew** chose to shoot the majority of their footage in New Zealand even though Actor and Producer Jason Momoa is a native Hawaiian born in the islands — a clear signal of how incentive structures influence filming decisions.

Historically, the film tax credit has helped drive economic growth: statewide production spending increased from roughly **\$128.2 million in 2007 to over \$355.6 million by 2019**, growing much faster than the broader economy and diversifying Hawai‘i’s economic base.

But more recently, Hawai‘i’s film industry has softened: national reporting indicates that average production spending in Hawai‘i has dropped from around **\$400 million annually to approximately \$200 million**, in part due to non-competitive credits and caps on available incentives.

SB 2580 and **SB 2796** represent thoughtful, pragmatic strategies to preserve and expand creative industry jobs — **not only actors but crew members, technicians, hospitality workers, and small businesses that benefit from the ripple effects of production dollars**. These bills would help ensure that our state remains attractive to productions large and small, protecting union jobs in a high-cost environment where reliable work is essential to sustaining local households and diversifying Hawai‘i’s economy beyond tourism dollars.

For our state to retain its legacy as a world-class production destination — and for working families whose livelihoods depend on these opportunities — I respectfully urge your **support and passage of SB 2580 and SB 2796**.

Thank you for your time and consideration,
Thomas McCurdy

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:02:16 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William G. Meyer III	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:**Statement of William G. Meyer III**

Before the Senate Committee on Economic Development and Tourism in strong support of SB 2580 (Relating to Taxation) Hearing: Tuesday February 3, 2026, at 1:00 pm.

Dear Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai and Members of the Senate Committee on Economic Development and Tourism:

My name is William G. Meyer III and I hereby express my strong support of SB 2580.

I have been practicing law in Honolulu since 1979 with a focus on entertainment and intellectual property law and have represented both local and national motion picture and television industry stakeholders in connection with intellectual property and tax matters.

Over the years Hawai'i's film tax incentive program has brought significant production work to the state which has led to the development of a crew base that is second to none throughout the country and has provided numerous opportunities for Hawai'i's creative talent to flourish. However, as a result of certain DoTax missteps and the state's failure to remain competitive with its incentive structure the past few years has seen a precipitous decline in production activity. In fact, last year saw virtually no production work come to Hawai'i.

Most other states with thriving film production industry have incentives structures above 30%. With Hawai'i's high cost of living and uncompetitive incentives, we have been passed over recently because it simply does not pencil out to do business here.

This measure addresses major concerns for the industry by increasing the overall base percentages, allowing larger projects to have a larger per-production cap, increasing the over all yearly cap and extending the sunset date.

Increasing the base rate to 27%/32% is critical to bringing mainland production spending into our economy. Hawai'i as a location is almost always ruled out because of its current low 22% base rate.

Allowing productions that spend more than 60 million to exceed the per-production cap is essential to bringing larger and long-term productions here. Television series and big-budget

studio features will be able to shoot exclusively in Hawai'i rather than the current situation whereby shows will shoot some exteriors in Hawai'i for a couple of weeks but then revert to other more affordable locations that pose for Hawai'i. This is a bummer.

The current overall \$50 million cap has not increased in several years. Raising it to \$60 million is a modest increase that is in line with inflation.

And extending the sunset date of our incentives sends a message to producers and studios that Hawai'i is a committed investment partner. TV series have been the primary stimulus in building the states' film industry and series producers need to know that they can rely on a stable business structure in bringing multi-year productions to Hawai'i.

Collectively, this measure, along with other film industry bills introduced this session, will bring mainland production money here and distribute it to local vendors and workers by sending a strong message that Hawai'i is, once again, a film-friendly state.

Respectfully submitted

William G. Meyer III

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:03:16 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
SCOTT SWARTZ	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Scott Swartz, and I strongly SUPPORT SB 2580. I am an actor, a member of SAG-AFTRA, and a full-time resident of Oahu.

Mahalo,

Scott Swartz

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:03:33 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marsha Mealey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of SB 2580
Relating to the Film and Digital Media Tax Credit

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committee,

I strongly support SB 2580. As a Hawai‘i resident, I have personally seen how the film and digital media industry creates meaningful, well-paying jobs for local people and supports families who want to build long-term lives here. Friends and neighbors who work in film rely on consistent production work to stay in Hawai‘i, cover rising costs, and continue contributing to our local economy.

Beyond individual jobs, film productions support a wide network of local businesses—from equipment rentals and construction to restaurants, hotels, and transportation. When productions choose Hawai‘i, that spending stays in our communities and circulates locally.

The film tax credit helps keep Hawai‘i competitive with other states and countries that actively invest in this industry. Supporting SB 2580 is not just about attracting productions; it is about supporting local workers, small businesses, and economic diversification so our residents can thrive here at home.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:03:45 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Truc Mai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support for Bill SB2580. I believe my reasons in support are similar to many others. I believe that more film jobs and better tax credits in the local communities will help so many people financially and that will benefit the economy and their families.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:04:21 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Sheftell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is David Sheftell, and I am a actor living and working in Honolulu, Hawai‘i. I have been involved in Hawai‘i’s film and media industry for five years, and I can personally attest to the positive impact productions have on our local community.

Hawai‘i’s film and digital media industry is more than entertainment — it provides meaningful employment, skill-building opportunities, and economic growth for our residents. From hiring local crew and actors to engaging local vendors and service providers, productions directly contribute to our communities and help sustain Hawai‘i’s unique economy beyond tourism.

I support SB2580 because it strengthens Hawai‘i’s production tax incentive program, making it easier for productions to choose Hawai‘i over other locations. This bill ensures that local residents like me can continue to work in meaningful creative roles, gain experience, and contribute to a thriving industry here at home. By supporting SB2580, the legislature is investing in Hawai‘i’s economy, local talent, and the future of our creative workforce.

Mahalo for your time and support,

David Sheftell

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:04:24 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gary Fujii	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support providing tax incentives to the local film industry.

Aloha to whom it may concern in regards to SB 2580,

My name is Dylan Chace Lee and I am writing in support of this bill to increase the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit.

As an actor based in Hawaii, it was sad to see the Diamond Head Film studio empty. For over a decade, the film studio provided work for many of crew members on projects such as: *Hawaii 5-0*, *Magnum P.I.*, and *NCIS: HI*. However, with production costs rising and with no incentives to film in Hawai‘i, the work was outsourced elsewhere. The Apple TV series *Chief of War*, a historical story about Hawaiians, by Hawaiians, for Hawaiians filmed in Aotearoa due to cheaper production costs. Although we are grateful for our Polynesian cousins welcoming us to their lands, there should have been no reason that a story, involving Kamehameha the Great no-less, could not have been filmed in Hawai‘i. The mo‘olelo, and the mana carried within those historical places, is ingrained within the ‘āina upon which those actions took place.

In addition, I believe it prudent that Hawai‘i begins to evolve from a singular economy dependent on tourism to a multi-faceted economy that is prepared for the future. Given the current administration in charge at the White House and their actions towards immigration, the United States has faced heavy losses with the tourism business. The World Travel & Tourism Council estimates that US tourism lost about \$12.5 billion dollars in foreign visitor spending. Granted, the losses cannot entirely be pinned solely on immigration policies within the United States, however, the losses show that tourism is not as sustainable as it once was. A solution to the foddering tourism economy is to increase the number of productions that film here. Local businesses like Kualoa Ranch have done well for themselves by capitalizing on the fact that they are a backdrop for many past films such as: *Jurassic Park*, *50 First Dates*, and *Forgetting Sarah Marshall*. Therefore, by supporting SB 2580, there will be indirect benefits to bolster the tourism industry and local businesses.

I thank you folks for your time and consideration of SB 2580 and hope that many of you vote in favor of its passing.

Mahalo a nui loa,

Dylan Chace Lee

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:07:20 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ati Ripley Scanlan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Bringing film back to Hawaii will create jobs and keep money in Hawaii

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:09:32 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joseph F. McDaniel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

WE ARE ALL OUT OF WORK!!! YOU GUYS AT THE CAPITOL KILLED THE INDUSTRY AND TOOK AWAY ALL OUR JOBS!

MY FRIENDS AND I ONCE MADE A GREAT WAGE... Now we struggle and have 3 jobs food dlivery, uber, ect, and even then cannot make anywhere close to pay the high cost of living. NOT TO METION THATS NOT MY TRADE!!!

IM SO TIRED OF THESE OUT OF TOUGH POLITICIANS THINKING THEY ARE HELPING! STOP PRETENDING TO CARE AND DO SOMETHING. Its not fair you get to kill all out jobs and you know nothing about what your killing. Shame on all the people who let this go on so long. Never has hawaii gone this long w/ no work. NEVER AGAIN HAWAII!!!!

IM VERY UPSET BUT I HUMBLY ASK YOU TO CORRECT COURSE 🙏

mahalo,

Joseph Fain McDaniel

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:09:47 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marissa Fry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha ē Chair and Members of the Committee on Economic Development and Tourism (EDT),

My name is Marissa, and I am a resident of Aiea, O‘ahu. I am the proud parent of young children who are working actors and models represented by Bliss Models and Talent, a local Honolulu-based agency that specializes in placing Hawaii keiki and families in film, television, commercials, streaming projects, and other media productions.

I strongly support S.B. 2580 because it would significantly strengthen Hawaii's film and digital media industry by making our state more competitive for productions. The proposed increases to the tax credit—27% for qualified costs in counties like O‘ahu (population over 700,000) and 32% in smaller counties—along with raising the annual statewide cap to \$60 million, removing the \$17 million per-production cap for large projects spending \$60 million or more, and extending the program through 2038 would attract more film, TV, streaming series, commercials, and digital media work here.

For my family, this means more real opportunities. My children audition regularly for roles in local and visiting productions, but too often projects choose to film elsewhere due to cost advantages in other states with stronger incentives. When productions come to Hawaii, my kids get to work on professional sets, gain valuable experience, earn income, and represent our islands proudly—all while staying close to home and school. More bookings would provide stable, family-friendly work in an industry that supports not just talent but also local crew, vendors, and businesses.

The bill's additional safeguards, like requiring independent third-party certification from a CPA to verify costs, claimed credits, and local hires, ensure transparency and protect taxpayer dollars while prioritizing Hawaii residents.

Passing S.B. 2580 would help sustain and grow jobs for our keiki and families in the creative economy, boost tourism through on-screen exposure, and keep more economic activity right here in Hawaii.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my family's perspective and for considering this important measure. I respectfully urge the committee to pass S.B. 2580.

Mahalo nui loa,
Marissa Fry
‘Aiea Resident and Parent of Local Child Talent

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:09:51 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anela K Lagaret	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Anela Lagaret and I am a parent from county of Hawai'i. I am writing to express my strong support for SB 2580.

SB 2580 provides a thoughtful and necessary solution for our film industry. I believe SB 2580 will have a meaningful and positive impact on individuals, families, and communities across our state.

I appreciate that SB 2580 promotes fairness/safety/accountability/accessibility/efficiency—choose what fits, while balancing the needs of both the public and the state. Passing this bill is a practical step toward for our future.

I respectfully urge you to vote **YES** on SB 2580. Thank you for your time and for your commitment to serving our communities.

Sincerely,
Anela Lagaret
Kamuela, Hawai'i

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:10:13 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kawika Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The film industry allows for local people to have the chance to showcase our talents as well as potentially make a living for themselves and their families. This industry has afforded few opportunities for locals when outside of Hawaii. When projects come here, locals have a much greater success at booking roles or even participating as background, not to mention grips, set production, casting, etc. Incentivizing studios to film locally in our islands is a win win for us all.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:11:28 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alan Isobe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of Sb2580 because I believe it is important to support the local film industry by bringing in work from around the world. It encourages outside money to enter our economy and support our local citizens. It also has a multiplying effect by giving Hawaii greater exposure in the media and helps bring in tourism dollars to support our hotel and entertainment industries.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:11:50 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sidney Higa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawai‘i State Senate Committee on Economic Development and Tourism (EDT)

Date: Tuesday, February 3, 2026
Time: 1:00 p.m.
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference
State Capitol, 415 South Beretania Street

RE: SB 2580 Relating to Film Incentives

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

My name is **Sidney Higa**, and I am a **resident of Makakilo** in West O‘ahu.

I am writing **in support of SB 2580**, which would strengthen Hawai‘i’s film incentives.

Television series such as Magnum P.I., Hawai‘i Five-O, and NCIS: Hawai‘i have filmed in West O‘ahu, bringing business to local restaurants, vendors, and service providers, and supporting jobs for local workers.

With no television series filming in Hawai‘i, small businesses are losing customers and workers are losing income that supports their families. Productions are increasingly choosing to film elsewhere because Hawai‘i’s incentives are no longer competitive.

Strengthening Hawai‘i’s film incentives will help bring productions back, support small businesses and jobs in West O‘ahu, and increase economic activity in our communities, especially as a film studio is planned for the region.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony and for considering the needs of our West O‘ahu business community.

Respectfully,

Sidney Higa

Makakilo Resident

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:12:21 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristin Sifton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill. I am an active member of the local I.A.T.S.E 665 union. I've been out of work since last year.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:13:16 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Danny Bernardy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As an actor who has directly benefited from working in Hawai‘i, I’ve seen firsthand how these incentives create real, sustainable jobs for local performers and crew. With significantly less film and television work happening now, these measures are essential to bringing production back to the islands, supporting local workers, and strengthening Hawai‘i’s creative economy. I urge lawmakers to pass this bill and help make Hawai‘i competitive again as a production destination.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:14:26 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Levon Gardner	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill and simply need everyone involved to play a positive role in EVERYTHING involved with filming here in the islands. Those filming need to respect the islands they are visiting and the people who live there and take care of the places they use for filming. Leave it in better condition then it was found. The govt needs to find a happy medium and keep greed to a minimum so everyone makes out and has a positive outcome from filming here in the islands as well, there is definitely enough to go around! Enjoy the journey, don't be ignorant or greedy, and enjoy the ride TOGETHER...simple.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:15:23 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathrine Nakano	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair, Vice Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kathrine Nakano, I live in Pearl City. I am an actor. I am testifying in strong support of Bill SB2580 not only for personal reasons but also because I believe this will encourage more projects in the film industry to film in Hawaii, bringing more business to the islands, and to sustain professionals like myself who would like to make a living in the industry. We have plenty of talent and skill here but the vast majority of us have to leave the island if we want to be successful and make a sustainable living.

It's been a long time coming and I strongly urge this committee to push this through.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Kathrine Nakano

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:16:57 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Angela Escontrias	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of SB2580. We have so much talent, knowledge, and stories here in Hawaii. We need to support the entertainment field and the desire to create and film here in the islands. With us wondering if tourism is going to support our economy and create good jobs for our people, we need to focus our abilities and opportunities elsewhere.

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2580
KIMEE BALMILERO

February 2nd 2026

Aloha,

My name is Kimee Balmilero. I am a professional actor born and raised in Hawai'i. After years of working on the continent, I was able to return home thanks to opportunities created by Hawai'i's film and television industry. Being able to live and work here has allowed me to build a career while staying close to my family, including my parents, as they get older. I support SB 2580.

When film and television productions are not happening here, Hawai'i does not save money. We lose it. We lose jobs. We lose workers. We lose residents who want to stay but cannot afford to when the work disappears.

We are already seeing this happen. Shows and films that are rooted in Hawai'i are being filmed elsewhere. *Chief of War* was filmed in New Zealand. The live-action *Moana* was filmed in Atlanta, Georgia. When projects like these leave Hawai'i, local crews are not hired, local vendors are not paid, and local families lose income.

Film and television production brings outside money into Hawai'i and spends it locally. Productions pay wages, rent housing, hire transportation, and purchase goods and services across the state. When those productions go somewhere else, all of that money goes with them.

SB 2580 helps prevent this. By increasing the production tax credit, raising the annual cap, and updating the program to include streaming platforms, this bill makes Hawai'i competitive in an industry with many options. It gives productions a reason to choose Hawai'i rather than cross us off the list.

The film industry is project-based. Stability matters. SB 2580 helps create more consistent work so people like me can continue living and working in Hawai'i and supporting our families.

Choosing not to invest in this industry does not protect Hawai'i's economy. It pushes jobs and money out of the state. SB 2580 is about keeping that economic activity here.

I urge you to support SB 2580.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kimee J. Balmilero". The signature is fluid and cursive, with "Kimee" and "J." on the first line, and "Balmilero" on the second line. A small circle is drawn around the letter "o" in "Balmilero".

Kimee J. Balmilero

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:21:55 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chuck Lyons	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly urge the passing of SB2580. Hawaii has seen the rapid deterioration of the film industry here. Currently, revenues from film production has decreased to approx \$55M; down by 80% from pre-pandemic levels. That means less taxes and less jobs

Increasing the annual credit caps to \$60M is a good start, but still puts Hawaii at the lower end of states with credit caps. Given many theatrical releases are in the \$10-\$20M range, meaning we could quickly exhaust the annual credit caps early in the year. Removing the per project caps for \$60M+ productions is also a plus, but there are very few blockbuster productions. I'd prefer to see a temporary no credit cap until we see a resurgence of film production to Hawaii

Including streaming platforms is wonderful, a long overdue inclusion, but again, the budgets for streaming platforms will meet the per project cap, but will quickly exhaust the annual credit caps.

The logistics and cost of living in Hawaii is a hindrance in bringing film production back to Hawaii, putting us at a huge disadvantage against states with higher (or no) credit caps that attract blockbuster-level productions, or more medium level budgets

We appreciate the attention paid to the new problem of film production in Hawaii. Film production has always been a fluid business, but we have currently boxed ourselves in with a low annual credit cap that can be quickly exhausted. Without other financial incentives, we need to make it as easy and accommodating as we can to bring film production, and all of the jobs that benefit from them, back to Hawaii

Chuck Lyons

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:23:03 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Makana David	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill. I'm an actor in Hawai'i. I stand behind this bill.

We need more projects in Hawai'i. We are the original storytellers. Film and TV projects coming to our islands bring tons of people work, don't take up land, and pour so much into the economy.

Let's keep it going!

- Makana David

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:23:14 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
N Winter	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am fully in support of this measure

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:23:50 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Richard Raquino	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Let's Really take a hard look at how our State will benefit!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:24:41 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Steven Rodriguez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Steven Rodriguez. I'm a professional stunt performer and fight coordinator working in the TV & Film industry. I'm submitting a written testimony in support of SB2580 and SB2796, both of which help strengthen Hawai'i's competitiveness as a film and media production location while supporting local industry jobs.

I've had the opportunity of working in other states and out of the country. Thanks to the Hawai'iian industry I was able to meet my now wife (Hannah-Grace Rodriguez"McDermott ") she's an amazing stunt performer and Intimacy Coordinator. We worked together on Chief Of War. We have created a life together and both know there is NO place like home. There is no better place to film.

Hawai'i is home to some of the best movies and shows in the TV & Film industry, not only on screen but we have some of the best of the best, hard working crew members. Also the sceneries that Hawai'i provides are unique and enriched by the island love.

People often say "you don't quit the industry, the industry quits you" and if there is anything you've taken from my statement, please let it be that. Please let the cast & crew members keep having a chance to create what they are so passionate about.

Filming in Hawai'i made such a huge impact in my professional career and personal life. I got to fall in love with it and moved to the island wanting to bring more to the industry and support the local community.

The film and media industry brings significant economic activity to the islands and the families.

This bill would mean more consistent employment opportunities for performers, coordinators like myself, crew members of all departments and many local small businesses that provide

services to production crews. When productions come here, they spend locally on hotels, restaurants, equipment rentals, transportation, training facilities, etc.

I am so passionate about the TV & Film industry as well as many others. I respectfully ask that the committee support SB2580 and SB2796.

Mahalo for your time, your consideration of this testimony and your ongoing efforts to support Hawai'i's creativity.

Please save the film industry in Hawai'i!!

Mahalo Nui Loa,

Steven Rodriguez

IMDB: [IMDb Vanity URL \(imdb.me/StevenRodriguez\)](https://www.imdb.com/vanityurl/?id=imdb.me/StevenRodriguez)

Stunt Performer & Fight Coordinator

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:27:05 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alana Eagle	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Written Testimony in Support of SB2580

Aloha Chair and Members,

My name is **Alana Eagle**, and I live in **Honolulu**. I went to film school here, worked in local production for years, and eventually had to leave the industry because the work wasn't stable enough to build a life around.

I've watched friends face the same choice: **leave Hawai'i for months at a time**, relocate their families, or piece together side jobs in tourism, rideshare, or childcare just to stay afloat. **Locals shouldn't have to choose between tourism or leaving** to make a living in the creative trades.

SB2580 helps Hawai'i compete for productions that hire local crew and spend with local vendors, keeping paychecks here and supporting small businesses across the islands. It updates and strengthens the film tax credit, including changes that reflect the current industry (like streaming), raising the annual cap, and extending the program's sunset.

This is also about Hawai'i's broader goal of **diversifying the economy**. A stronger film sector builds year-round, skilled jobs that do not depend on visitor volume, and it gives local residents a reason to stay.

Please pass SB2580.

Mahalo,
Alana Eagle
Honolulu, Hawai'i

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:27:29 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pashyn Santos	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Written Testimony in Support of SB2580 & SB2796

Name: Pashyn Santos

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Pashyn Santos. I am a local actress, writer, content creator, and storyteller born and raised in Hawai‘i.

The arts have always been a powerful way to bring communities together, to create inclusion, shine light on difficult issues, share joy, and help people heal. I am deeply grateful that Hawai‘i is becoming a place where creatives like myself no longer feel forced to leave home for places like Los Angeles or New York in order to pursue a sustainable career in film and media.

Bills like SB2580 and SB2796 help ensure that local talent, culture, and stories continue to thrive right here in our own backyard. These opportunities allow Native Hawaiian and local voices to be seen, heard, and employed while strengthening our local economy and creating meaningful career pathways for future generations.

I want to continue living, working, and contributing to Hawai‘i in the profession I love, alongside others who are building their dreams here at home. Please support SB2580 and SB2796 and the local creative community that depends on them.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Pashyn Santos

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:30:25 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Courtney Cornis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As an Actor and local resident of the hawaiian Islands I can testify that we absolutely need more film opportunity and work. I love hawaii and I've called it home since I was born on oahu 30 years ago. There is not enough acting work here and I don't want to have to move to continue my career. Please bring back film production to hawaii!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:34:56 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lia Aguero	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senator Decoite,

My name is Lia Aguero, I work for Hawaii Media Inc., a prolific film equipment rental company in Hawai'i. **I strongly support SB2580**, relating to the film industry tax credit.

I am grateful for the legislature's continued support of our industry. Increasing the tax credit to 27% / 32% will directly affect countless local families, including my own, in a positive and meaningful way, by bringing more productions to Hawai'i.

Hawaii Media Inc. is a family business that my father helped establish in 1992. I have worked there since 2009, alongside my father and husband. Our business is entirely dependent on the success of our local film industry. We are dedicated to providing our team and their families with strong benefits and livable wages, which we strive to maintain despite the industry's fluctuations. As a mother of two young children, my own family's livelihood depends more than ever on the success of the Hawai'i film industry. The current situation is critical, and we are eager for jobs to return. I believe that strengthening the film tax incentive is the most effective way to make Hawai'i a more attractive and lucrative place for productions to come to film

Hawai'i's film industry supports thousands of working families like mine in the state of Hawai'i. These thriving wage jobs are irreplaceable by other industries. When the film tax incentive is empowered, this industry contributes significantly to state GDP, earnings, and even visitor spending. When film industry workers are employed, we also contribute to local businesses and restaurants. The film industry as a whole has tightened its belt, and Hawai'i must compete in a more aggressive market than ever. Los Angeles recently expanded its film tax incentive program and has already begun to reap the benefits. To remain competitive in the global market, it is imperative that Hawai'i strengthens and stabilizes the film tax incentive program. SB2580 will take meaningful steps to empower our film tax incentive program and will support thousands of working families in Hawai'i.

I strongly support SB2580. I urge your committee to do the same. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Aloha,

Lia Aguero

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:37:07 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Varenchik	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As an independent filmmaker I support this bill. This will help productions on island, as well possibly draw more out of state productions here. We need to make our location attractive to larger productions and this will help.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:38:56 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ryan Gilla	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill 100%.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:39:11 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joshua Meredith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and members of the Senate committee,

My name is Joshua J. Meredith. I'm a member of IATSE Local 665 and Maui resident. **I strongly support SB2580**, Relating to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit.

This bill is a direct investment in stable jobs for Hawaii's workforce. The changes proposed in SB 2580 will significantly increase Hawai'i's ability to attract jobs to stabilize the long-term health of this industry. The increase of the per production percentages, the inclusion of "streaming platforms" as qualified productions, and the extension of the sunset date are good moves for the working people in this industry. Excluding companies that incur more than \$60 million in qualified expenditures from the "per production" cap will encourage long-term projects towards our islands.

To remain competitive in the global market, it is imperative that Hawai'i strengthens the film tax incentive program. SB 2580 will take meaningful steps to empower our film tax incentive program, and will support thousands of working families in Hawai'i.

I strongly support SB 2580. I urge your committee to do the same. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:42:42 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lusy Irawati Van Dyke	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this industry so local Hawaii residents can get more benefits from all activities and businesses then we're grow together

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:42:52 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tara Laulu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha my name is TARA Laulu supporting the HAWAII Film Industry.

My families & Friends work on the HAWAII Film Industry. I'm a supporter & Fans of the Fandoms of MagnumPI & I live here in Oahu--Waikiki.

1--Subject about the Visitors of HAWAII---Tourism. They come to HAWAII to see all the films  & also spending money to HAWAII Industry. And some can't afford to come here or haven't see HAWAII so seeing HAWAII in Films is beautiful to them.

2---Resources.

Jobs for all the Local people here & support their OHANA. So they don't have to move away from HAWAII. And strictly hired from within.

3--Culture--Aloha

Hawaii is the only place in HAWAII with "Aloha" The Beauty, The Heart , Mana, & Full Aloha.

Please support our HAWAII Film Industry. Much Mahalo for excepting my testimony.

Mahalo Nui Loa,

Tara Laulu

FANDOMS OF MAGNUMPI

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:43:14 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christine Russo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Please pass this measure. It will facilitate more productions in the islands which provides essential jobs for those in the industry. Mahalo!

Christine Russo

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:45:41 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Edith Kepa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am an O‘ahu resident, a parent of children active in acting, theatre, film, and commercial work here in Hawai‘i, and the spouse of someone who also works in local film production. I am writing in strong support of SB 2580.

For my family, this industry it’s part of our everyday life. I’ve seen how this work builds confidence, creativity, and real-world skills for my children. It shows them that creative careers are possible here at home, not something they have to move away to pursue.

This industry also supports our household and many families we know. Behind every production are local crew members, drivers, small vendors, caterers, equipment rentals, and neighborhood businesses. When productions come here, local people work. When they leave, those opportunities disappear.

As a parent, my biggest hope is that my children can grow up and build their futures in Hawai‘i. Keeping our film industry strong helps create diverse career paths and supports an economy that goes beyond tourism. SB 2580 helps Hawai‘i stay competitive so these jobs and opportunities remain in our islands.

Mahalo for supporting local families like mine and for considering my testimony in support of SB 2580.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:45:42 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daniel Rosner	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Danny Rosner. I am president of Hawaii Media Inc., which is the largest provider of Production, Camera, Lighting and Grip equipment in the state of Hawaii, since 1992. Also, I have been a member of IATSE Local 665, the union representing technicians and artisans in the entertainment industry in Hawaii, since 1981.

I STRONGLY SUPPORT SB2580 relating to the motion picture, digital media, and film production income tax credit.

I want to thank Senator DeCoite for her tireless efforts to the purpose of enhancing the production income tax credit. As the owner and president of the largest vendor in this sector in Hawaii, I hereby testify that the enhancements suggested in this bill will be exceptionally effective in revitalizing the movie production industry in general and my company specifically. I would expect to be hiring additional workforce shortly after the bill's passage.

We've been down this road many times before, and most recently last year, so I really don't think that it's necessary to explain how important this is to the state economy. Except perhaps to point out that we now know that local movie production is a significant driver of tourism to the islands. And ultimately stimulates the local economy with unmatched bang for our bucks. As a result, the tax credit more than pays for itself.

Again, I appreciate that Senator DeCoite specifically, and the entire legislature along with the Administration, all seem to be on the same page such that we need to take the necessary steps that this great bill represents.

Mahalo!

Danny Rosner

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:46:05 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Relle Reavis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Relle Kai Reavis and I am a Kanaka Maoli born and raised on Oahu. Ever since I could remember, I wanted to be part of movies and tv shows. Especially, seeing our beautiful home in so many iconic films/shows like Hawaii 5-0, Jurassic Park, 50 First Dates, Lost, the list goes on and on.

Hawaii is such a beautiful place filled with so many talented people. Through incentivizing projects to be filmed here, we not only give talented cast and crew opportunities, but also local businesses. Food catering, location usage, and increased exposure offer local businesses. Not to mention tourism. One of Kualoa ranch's most popular attractions is showing off their iconic sets from movies. Imagine the future of Hawaii where we can uplift local businesses and educate people on the real Hawaii.

I love my home. I want to be able to live here and pursue my dreams. I want to show the world our beautiful home. I want to uplift our local community and businesses.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:46:11 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jocelyn Tecson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of SB2580. We need to save our Hawai'i Film Industry and providing better tax incentives bring more production to our state, as well as work for local talent, crew and local businesses. Please kindly consider the importance of passing bills to support our local film industry in order to support local jobs. Mahalo.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:46:12 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cindy Gilla	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I firmly support this bill to keep our families working here in Hawaii!

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:46:37 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jack Kamby	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha ladies and gentlemen of the Committee,

My name is Jack Kamby and I am writing in support of SB2580. I work in the film industry primarily as the warehouse manager for Hawai‘i Media Inc. (HMI), the largest film and TV vendor in Hawai‘i. Working for HMI has also granted me the opportunity to work on some bigger sets doing large commercials and movies.

However, in the past couple of years, the work has dried up due to productions deciding to head for locations with better incentives and low payroll tax rates. I have watched this hurt people from the top to bottom of this industry. From having to turn away UH students seeking internships, to seeing legendary filmmakers with 25+ years of experience turn to driving Uber and making sandwiches at the grocery store deli counter just to make ends meet.

The financial impacts of the film industry stretch far beyond the workers on-set. These include local restaurants getting a bump in revenue from catering orders, lumber and hardware sales, and local vendors renting and selling their equipment. These things create jobs that are not often included in the financial impact report when it comes to looking at productions.

For example, when we still had Magnum PI and NCIS shooting on island, Hawai‘i Media Inc. had over twenty full-time employees. Today, we have seven. That is hundreds of thousands of dollars in wages per year that has disappeared from the local economy. Unfortunately, there are countless stories like this among our local vendors.

In addition, film and TV in Hawai‘i directly impacts the tourism industry. I have talked to friends at TS Restaurants (controls Duke's, Hula Grill, etc) and they say sales are down this year and last. I have also talked to friends in the hotels and they say the same, 10-20% decline across the board. Could this be because people aren't seeing Hawai‘i on their television screens on a weekly basis? Certainly seems there could be a correlation.

The rise of vertical productions (formatted to watch on mobile phone) over the past few years has been staggering, especially in Asia. As we know, we have not seen Asian tourism return to Hawai‘i in full force since COVID. A Hawai‘i based vertical production targeted at the Korean or Japanese market could be a key driver in getting those dollars to return.

Mahalo to the committee for taking the time to read my testimony. Please pass SB2580 so we can take the first step in getting everyone back to work in an industry where the benefits for the state far outweigh the negatives.

Mahalo,

Jack Kamby

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:46:49 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shannon Patalano	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill Sb2580 as a working actor here in the state of Hawaii. We need more work filmed here. This benefits all of us living here.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:47:32 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Paul	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support, many family and friends in the industry.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:47:43 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ron Evans	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and members of the Senate committee,

My name is Ron Evans. I'm a member of IATSE Local 665, the union representing technicians and artisans in the entertainment industry in Hawai'i. **I strongly support SB2580**, Relating to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit.

This bill is a direct investment in stable, middle-class jobs for Hawaii's creative workforce. The changes proposed in SB 2580 will significantly increase Hawai'i's ability to attract lasting work with thriving wage jobs to stabilize the long-term health of this vital industry. I thank the legislature for their foresight in proposing the increase of the overall cap, the increase of the per production percentages, the inclusion of "streaming platforms" as qualified productions, and the extension of the sunset date will make great strides in supporting the thousands of local working families that are supported by this industry. Excluding companies that incur more than \$60 million in qualified expenditures from the "per production" cap will encourage long-term projects towards our islands.

Hawai'i's film industry supports thousands of working families in the state of Hawai'i. These thriving wages are irreplaceable by other industries. When the film tax incentive is empowered, this industry generates significantly to state GDP, earnings, and even visitor spending. When the film tax incentive is restrained, we not only lose the economic benefits of the industry, but we also lose the ability to tell our own stories. To remain competitive in the global market, it is imperative that Hawai'i strengthens and stabilizes the film tax incentive program. SB 2580 will take meaningful steps to empower our film tax incentive program, and will support thousands of working families in Hawai'i.

I strongly support SB 2580. I urge your committee to do the same. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,
Ron Evans

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:51:51 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lainey Collado	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senate Committee and to whom this letter may concern,

My name is Lainey Collado. I am an independent animator to testify in support of SB 2580.

I recently graduated from Pacific Northwest College of Art with a Bachelors in Animated Arts, during a time where animators like I struggled to find a job. Like its live action counterpart, animation is a job that's mostly outside of Hawai'i, as far as Burbank, California or even Annecy, France. It's a challenge to get in because of high competition and low acceptance rate.

Hawai'i is my home and I would like to continue to live here and show my talents with fellow Hawai'i filmmakers. With raising tax credits, this will help secure and support indie, union, veteran, and new storytellers of all kinds.

By supporting a film industry here in Hawai'i, animators like myself will be able to connect and tell stories of our own, and be able to have a sustainable job. This will also help those who have trouble taking their first steps into the industry such as I.

My goal is to create a community of local talent and create animated works that tell a variety of stories of Hawai'i. I'd love to call it 'ainamaiton. Where Japan calls it anime, and the west calls it cartoons, Hawai'i will have 'ainamation.

Thank you for your attention and I hope you consider this legislation.

- **Lainey T.L. Collado**

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:52:13 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Makana	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Keep Hawaiian films with Hawaiian folks.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:56:17 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Abraham Rodriguez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support the tax credits for movie and film industry. Its a vital industry in Hawaii

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:58:05 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gary Lee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the committee. My name is Gary Lee, I've worked in the industry for 6 years. I stand on my written testimony in support of Sb 2580. Thank you for the opportunity to testify

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 12:58:34 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
June Jones	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm an actor and a crew member I support this bill wholeheartedly because it's important to have more jobs for our film industry on island For Hawaii

LATE

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 1:01:35 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sara Gatiuan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a 2025 film graduate, there hasn't been much work to get my foot in the door. I now teach film at a high school where they are looking to get into the industry but there isn't much for them to look into. This would help multiple generations get creative jobs.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 1:02:22 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Luci and alex	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

please listen to industry leaders and make this industry able to return. it is a huge industry for hawaii and so many people have had to leave. please dont let another 2 years go by

LATE

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 1:06:09 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Merly supnet	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:



LATE

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 1:06:35 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mary Lively	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:



LATE

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 1:13:07 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nadine Dalton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support Bill SB 2580 because I believe the entertainment industry benefits Hawai'i in unique ways. Increasing the tax credit is a rare opportunity to invest in Hawaii's economic future. Strengthening the third pillar of Hawaii's economic support structure would build economic resilience for residents in addition to the military industry and tourism industry.

This tax credit is in corporate welfare; it's an incentive. It's not giving away tax dollars with no expectation of reimbursement; it's agreeing to give big spenders a discount for choosing Hawai'i over the competition.

Movies, including those set in or about Hawaii, will get made whether you want them to or not. The tax credit incentivizes those movies to be made here with local talent from actors to crew members consisting of electricians, location scouts, drivers, caterers, the list could go on for days.

Every competing location offers incentives. The entertainment industry has proven they will always choose the best deal. The 80% drop in production proves that Hawaii does not have what it takes by itself to compete. That's the cold hard numbers. Numbers don't care about employing our community, they only care about numbers and facts over feelings.

I know first hand for a fact that the entertainment industry plays a huge role in employment for thousands of us residents. We spend our paychecks locally and visitors due to. One large production can pump 60 million into Hawaii's economy. Or zero when they film elsewhere.

White lotus was filmed in Maui and contributed to about 12.9 million in direct spending to Maui's local economy during the height of the pandemic. They hire local crew and background actors and supported local businesses. According to Expedia there was a 300% increase in tourism in the 90 days following its premiere. White lotus season 1 is credited with popularizing "set-jetting" and the 1 billion dollars in visitor spending to the state in 2022.

We had the potential to have that happen again for season 3 but instead we got ZERO WHOLE DOLLARS.

Taxpayers in Vista about or more than \$550,000 which is a whopping return on investment with such quick turnaround too. Can tourism do that alone? Clearly not. Another positive point about

a tax credit is that it is risk-free. As in no money is paid upfront. Performance-based credits are only given if production has quotas and requirements, spending that money first.

White lotus season 3 was filmed in Thailand who offered a 30% cash rebate saving production \$4.4 million of the \$35 million in cost. Thailand benefited greatly while we made \$0. Tylen understands that you need to spend money to make money and I hope you'll consider doing the same. In this case, however, we don't even have to spend money- production does. It's simply a matter of making a little bit less which is still a lot more than zero.

Hypothetically speaking, if white lotus went back to the original setting in Maui, as the storyline allowed if it's so chose, Hawaii would have made bank. Hawaii missed out on the \$35 to 70 million on direct spending, hundreds of jobs, the millions in GET on paychecks and production expenses, spending on lodging, food, living expenses, vendors etc at local places and upwards of 300% spike in set jetting tourism who are usually "high value/ high spenders." People who can afford to spend a week in Maui at the drop of a dime know how to spend some coin. Let them spend it here. Let them spend money on a restaurants, shops, supply stores, and more. Let them employ hundreds of our community members. Let them spend money and let us collect taxes.

Please vote yes on incentivizing productions to film in Hawaii and bring back a well-loved and very missed industry.

Please let them help support the economy and positive ways- we are counting on you.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

LATE

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 1:13:13 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sydney Agudong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Sydney Agudong, and I'm offering my testimony in strong support of SB 2580 and SB 2796.

I am born and raised from the island of Kaua'i and have had the highest privilege of working within our community on some of the best and rewarding projects. These projects have brought in a ton of worldwide attraction to the islands, global recognition, and a mass amount of career opportunities for the local community. I care deeply about the state of our industry, the sustainability, and livelihoods of Hawai'i. These bills matter to me because they help grow real jobs right here at home. These jobs in film and media that can support local families, provide training and experience for Hawai'i's youth, and keep more creative work in our islands instead of sending it elsewhere.

SB 2580 strengthens Hawai'i's film production tax incentive so that our state can compete with others and attract more projects that hire local cast, crew, and small businesses. SB 2796 ensures fairer tax treatment for productions, making it easier for companies to choose Hawai'i and to employ Hawai'i people.

Together, these bills help make the film industry a stable part of our economy. An economy that celebrates Hawai'i's precious culture, strength, and passion. Not only will it bring in jobs for locals, but will circulate through the rest of our businesses through tourism and hospitality.

We are capable of so much and the sustainability is full-proof! Please consider these voices while creating good opportunities for our communities.

Mahalo for your consideration and support.

from all my heart,

Sydney Agudong

Dear Senator DeCoite and members of the EDT Committee,

LATE

I am in support of SB 2580 but suggest amendments:

Amend Section 1 (a) (1) to read: ~~[Twenty-two]~~ Twenty-seven per cent of the qualified production costs incurred by a qualified production in any county of the State with a population of over seven hundred thousand, with an additional two per cent of the qualified production costs incurred by a qualified production for wages or salaries of writers, cast, crew, and musicians, who are bona fide residents of the State of Hawaii as evidenced by having filed a state tax return for the most recent year; or

Amend Section 2 (a) (1) to read: ~~[Twenty-seven]~~ Thirty two per cent of the qualified production costs incurred by a qualified production in any county of the State with a population of over seven hundred thousand, with an additional two per cent of the qualified production costs incurred by a qualified production for wages or salaries of writers cast, crew, and musicians, who are bona fide residents of the State of Hawaii as evidenced by having filed a state tax return for the most recent year; or

Thank you,
Carlton T. Saito

LATE

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 2:02:15 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Michaels	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Most productions are streaming now. And so many other states and countries have much more competitive tax incentives. Hawaii needs a diversified economy and should not be too dependent on tourism. Please do whatever is necessary to make Hawaii financially attractive to TV and film productions.

LATE

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 2:06:30 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jade Macedo Muniz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We need your support to keep this thriving industry in our state! A movie like Lilo and Stitch will bring hundreds of millions of dollars to this state. We need your help!
Mahalo

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 2:30:40 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
robert suka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

listen to industry leaders

LATE

I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill 2580, which aims to enhance tax incentives for the film industry in Hawaii. This legislation is crucial for revitalizing our local film community and fostering economic growth throughout the state.

I am a member of the Directors guild of America and the Producer and Director on Hawaii Five-0 and Magnum PI on over 250 episodes. I have personally been involved and witnessed the rise and decline of the film industry here over the last 10 years.

The film industry has a significant impact on Hawaii's economy and taxes. By offering better tax incentives, we can attract more filmmakers to Hawaii, leading to increased production opportunities and job creation for local talent and businesses.

The benefits of SB 2580 extend beyond just the film industry. As more production companies choose Hawaii as their backdrop, we will see a surge in demand for local services, including catering, lodging, and transportation. This ripple effect will not only support our economy but also showcase the unparalleled beauty and culture of our islands to a global audience.

I urge you to support SB 2580. This bill is a vital step towards enhancing the film industry's presence in Hawaii, creating jobs, and stimulating economic growth. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,
Bryan Spicer
Local
DGA Director

LATE

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Lisa Coll, and I respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of SB2580, which proposes increasing Hawaii's film and television tax incentives. I am a member of the Director's Guild of America and a local Hawaii resident.

Film and television production is not just an arts industry—it is a powerful economic engine. When productions choose Hawaii, the impact ripples far beyond the set. Local crew members are hired, hotels are booked, rental cars are filled, restaurants and small businesses see increased revenue, and local vendors across multiple industries benefit directly. Increasing the tax incentive ensures that Hawaii remains competitive with other states and countries that are aggressively courting productions with higher and more flexible incentives.

Hawaii has a highly skilled local workforce with decades of experience supporting major studio features and episodic television. However, without competitive incentives, productions are often forced to take their projects elsewhere—resulting in lost jobs, lost revenue, and lost opportunities for Hawaii residents. SB2580 helps protect and grow local employment, allowing crew members to work consistently at home rather than being forced to leave the state to find work.

Additionally, film and television productions provide long-term value through global exposure. Projects shot in Hawaii showcase the islands' beauty, culture, and unique sense of place, driving tourism and strengthening Hawaii's brand worldwide. These benefits continue long after production wraps.

Increasing the tax incentive is an investment in Hawaii's economy, its workforce, and its future. SB2580 will help stabilize and expand an industry that brings millions of dollars into the state while supporting local families and small businesses.

I strongly urge you to pass SB2580 and continue supporting Hawaii's film and television industry.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
Lisa Coll

LATE

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 3:54:00 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cody B Lasconia	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

PLEASE WE NEED HAWAII TO KEEP HAVING THE WORK COME TO HAWAII

LATE

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 4:04:56 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dorene Tagudin Kam	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a Hawaii born and raised screenwriter and screen consultant, I want to build a career here. This is possible if more Film/TV projects choose to complete their projects in the State of Hawaii. They will only come if the State offers a competitive annual Base Credit. I urge all of you to allow SB2580 to move forward so that it will allow the Hawaii Film Industry to grow and be sustainable. Out of state productions will infuse the State's economy in positive and predictable ways. However, they will only be compelled to come to Hawaii if our state offers them competitive financial support as compared to that which is already offered by other states. Let's not miss out on this lucrative opportunity that can create a win-win situation for our film community and the entire state of Hawaii.

Mahalo~Dorene M Tagudin Kam

LATE

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 4:24:08 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicole Kilantang	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawai‘i State Senate Committee on Economic Development and Tourism (EDT)

Date: Tuesday, February 3, 2026
Time: 1:00 p.m.
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference
State Capitol, 415 South Beretania Street

RE: SB 2580 Relating to Film Incentives

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

My name is **Nicole Kilantang**, and I am a **SMALL BUSINESS EMPLOYEE** in West O‘ahu.

I am writing **in support of SB 2580**, which would strengthen Hawai‘i’s film incentives.

Television series such as Magnum P.I., Hawai‘i Five-O, and NCIS: Hawai‘i have filmed in West O‘ahu, bringing business to local restaurants, vendors, and service providers, and supporting jobs for local workers.

With no television series filming in Hawai‘i, small businesses are losing customers and workers are losing income that supports their families. Productions are increasingly choosing to film elsewhere because Hawai‘i’s incentives are no longer competitive.

Strengthening Hawai‘i’s film incentives will help bring productions back, support small businesses and jobs in West O‘ahu, and increase economic activity in our communities, especially as a film studio is planned for the region.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony and for considering the needs of our West O‘ahu business community.

Respectfully,

Nicole Kilantang
Embassy Suites by Hilton Oahu Kapolei
Kapolei, Hawai‘i

LATE

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 4:44:08 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacqueline Beckman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Senators,

I fully support this bill to

- Increases the tax credit cap to \$60 million annually.
- Excludes high-spend productions (over \$60M) from the individual cap — encouraging major studio projects.
- Includes "streaming platforms" — reflecting today's market reality.
- Extends the sunset date to 2038 — providing necessary long-term predictability.
- This bill is a direct investment in stable, middle-class jobs for Hawaii's creative workforce.

We need to bring back the incentives for more filming in Hawaii along with our new innovative film studio at UH West Oahu.

Mahalo,

Jacqueline Beckman

SAG-AFTRA Member

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 4:45:56 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pomaikai Marmolejos	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support Bill 2580.

LATE

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 4:50:26 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
KEOLA RAPOZO	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony in Support of SB2580

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Keola Rapozo. I am a small business owner and parent raising my family in Hawai‘i. I am in strong support of SB2580 and the film tax credit.

Film production in Hawai‘i directly benefits independent small businesses and working families. When productions are here, the impact reaches far beyond the set; local vendors, food businesses, craftspeople, drivers, and crews all gain real opportunities. For many families, these projects provide meaningful income and mobility in a place where limited resources often mean limited options.

When films choose to use the actual land, people, and stories of Hawai‘i, it matters. Authentic productions invest in place and community, not just the image of Hawai‘i. Allowing Hawaiian-based stories to be filmed elsewhere or on sets that merely imitate Hawai‘i weakens those benefits and disconnects our stories from the people who live them.

SB2580 helps ensure that when Hawai‘i is the story, Hawai‘i is also the beneficiary. I urge you to support this measure.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Keola Rapozo

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/1/2026 9:37:14 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Asher Morgado	Testifying for Hawai'i Film Alliance	Support	In Person

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members,

My name is Asher Morgado. I am 19 years old, born and raised in Hawai'i, and I am an actor and aspiring movie director. I respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of SB2580.

For many young creatives in Hawai'i, there is an unspoken reality: if you want to pursue a serious career in film, you are expected to leave. Leave the place that shaped your identity. Leave your family, culture, and community. That expectation quietly drains Hawai'i of its own storytellers.

SB2580 represents a powerful opportunity to change that.

By strengthening and extending film and media incentives, SB2580 sends a clear message that Hawai'i believes in its own talent. It encourages productions to invest here, not only in locations, but in people. It creates opportunities for local actors, filmmakers, writers, crew members, and students to gain experience, mentorship, and sustainable work without being forced to leave home.

As a young filmmaker, my goal is not simply to work in Hawai'i, but to build something that lasts here. I want to tell stories that are rooted in our communities, stories that reflect the depth, diversity, and reality of life in Hawai'i. When young people see authentic stories from their home brought to life, it gives them vision. It tells them that their voice matters and that their future can begin where they are.

SB2580 is not just an economic investment, it is a generational one. It supports talent retention, workforce development, and cultural storytelling. It helps ensure that Hawai'i is not only a place where stories are filmed, but a place where they are created, shaped, and sustained by those who call it home.

I want Hawai'i to be a place where young people don't have to choose between their dreams and their roots. SB2580 helps make that future possible.

Mahalo for your consideration, and for your continued commitment to Hawai'i's creative future.

Respectfully,

Asher Morgado

LATE

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 5:37:08 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Skyler Kamaka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm in support of SB2796. We need this in order to share our culture and stories authentically and support the local film makers.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 6:04:08 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laticia M Perkins	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure.

LATE

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 6:58:00 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joni Keamoai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Joni Keamoai, and I am in strong support of SB2580.

The film industry should be thriving here in Hawai‘i, not on the brink of being dissolved. Hawai‘i is not only a place of extraordinary beauty, but a place rich with stories found nowhere else in the world. Our history, culture, language, and most importantly our people, carry generations of mo‘olelo just waiting to be shared through film.

While I do not currently work in the film industry, I hope to one day. I am an author of books and music, and I believe deeply in the power of storytelling. Supporting this bill shines a positive light on Hawai‘i, creates opportunity, and opens doors for future jobs and creative pathways for local people.

I humbly ask those with the privilege of voting on SB2580 to please pass this bill. Give our stories a voice and a chance to be seen, heard, and more importantly, felt.

Mahalo nui loa,

Joni Keamoai

LATE

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 7:18:06 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Randy Wong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to **support SB 2580**. As someone who works daily on behalf of young people aspiring to careers in music and the broader creative ecosystem, I see firsthand how deeply today's youth are inspired by film, media, and storytelling; and how that inspiration directly fuels interest in music, performance, sound design, and creative careers.

By increasing the motion picture, digital media, and film production tax credit, expanding eligibility to include streaming productions, and extending the program's sunset date, SB 2580 provides the **long-term certainty** needed to attract sustained production activity in Hawai'i. That stability is critical for building a reliable creative workforce and for signaling to students that creative careers can be pursued here at home, not only on the continent.

Film production is inherently collaborative. The proposed enhancements (e.g. the higher credits in neighbor island counties and increased annual caps) support geographic equity while strengthening the broader creative economy that surrounds film production.

Investing in film through SB 2580 is an investment in **homegrown talent**, workforce development, and youth aspiration. Strong creative industries help combat brain drain by allowing students to imagine sustainable futures in Hawai'i. Our Hawai'i will therefore reflect the strategic forethought, creativity, and resilience that this bill cultivates.

Mahalo!

LATE

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 7:19:27 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Debra Bringman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Late entry due to electricity being down on Kahalu'u. Electricity did not come back on until about 6:45 p.m. (2/2).

I am in strong support of this bill. We need the movie industry here in Hawaii to support our economy and our people.

LATE

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 7:30:15 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kelly Tolentino	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this 

LATE

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 8:28:15 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jodi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To the best of my knowledge for the bill SB2580: Relating to The Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax. This bill is very beneficial to the people of Hawaii. Many family and friends feed their families and provide for their families through this opportunity. By allowing this Bill to pass until 2038, many families within the Islands will be able to remain in the island and provide for their loved ones.

LATE

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 8:41:55 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jaylin Kuoha	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

LATE

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:23:48 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daniel Houglum	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am a professional music composer and support Hawaii striving to increase relevance in a global film industry with many competitive locations. More projects created locally could positively economically impact my family and related local film/music industry contacts through increased work. Hosting more film projects in Hawaii can have a broader effect than perhaps realized. For example, when writing the musical score for a film, I aim to hire local professional orchestral musicians to record in Honolulu-based studios for film projects. More film projects leads to more post-production work for those musicians, local sound engineers, and many others in the field.

Hawaii has so many great writers, directors, actors, production crews, and post-production sound/music/vfx to produce great TV and cinema and I support the State strengthening this industry -- an industry that the University of Hawaii System is graduating credentialed Creative Media students into. It's an industry in which momentum, both real and perceived, directs the course -- so thank you for helping bring more opportunities to the talented creative and production teams Hawaii has to share with the world.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Daniel Houglum

LATE

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:23:56 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kanoa Andrade	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support this bill and how it would help revitalize our film industry, giving professionals the steady work they need and making Hawaii a sought after location for production, boosting the economy, giving necessary income for people to provide for their families, and ensuring that new generations of filmmakers have opportunities to thrive without having to go elsewhere for work.

LATE

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:42:11 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James Chun	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii in film is a natural and organic way to showcase the islands to the world. We have reaped the benefits from past productions. We need to continue and expand the credits that will ensure the desirability of Hawaii to many more people for years to come.



LATE

TESTIMONY OF DAVE ERDMAN, PRESIDENT & CEO
RETAIL MERCHANTS OF HAWAII
FEBRUARY 2, 2026

IN SUPPORT OF SB 2580 - RELATING TO THE MOTION PICTURE, DIGITAL MEDIA, AND FILM PRODUCTION INCOME TAX CREDIT

Aloha Chair Decoit, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Dave Erdman, and I am the Interim President and CEO of Retail Merchants of Hawai'i, a statewide nonprofit trade association representing retailers, shopping centers, and allied businesses across the islands.

Retail Merchants of Hawai'i supports SB 2580.

RMH supports motion picture, digital media, film, and streaming production income tax credits because these programs attract outside investment, create local jobs, and strengthen Hawai'i's overall economic ecosystem.

Film and television productions employ local families in a wide range of production roles, from technical and creative positions to administrative and support services. These productions also rely heavily on local vendors, suppliers, and service providers, many of whom are small and locally owned businesses.

When productions are active in our communities, spending flows directly into the local economy. Cast and crew shop at local stores, dine at nearby restaurants, and use neighborhood services. This activity supports retailers and helps sustain jobs well beyond the production industry itself.

Research prepared by the Research and Economic Analysis Division of the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism shows that film and television productions also play an important role in promoting Hawai'i to a global audience. Productions that showcase Hawai'i increase awareness of our islands and help drive visitor interest over time. Increased visitation benefits retailers statewide, particularly those in visitor-facing areas, shopping centers, and town centers.

SB 2580 helps maintain Hawai'i's competitiveness in attracting productions in an increasingly competitive global market. Continued support for these tax credits helps ensure that Hawai'i remains a viable location for film and digital media projects while delivering broad economic benefits to local workers, businesses, and communities.



For these reasons, Retail Merchants of Hawai‘i respectfully supports SB 2580.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Respectfully submitted,
Dave Erdman
Interim President and CEO
Retail Merchants of Hawai‘i

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:12:34 PM

Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
david stant iii	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill. it is vital for our film industry and local families who work in this industry that this bill passes. the film industry also brings lots of money to our local economy and businesses.

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 11:11:18 PM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Geronimo Son	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Committee Members,

Please honor our beautiful state of Hawai‘i by supporting this bill that supports not only so many families and creatives like myself that work in the film industry, but also supports thousands more through direct spending and the creation of jobs. Besides the immense financial benefits for the state and your constituents, please consider the positive cultural impact that having a healthy and robust Hawai‘i film and television industry has in putting Hawai‘i stories on screens in Hawaiian homes and around the world. Storytelling is as old as fire, and just as vital. Our Hawai‘i stories cannot be told if it is not economically viable for productions to shoot here. Please give a lifeline to our ‘ohana. Please support our stories. Please support the growth of Hawai‘i’s economy and cultural output on the global stage by passing this bill. Mahalo!

LATE

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 5:44:41 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Siena Agudong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Siena Agudong, and I strongly support SB 2580 and SB 2796.

I am a professional actress born and raised from the island of Kaua'i, and of my 14 years of work over the years, filming at home in Hawai'i was the highlight of my career. I care deeply about the state of our industry, the community resources, and the opportunities for our youth. Hawai'i is overflowing with talent but is lacking the support that we urge you to provide. These bills will help support local families, provide training and experience, and keep more creative work flowing in our islands instead of sending it elsewhere.

SB 2580 strengthens Hawai'i's film production tax incentive which allows our state to have a rightful opportunity to bring more projects that hire local cast, crew, and small businesses. SB 2796 ensures fairer tax treatment for productions, making it easier for companies to choose Hawai'i and to employ Hawai'i people.

Together, these bills help make the film industry a stable part of our economy. An economy that celebrates Hawai'i's precious culture, strength, and passion. Not only that, but these bills represent more than a fight to keep our industry alive, they stand for something greater. This is an opportunity to stand and fight for Hawai'i. Passing SB 2580 and SB 2796 shows the state's pride for Hawai'i people and support in genuine representation of Hawaiian culture in film.

Mahalo for your consideration and support.

With sincerity,

Siena Agudong

LATE

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 8:48:43 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brendan Lee	Testifying for West 4th Street Films	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha and Good Afternoon,

I am writing today in support of SB2580 and the Hawaii Film Industry.

I have been blessed over the years to work in the islands, and to be a part of the one-of-a-kind experience it is to make films in Hawaii. The production value is obvious in the singular beauty of the locations, but where Hawaii's industry really distinguishes itself is in the talent and spirit of the local crew.

I have worked all over the world, in several countries and U.S. States, and after 20+ years of adapting to and working with local crews in these various locales, I can confidently say that Hawaii's talent pool is absolutely the cream of the crop.

With a more competitive tax incentive structure, I believe that productions currently choosing to do business further afield will return to Hawaii and invest in the local economy across several sectors.

I have made lifelong friends in the islands because of this industry, and it is my sincere hope that they be able to thrive making films far into the future, in Hawaii.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Brendan Lee

President, West 4th Street Films

Director & Assistant Director (DGA)

LATE

SB-2580

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 9:12:57 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/3/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Cruickshank	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Just wanted to say that as someone who has been employed by the film and TV industry for nearly 3 decades, it is difficult right now for my family right now as we have seen a decrease in our income and loss of industry supplied healthcare. It is also hard to see my colleagues going through the same thing. The film ohana in Hawaii is vital and talented and everybody is looking for a time when production is enticed to return to Hawaii. This bill should help get the ball rolling, Thank you.