JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR

JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA
DIRECTOR

DANE K. WICKER
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

DENNIS T. LING
ADMINISTRATOR

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

KA ʻOIHANA HOʻOMOHALA PĀʻOIHANA, ʻIMI WAIWAI A HOʻOMĀKAʻIKAʻI

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT DIVISION

No. 1 Capitol District Building, 250 South Hotel Street, 5th Floor, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813
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Statement of
Dennis T. Ling
Administrator
Business Development & Support Division
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Wednesday, February 25, 2026
10:57 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

In consideration of
SB2928, SD1
RELATING TO PROCUREMENT.

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki and members of the Committee. The Business Development & Support Division (BDSD) of the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism supports **SB2928, SD1** which would appropriate funds and establish the Small Business Procurement Program within the State Procurement Office.

This measure provides a path for small businesses, including those owned by veterans, Native Hawaiians, and women, to effectively participate in small business contracting opportunities in the State. It also establishes a permanent Small Business Procurement Coordinator position to oversee the proper administration, enforcement, and facilitation of programs necessary to assist small businesses effectively participate in the State's public procurement processes.

BDSD agrees that small businesses are the lifeblood of the State's economy. Establishing a permanent procurement program and developing an effective small

business state contracting program within the state procurement process will help promote the growth and development of small businesses in Hawai‘i.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

JOSH B. GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIAʻĀINA

BONNIE KAHAKUI
ADMINISTRATOR

DAYNA OMIYA
ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR

STATE OF HAWAIʻI | KA MOKUʻĀINA O HAWAIʻI
STATE PROCUREMENT OFFICE
P.O. Box 119
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TESTIMONY
OF
BONNIE KAHAKUI, ADMINISTRATOR
STATE PROCUREMENT OFFICE

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE
ON
WAYS AND MEANS
February 25, 2026, 10:57 AM

SENATE BILL 2928, SD1
RELATING TO PROCUREMENT

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on Senate Bill 2928, SD1. The State Procurement Office (SPO) strongly supports this bill, which permanently establishes the Small Business Procurement Program and small business procurement coordinator position within the SPO, and respectfully requests continued funding for the position from FY2028 and beyond.

Hawaiʻi's small businesses are a critical driver of the State's economy, yet historically they have faced structural barriers to participating effectively in public procurement. While prior legislative efforts sought to address this issue, many of those initiatives were temporary, under-resourced, or lacked the staffing and data necessary for effective implementation. As a result, earlier programs did not achieve sustained improvements in small business participation in state contracting.

Act 168, Session Laws of Hawaiʻi 2022, marked a significant turning point by establishing a five-year small business assistance initiative within the SPO. Since its implementation and hiring of the Small Business Procurement Coordinator in 2025, the initiative has delivered the following:

1. Established and expanded a statewide small business database to track participation, including:
    - Increasing the small business vendor registration by 48%.
    - Tracking small business awards data: $6.3M in contract dollars awarded to registered small businesses in FY2025, and $3.4M in FY2026 to date.
2. Developed a centralized small business resource website with a monthly newsletter.
3. Conducted statewide surveys of small businesses and procurement personnel, which revealed:
    - A strong desire from both small businesses and procurement staff to address the complexity, ambiguity, and information gaps preventing success in state contracting; and

- A need to reduce barriers through education and simplification of the procurement process.

4. Participated in 16 outreach events, collaborating with other state and county agencies, and small business programs in other states.
5. Developed draft administrative rules to support Hawai‘i Revised Statutes (HRS) chapter 103D Part IX, Assistance to Small Businesses.

These efforts have improved both vendor readiness and procurement staff awareness and generated the data necessary to inform policy development and administrative rulemaking. Senate Bill 2928 builds upon this progress by transitioning the temporary initiative into a permanent program to support small businesses in state procurement. Permanently establishing the Small Business Procurement Program ensures continuity, preserves institutional knowledge, and allows the state to fully realize the benefits of its initial investment under Act 168, SLH 2022. Without this measure, Hawai‘i risks losing momentum, data infrastructure, and the capacity to address long-standing participation gaps in a meaningful and sustainable way.

Impacts and Implementation Considerations

This bill formalizes existing operations rather than creating a new or duplicative program. By placing the Small Business Procurement Program within Part IX of Chapter 103D, HRS, the measure provides clear statutory authority for ongoing data collection, outreach, policy development, and coordination with state agencies.

The fiscal impact is limited and clearly defined. The bill requests the continued annual appropriation of $126,000 in FY28 and onwards for one permanent full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) Small Business Procurement Coordinator position within the SPO, as noted in the Committee on Government Operations report. This position is already functionally in place under the current initiative, and funds have been appropriated through FY27.

In the long term, the program is expected to continue increasing small business participation in state contracts, improving competition, strengthening local supply chains, and ensuring that public procurement dollars circulate within Hawai‘i’s economy. Any ongoing costs associated with the program are modest when weighed against these economic and operational benefits.

SPO recommends revisions to Section 5, page 9, lines 20-21; and page 10, lines 1-4 to read as follows:

> "Section 5. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of $126,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary, annually, beginning fiscal year 2027 to establish one permanent full-time equivalent (1.00 FTE) small business procurement coordinator position within the state procurement office."

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this important initiative.

February 25, 2026

Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Wednesday, February 25, 2026, 10:57 a.m.
Conference Room #211 and via video conference

KAPOLEI CHAMBER of COMMERCE
Working for West Oahu

RE: SB 2928 SD1 Relating to Procurement

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki 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, ʻEwa Beach, Nānakūli, Waiʻanae 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 Oʻahu businesses thrive.

The Kapolei Chamber of Commerce **strongly supports SB 2928 SD1**, which permanently establishes the Small Business Procurement Program and the Small Business Procurement Coordinator position within the State Procurement Office, repeals the Small Business Assistance Initiative established under Act 168, Session Laws of Hawaiʻi 2022 effective January 1, 2025, and appropriates funds to support the continuation of this work.

SB 2928 appropriately transitions the work initiated under Act 168 into a permanent structure within the State Procurement Office, ensuring that services continue without interruption while strengthening accountability, stability, and long-term planning.

The Kapolei Chamber of Commerce has had the opportunity to participate in small business resource and outreach events in partnership with the Small Business Procurement Coordinator and the Small Business Assistance Initiative. We have seen firsthand how impactful this program is for small businesses seeking to enter or expand their participation in state procurement opportunities. At these events, **business owners receive practical, accessible guidance on business registration, certifications, locating bidding opportunities, and navigating state procurement processes.** Just as importantly, these sessions provide direct access to knowledgeable staff, allowing business owners to ask questions, build relationships, and gain confidence navigating a system that can often feel complex and intimidating. For many participants, these workshops represent their first meaningful introduction to government contracting.

Businesses consistently leave these sessions better informed, more prepared, and more motivated to pursue public-sector opportunities. This targeted support helps move businesses from interest to action and from potential to performance. **Without this kind of hands-on assistance, many small businesses, particularly those new to government contracting, would remain on the sidelines.**

SB 2928 is critical to sustaining and expanding this progress. The Small Business Assistance Initiative has established strong partnerships with chambers of commerce, business associations, and community organizations, enabling outreach and training to reach businesses where they are, within their local communities and trusted networks. **Making this program permanent ensures continuity, strengthens these partnerships, and avoids disruption caused by funding uncertainty or program sunsets.**

From a fiscal perspective, establishing this program permanently maximizes the State's prior investment by institutionalizing a proven and effective model rather than repeatedly rebuilding capacity through temporary initiatives. Stable staffing and continuity reduce inefficiencies, minimize administrative disruption, and allow the program to focus on measurable outcomes for small businesses.

From an economic development perspective, SB 2928 strengthens Hawai'i's local business ecosystem. **When more local businesses are equipped to compete for state contracts, public dollars are more likely to remain in the local economy—supporting workforce stability and community growth.**

The Kapolei Chamber of Commerce works closely with small businesses across West O'ahu, and we have seen the positive impact this initiative has had on their readiness and confidence. Allowing this program to expire would represent a step backward in our shared efforts to support small businesses and strengthen Hawai'i's economy.

For these reasons, the Kapolei Chamber of Commerce strongly supports SB 2928 SD1 and respectfully urges the Committee to pass this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Respectfully,

Kiran Polk
Executive Director & CEO

Chamber of Commerce HAWAII

2030 BLUEPRINT
ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN FOR HAWAII

Testimony to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Wednesday, February 25, 2026, at 10:57AM
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

RE: SB2928 SD1 Relating to Procurement

Aloha e Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Sherry Menor, President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber"). The Chamber supports Senate Bill 2928 SD1 (SB2928 SD1), which establishes the Small Business Procurement Program and Small Business Procurement Coordinator position permanently in the State Procurement Office.

SB2928 SD1 aligns with our 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii: An Economic Action Plan, specifically under the policy pillar for Small Business. This pillar wholly supports institutional assistance for small business growth and development. This legislation improves access to state procurement opportunities for these important businesses, that may have otherwise not been aware of these opportunities. The Chamber appreciates the sentiment in the preamble of this legislation, to make good on prior legislative intent to provide this support to small businesses. As economic cost pressure continues to mount and the cost of doing business continues to rise, the permanence of a Small Business Procurement program and a Small Business Procurement Coordinator will be instrumental in connecting Hawaii's small business with economic opportunity while keeping taxpayer money productive and circulating within the state.

The Chamber appreciates the comprehensive scope of this legislation and is hopeful that further administrative infrastructure will magnify the impact the Small Business Procurement Coordinator has already delivered. This position has increased small business vendor registration by 42% and supported $8.9M in contract dollars awarded since FY2025. The Chamber supports many small businesses within the state and recognizes the benefit this legislation can deliver to our members.

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii is the state's leading business advocacy organization, dedicated to improving Hawaii's economy and securing Hawaii's future for growth and opportunity. Our mission is to foster a vibrant economic climate. As such, we support initiatives and policies that align with the 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii that create opportunities to strengthen overall competitiveness, improve the quantity and skills of available workforce, diversify the economy, and build greater local wealth.

We respectfully ask to pass Senate Bill SB2928 SD1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Statement of
Derek J. Sakaguchi
President & Chairman
Native Hawaiian Community Development Corporation
before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Wednesday, February 25, 2026
10:57 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

In strong support of
SB 2928, SD1
RELATING TO PROCUREMENT

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Derek Sakaguchi, President and Chairman of the Native Hawaiian Community Development Corporation, and I strongly support Senate Bill 2928, which permanently establishes the Small Business Procurement Program and Small Business Procurement Coordinator position within the State Procurement Office.

Through my work with Native Hawaiian entrepreneurs and family-owned businesses, I have seen firsthand both the talent that exists in our communities and the systemic barriers that have limited their access to government contracting opportunities. Many of these businesses have the skills, capacity, and desire to work with the State, yet they are often excluded simply because they lack access to information, guidance, and institutional support.

For too long, state procurement has been difficult to navigate for small, locally owned businesses. Complex rules, unfamiliar processes, limited outreach, and inconsistent assistance have made it challenging for many entrepreneurs to even know where to begin. As a result, too many capable Native Hawaiian-owned businesses have been left out of opportunities that could help them grow, hire locally, and reinvest in their communities.

The Small Business Procurement Program will help to change this reality. For the first time, many Native Hawaiian-owned businesses will have access to centralized resources, training workshops, direct outreach, and personalized guidance on how to compete for state contracts. The creation of a statewide database, educational materials, and a dedicated coordinator has made the state procurement system more transparent and more accessible. These efforts have and will continue to help demystify the process and build confidence among business owners who previously felt excluded.

However, this progress is fragile. Because the current initiative is temporary, many business owners remain uncertain about whether this support will continue.

Without permanence, relationships are disrupted, institutional knowledge is lost, and trust within the community is weakened. SB2928 addresses this concern by making the program permanent and ensuring that the State's commitment to small businesses—especially those owned by Native Hawaiians—is not subject to expiration. This program is especially critical now, as uncertainty surrounding federal small business programs has created additional challenges for local entrepreneurs seeking stable and reliable opportunities.

Continuity matters. Building capacity within Native Hawaiian-owned businesses does not happen overnight. It requires consistent outreach, long-term mentoring, reliable data collection, and sustained engagement. This bill recognizes that reality. By permanently establishing the Small Business Procurement Program, the Legislature affirms that supporting small businesses, especially Native Hawaiian entrepreneurs, is not a short-term project, but a long-term investment in Hawai'i's future.

When Native Hawaiian-owned businesses can access state and local contracts, the benefits extend far beyond individual companies. These businesses hire locally, support 'ohana, preserve cultural values, and strengthen the economic resilience of our islands. I've experienced through my work that government contracting can be a powerful tool for economic self-determination, but only if access is fair and meaningful.

SB2928 moves Hawai'i closer to that goal. This measure ensures that the data, relationships, and systems built under Act 168 will not be lost. It provides accountability through reporting and oversight. It institutionalizes outreach and advocacy within the procurement system. Most importantly, it sends a clear message to local and Native Hawaiian small businesses that the State is committed to their success.

For these reasons, I strongly urge the committee to pass SB 2928, SD1.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this important measure.

Respectfully submitted,

Derek J. Sakaguchi
Chairman & President

Native Hawaiian Community Development Corporation
181 South Kukui Street • Honolulu, Hawai`i 96813 • 808.834.4631

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WAHIAWĀ VALUE-ADDED PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT CENTER

Statement of
Chris Bailey
Manager
Wahiawā Value-Added Product Development Center
before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Wednesday, February 25, 2026
10:57 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

In strong support of
SB 2928, SD1
RELATING TO PROCUREMENT

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of SB 2928, SD1.

The Wahiawā Value-Added Product Development Center (WVAPDC) was established to strengthen Hawaiʻi's agricultural economy by helping farmers and food entrepreneurs transform raw commodities into market-ready, value-added products. SB 2928 represents an important step toward aligning state procurement policy with that mission. Every year, the State spends substantial public funds on food and food-related products for schools, correctional facilities, healthcare institutions, and other agencies. At the same time, we work with farmers and small manufacturers who are eager to scale production, meet institutional standards, and supply those very markets, but face structural barriers to entry.

The missing link is access. At WVAPDC, we provide certified commercial processing space, technical assistance, food safety compliance support, and product development services. We help entrepreneurs meet regulatory standards and scale their recipes to commercial volumes. What many of these businesses need next is a clear, accessible pathway into state contracting opportunities.

SB 2928 strengthens Hawaiʻi's small business procurement framework in ways that can create that pathway. By expanding participation and improving alignment between small business development and state purchasing, this measure supports:

- Increased competition and vendor diversity
- Growth of locally owned agricultural and food manufacturing businesses

- Stronger supply chain resilience
- Reduced dependence on imported food products

Importantly, this bill has implications beyond procurement mechanics. It directly supports economic diversification and food security.

When small, local producers are able to secure stable institutional contracts, they can invest in equipment, hire employees, expand production, and purchase more raw product from Hawai‘i farmers. This creates multiplier effects throughout the agricultural sector. It also provides greater predictability for both producers and public agencies.

Facilities like WVAPDC are designed to prepare businesses to meet institutional standards. SB 2928 helps ensure that once they are ready, there is a viable opportunity to compete.

As a state, we have already invested in infrastructure to grow local food manufacturing capacity. Aligning procurement practices with that investment maximizes its return. SB 2928 moves Hawai‘i toward a more intentional system—one where economic development, agriculture, and procurement policy work in concert rather than in isolation.

For these reasons, the Wahiawā Value-Added Product Development Center respectfully urges the Committee to pass SB 2928, SD1.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Chris Bailey
Manager
Wahiawā Value-Added Product Development Center

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIAʻĀINA

KEITH A. REGAN
COMPTROLLER
KA LUNA HOʻOMALU HANA LAULĀ

MEOH-LENG SILLIMAN
DEPUTY COMPTROLLER
KA HOPE LUNA HOʻOMALU HANA LAULĀ

STATE OF HAWAIʻI | KA MOKUʻĀINA O HAWAIʻI
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES | KA ʻOIHANA LOIHELU A LAWELAWE LAULĀ
P.O. BOX 119, HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0119

WRITTEN TESTIMONY
OF
KEITH A. REGAN, COMPTROLLER
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES
TO THE

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

FEBRUARY 25, 2026, 10:57 A.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM 211 AND VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE, STATE CAPITOL

S.B. 2928, S.D.1

RELATING TO PROCUREMENT

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on S.B. 2928, S.D. 1.

The Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS) strongly **supports** S.B. 2928, S.D. 1, which establishes the Small Business Procurement Program and Small Business Procurement Program Coordinator position permanently in the State Procurement Office. In addition, it repeals the Small Business Assistance Initiative established in Act 168, Session Laws of Hawaiʻi 2022.

S.B. 2928, S.D. 1 would permanently establish the Small Business Procurement Program and the Small Business Procurement Coordinator within the State Procurement Office (SPO), replacing the time-limited Small Business Assistance Initiative authorized by Act 168 (SLH 2022). Making these functions permanent

strengthens Hawai‘i’s procurement infrastructure by ensuring stable staffing, sustained data collection and reporting on small business participation, and consistent statewide outreach and training for agencies and vendors including veterans, Native Hawaiian, and women-owned enterprises so more local firms can compete effectively and deliver value to the State. Permanence also supports development and maintenance of a statewide small business resource hub and related tools, enabling transparent, data-driven policy and continuous improvement across jurisdictions.

The program will create and maintain a statewide small business database, develop outreach initiatives, and aggregate resources in an accessible online format. These efforts will provide small businesses with the tools and information needed to navigate the state procurement process, fostering growth and development.

The bill mandates the collection and analysis of data on small business participation in state contracts, including metrics on contract awards and vendor challenges. This data will inform policies and rules, ensuring the program addresses the needs of small businesses effectively while promoting transparency and accountability in state procurement processes.

It is for these reasons we would humbly ask that you support this measure. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

SB-2928-SD-1
Submitted on: 2/24/2026 9:15:24 AM
Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:57:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
kaloa@stanfordcarr.com	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB2928, SD1

Relating to Procurement

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Wednesday, February 25, 2026 10:57AM

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

My name is Kaloa Robinson, and I am submitting this testimony in strong support of SB2928, which permanently establishes the Small Business Procurement Program and small business procurement coordinator position within the State Procurement Office.

In my line of work in real estate development with a locally-owned firm, I am constantly engaged with contractors, engineers, designers, suppliers, and service providers. I see every day how projects succeed when we can partner with strong local small businesses. These businesses bring local knowledge, accountability, and long-term commitment to our communities. Most importantly, they keep our economic activity circulating here at home.

When contract dollars stay in Hawai‘i, they do more than complete a project. They support local jobs, strengthen family-owned companies, and reinvest in our neighborhoods. When those dollars leave the state, we lose that multiplier effect. SB2928 helps ensure that more public procurement spending benefits local businesses rather than being exported to outside firms.

From firsthand experience, I can say that many capable small businesses want to work with the State but struggle to access government contracting opportunities. The procurement system can be complex, difficult to navigate, and intimidating—especially for smaller, locally owned companies that do not have dedicated compliance or legal staff. Too often, this results in large out-of-state firms dominating contracts, even when qualified local companies exist.

By providing centralized information, outreach, training, and technical assistance, the Small Business Procurement Program has helped local businesses better understand bidding

requirements, certification processes, and compliance standards. This support increases the number of competitive local bidders and improves the overall quality of proposals submitted to the State. As a developer, I have seen how this leads to stronger project teams and better project outcomes.

However, these gains will be lost if the program is allowed to expire. Building strong local business capacity takes time. Relationships must be built. Trust must be earned. Skills must be developed. SB2928 recognizes that reality by making this initiative permanent and ensuring that the progress made over the past several years continues.

This stability matters. When more local small businesses are prepared to compete or subcontract for state work, we have a deeper and more reliable pool of partners. That strengthens the entire development ecosystem and reduces reliance on outside firms that may have little long-term investment in Hawai‘i.

SB2928 is a smart economic development policy. It protects the public’s investment. It supports workforce development. It strengthens local supply chains. And it ensures that taxpayer dollars circulate within our state. As someone who works every day to build in Hawai‘i and for Hawai‘i, I strongly urge the Committee to pass this measure.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support of SB2928, SD1.

Respectfully,

Kaloa Robinson

Testimony of
Pacific Resource Partnership

Hawai'i State Senate Committee on Ways and Means (WAM)
Wednesday, February 25, 2026

Subject: Testimony in Strong Support of SB2928 SD1, relating to procurement.

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and esteemed members of the committee.

Pacific Resource Partnership (PRP) is a labor-management alliance between the Hawai'i Regional Council of Carpenters, representing over 6,000 union carpenters and apprentices, and more than 250 signatory contractors statewide. Together, we represent a significant portion of Hawai'i's construction industry workforce and employers.

PRP strongly supports SB2928 SD1, which establishes the Small Business Procurement Program and the Small Business Procurement Coordinator position on a permanent basis within the State Procurement Office (SPO) and repeals the temporary Small Business Assistance Initiative established under Act 168, Session Laws of Hawai'i 2022. Hawai'i's small businesses form the backbone of our local economy, driving innovation, job creation, and community resilience. In the construction sector, this is especially true.

Many of our journey-level carpenters, after gaining valuable skills and experience through our apprenticeship programs, go on to launch their own contracting businesses. Likewise, a substantial number of our current signatory contractors qualify as small businesses, often starting modestly and growing through hard work and opportunity. These entrepreneurs face unique challenges in accessing public procurement opportunities, including navigating complex registration processes, understanding certification requirements, and competing in a system that can sometimes favor larger entities.

By making the Small Business Procurement Program permanent, this measure builds on the foundation laid by the temporary initiative, which has already demonstrated tangible progress. For instance, efforts to expand vendor databases, provide targeted resources, and conduct outreach have helped boost small business involvement in state contracts, leading to millions in awards and greater awareness among both vendors and procurement staff. Transitioning to a permanent structure ensures these gains are sustained, allowing for ongoing data collection, educational support, and streamlined processes that reduce barriers for local firms.

(Continued From Page 1)

Moreover, the modest investment in a permanent Small Business Procurement Coordinator position will yield significant returns. This role facilitates essential coordination, offering hands-on guidance that empowers small businesses to participate more effectively in state contracting. For our members and the broader construction community, this means fairer access to opportunities that strengthen local supply chains, circulate public dollars within Hawai'i, and foster economic diversification. In an industry where small contractors are vital to projects ranging from infrastructure to housing, such support is crucial for helping these businesses thrive and contribute to our state's long-term prosperity. PRP urges the Committee to pass SB2928 SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this measure.

Andrew Pereira

Director of Public Affairs
Pacific Resource Partnership
1100 Alakea Street, 4th Floor
Honolulu, HI 96813
Phone: (808) 528-5557
Email: apereira@prp-hawaii.com
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SB-2928-SD-1
Submitted on: 2/24/2026 10:08:52 AM
Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:57:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Derek Turbin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support.

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB2928, SD1

Relating to Procurement
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Wednesday, February 25, 2026, 10:57AM

Aloha e Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kamalani Kaeo, and I am the owner of Legacy Visuals LLC, a small women- and Native Hawaiian-owned business based on O‘ahu. I am writing in strong support of SB2928.

Legacy Visuals provides photography services for organizations and nonprofits, as well as social media and content management support. As a small business owner, accessing government contracting opportunities can feel overwhelming. Like many entrepreneurs, I have had to learn how to navigate how to find opportunities and the procurement process while also running the day-to-day operations of my business.

Through the City & County of Honolulu’s Office of Economic Revitalization (OER) Idea2Biz cohort and the support of the State Procurement Small Business Program, I have received guidance on how to position my business for government opportunities. The collaboration between agencies and programs has made a meaningful difference. I have been connected to potential opportunities through the small business procurement program and have gained a better understanding of how to compete for state contracts.

The outreach, technical assistance, and coordinated support I have received demonstrate that these programs are working to broaden participation and create pathways for small, locally owned businesses like mine. SB2928 would continue to strengthen these efforts and ensure that small businesses — including women-owned and Native Hawaiian-owned companies — have fair access to opportunities within state government.

When the State invests in programs that support local entrepreneurs, it keeps dollars circulating in our communities, and builds long-term economic resilience.

I respectfully urge you to pass SB2928.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Kamalani Kaeo
Owner, Legacy Visuals LLC

Testimony on SB2928
RELATING TO PROCUREMENT.

DATE: 02/25/2026
ROOM: CR 211
COMMITTEE: WAM

Dear chair, vice chair, and members of the committee,

Support

My name is Seiichi Nagai. I am the CEO of CivicNexus, a Hawaii-based small business. I am submitting testimony on behalf of CivicNexus in support of SB2928, which would make permanent the Small Business Procurement Program and the Small Business Procurement Coordinator within the State Procurement Office.

For a small business, state procurement involves a meaningful learning curve around registrations, certifications, compliance steps, and contract requirements. In my experience, the Small Business Procurement Coordinator played a valuable role in helping me understand and complete those requirements, and in navigating the procurement and contracting process.

In particular, the Coordinator provided two main types of support:

Guidance on registrations, certifications, and compliance steps.
The Coordinator walked me through the multiple state systems and websites a small business must use to register, pursue certifications, and understand compliance requirements, and helped clarify how bidding related steps fit into the broader process. This reduced confusion and helped ensure I completed the right steps in the right order.

Facilitating early introductions for practical, stakeholder-level feedback.
The Coordinator connected me with relevant State Procurement Office staff early on so I could share what our platform does and receive candid feedback from real government users about applicability and practical needs. That kind of early, real-world input is difficult for small businesses to obtain without help, and it materially improved how I approached building for and working with government.

SB2928 would help ensure this kind of hands-on support remains available to Hawai‘i’s small businesses and continues to improve small business participation in state contracting.

Sincerely,
Seiichi Nagai
CEO, CivicNexus

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB2928, SD1

Relating to Procurement
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Wednesday, February 25, 2026, 10:57AM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Lance Roylo, and I am a small business owner here in Hawai‘i. I own and operate Hello Momentum, a marketing and consulting company. I am submitting this testimony in strong support of SB2928, SD1.

Like many small business owners, I started with limited resources, a lot of determination, and a deep commitment to serving my community. Running a business means constantly balancing payroll, overhead, marketing, and client delivery. Every decision matters, and every opportunity can make the difference between surviving and thriving.

Several years ago, during the COVID-19 pandemic, Hello Momentum was awarded a state contract. That opportunity changed everything.

That contract provided consistent revenue, stability, and credibility at a time when private-sector work had largely dried up. It allowed me to keep my business running, retain talent, and continue serving clients when many other small firms were closing their doors. It gave me the foundation I needed to build something lasting.

Accessing that opportunity was not easy. Learning how to register, bid, comply with requirements, and compete against much larger firms was overwhelming. Without guidance and support, many small business owners simply give up before they even submit a proposal. I was fortunate to find help along the way, but many others are not.

That is why the Small Business Procurement Program through SB2928 is so important. This program helps entrepreneurs understand the system, respond competitively to solicitations, and build confidence. It gives small businesses a fair chance to participate instead of being shut out by complexity. It creates pathways for local talent to grow through state contracting.

I see this impact not only in my own experience, but in the stories of other business owners I meet through my professional networks. Many of them have the skills and passion to serve the State, but they lack access to information and technical support. This program bridges that gap.

Making this initiative permanent matters. Small businesses need stability. We plan years ahead; we invest cautiously; we grow slowly and responsibly. When support programs come and go, it becomes harder to rely on them as part of our development strategy. SB2928 ensures that the progress made under the initiative is not lost and that future entrepreneurs will have the same opportunities I was fortunate to find.

When local businesses succeed, our communities succeed. We hire neighbors. We support local suppliers. We keep money circulating here in Hawai‘i. State contracts are not just transactions—they are investments in local families and local futures. SB2928 strengthens that investment.

As someone whose business was sustained and strengthened by a state contract during one of the most challenging economic periods in recent memory, I can say with confidence that this program is critical. It creates real opportunities with real outcomes.

For these reasons, I stand in strong support of SB2928, SD1. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Warmly,

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