

HB-1576-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/1/2026 8:51:53 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

In support of bill HB 1576.



**State of Hawai'i
The Thirty-Third Legislature
State House of Representatives
Committee on Finance (FIN)**

**Monday, March 2, 2026
2:00 PM – Room 308, HI State Capitol**

**TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB 1576 HD 1
RELATING TO FILMING**

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

Mahalo for allowing us to testify on this measure. The Hawai'i Film Alliance (HFA) submits this testimony in **support of HB 1576 HD 1**.

HFA is a member-based organization comprised of 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 production including crew, talent, producers, and business owners.

HB 1576 HD 1 ensures that when a production obtains a permit, enters into a filming agreement with DBEDT, or registers for pre-qualification for the state's film tax credit, clear notice is made publicly available and posted on a readily accessible part of the department's website. It also allows members of the community to sign up to receive these notifications by email or mail.

Open, advance notification strengthens community engagement around filming activity by giving residents, businesses, and cultural practitioners timely information about where and when productions will occur. It helps ensure that community voices are heard and that potential impacts on neighborhoods, natural areas, and cultural sites are considered. At the same time, this transparency supports the film industry by building greater trust between production teams and the communities they engage with.

In a state as diverse as Hawai'i, where filming spans urban centers, rural areas, beaches, forests, and sacred cultural places, clear communication about upcoming production work benefits everyone. Greater transparency allows residents to plan for temporary changes in access or traffic, supports local businesses in preparing for production-related demand, and fosters stronger partnerships between filmmakers and Hawai'i communities.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony. **HFA respectfully requests the Committee pass HB 1576 HD 1.**



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Submitted on: 3/1/2026 9:36:04 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ricardo Galindez	Island Film Group	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Island Film Group SUPPORTS this measure

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Submitted on: 3/1/2026 7:11:36 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daniel Rosner	Hawaii Media Inc.	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

Hawaii Media Inc. is the largest supplier of rental equipment to the motion picture industry in Hawaii and we **SUPPORT HB1576** related to filming.

Mahalo,

Danny Rosner

President, Hawaii Media Inc.

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Submitted on: 3/1/2026 9:40:53 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Antoinette M Davis	Activities & Attractions Association of Hawaii, Inc.	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

March 2, 2026

Strongly Support HB1576

Aloha Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members,

My name is Antoinette Davis, and I have had the honor of serving as Executive Director of the Activities and Attractions Association of Hawai‘i (A3H), a 501(c)(6) not-for-profit trade organization, since 1997. A3H **strongly supports** this measure.

A healthy film and television industry **supports a healthy tourism industry** by attracting visitors and amplifying Hawai‘i’s brand, while also delivering **large economic benefits** through local hiring and the extensive on-the-ground work required to execute productions. The transparency and public-notice structure in H.B. 1576, H.D. 1 is a reasonable step that helps communities participate in and benefit from filming activity.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Toni

Toni Marie Davis/Executive Director
Activities & Attractions Association of Hawaii, Inc.
Statewide 501 (c) (6) not-for-profit Trade Association
PO Box 598, Makawao, Hawaii 96768
(808)871-7947



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

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
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Statement of
GEORJA SKINNER
Administrator, Creative Industries Division
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

March 2, 2026
2:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

In consideration of
HB1576 HD1
RELATING TO FILMING

Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the Committee. The Creative Industries Division (CID) in the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) supports Section 2 of HB1576, HD1 which incorporates language from the Administration's HB2269 to expedite the approval process for productions use of the Hawai'i Film Studio through amending Chapter 166 and respectfully offers comments on Section 1 which requires DBEDT and its Hawai'i Film Office to issue public notices for all state film permits, as well as productions registering or qualifying for the 235-17 HRS, the Hawai'i Motion Picture, Digital Media, Film Production Income Tax Credit within five days of either process, including emailing or mailing notices and posting on DBEDT HFO websites.

DBEDT recognizes the intent of Section 1 of this measure to increase transparency and community awareness related to film production activities across the state. We bring your attention to actions already taken by CID and its Tax Credit Unit (TCU) as it relates to Section 1.

Currently, notification emails to all entertainment industry labor unions are issued by the TCU team once a project has been registered and their documentation of the Start of Principal Photography (SOPP) Productions has been received. They must submit a formal notification letter on the filing entity's official letterhead to affirming advance notice, at least seven business days prior, of the start of principal photography for a film or media production in Hawai'i. TCU confirms receipt of required production information, including the production name, filing entity, island location, scheduled shoot dates, and the start and end dates the production will be in the state.

This is a requirement applies to all productions with budgets exceeding \$1,000,000, and the filers must approve release of this information through acknowledging DBEDT's authority to notify applicable Hawai'i-based entertainment industry labor unions, including IATSE Local 665, Teamsters Local 996, SAG-AFTRA, and, if applicable, IBEW, of the project's production start date.

Film permitting for standard permits, open and accessible, is a more layered process with inherent challenges.

While we recognize the intent may be to provide information to the community-at-large in order to inform and foster positive relationships between the film industry, residents, and local stakeholders, this can inadvertently compromise production schedules and operations in general in CID and its film office. With the pace at which CID and state departments such as DLNR, DOT work to meet the workflow demands of permitting for the film industry, the required staff time to prepare, publish, and manage public notices for qualifying productions, maintain online postings, and administer opt-in email and postal notification systems is beyond our current capacity.

If the intent is notification to the public, then the web portal is the best avenue to explore, with the caveat that productions, such as short films or larger scale studio productions, would have to approve any posting. Because it is not an industry best

practice to provide public notice of film productions as part of the film permit application process, we are concerned the requirement as proposed could act more as a disincentive to attract new production business to Hawai'i.

The Office of the Attorney General has reviewed the proposed legislation and stated proposals could create potential privacy, confidentiality, and safety considerations, primarily depending on how "designated representative" is defined and the operational implications of publicly releasing detailed filming information long before productions are released in theatres, on television or streamed.

We all recognize the economic diversification the film industry brings to Hawai'i, and an anchor of Hawai'i's creative economy, and provides meaningful employment opportunities for local residents and vendors.

DBEDT looks forward to working collaboratively with our Legislature, sister agencies, industry partners, and community stakeholders to refine the measure in a way that advances transparency goals while ensuring that implementation is practical, sustainable, and appropriately resourced.

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

HB 1576 — Public Notice for Filming Permits / MOUs (DBEDT)

Submitted by: Brian Keaulana
Producer / Director / Stunt Coordinator / Ocean Risk Management Specialist
Position: SUPPORT
Date: February 28, 2026

Chair and members, aloha mai kākou.

My name is Brian Keaulana, Producer / Director / Stunt Coordinator / Ocean Risk Management Specialist. I submit testimony in support of HB 1576.

Competitive incentive context: Hawai'i competes directly with other jurisdictions that offer aggressive, predictable tax incentives and purpose-built infrastructure. To draw productions here—and keep them here—we need a competitive, stable incentive that reduces friction and rewards in-state hiring, local vendors, and in-state post work.

HB 1576 strengthens public notice requirements when productions obtain permits or enter memoranda to film at certain locations. Clear communication is one of the best ways to keep Hawai'i both film-friendly and community-friendly—so we can stay competitive without sacrificing public trust.

I also want to add a local “above-the-line” perspective. We have many strong local producers here in Hawai'i. When mainland productions arrive, local producers can help set the tone early: we build a stewardship atmosphere—respecting access, cultural protocol, and the people who live here—rather than an “ownership” mindset. Public notice and a clear point of contact support that stewardship approach and reduce conflict in real time.

Timely permitting and flexibility matter: Filmmaking has to work with weather, ocean conditions, and natural patterns. Productions shoot day or night and plan ahead, but sometimes the window that nature gives us is short. HB 1576 can support a more efficient process by standardizing notice and contacts, while still allowing reasonable, rapid schedule adjustments when conditions change.

How this benefits Hawai'i's economy: A predictable, trusted permitting environment reduces conflict and delays that can drive productions to other jurisdictions. Smoother operations help Hawai'i retain production days and the spending that comes with them.

How this benefits local people and vendors: Notice helps communities plan around

access, traffic, and public spaces, and it helps local vendors prepare to support productions. Transparency supports local jobs while protecting residents' daily life and use of shared places.

Is this a sustainable business for me: As a Hawai'i-based producer and production service provider, predictability matters. Clear notice and points of contact reduce last-minute disruptions and cancellations, supporting a more sustainable local business environment—including local safety, water, and risk-management services.

Design check: This bill is best designed when it improves communication without slowing permit approvals. I recommend a standardized notice format (what/where/when/contact), protection of sensitive security details, and clear timelines—plus a simple way to update notices when weather or conditions force a schedule change—so compliance is straightforward for productions and useful for communities.

Mahalo for your consideration.

HB-1576-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 2:17:53 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joshua Meredith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Joshua J. Meredith. I'm a Maui resident and member of IATSE Local 665, the union representing technicians and artisans in the entertainment industry in Hawai'i. I strongly support HB 1576.

HB-1576-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/28/2026 8:53:07 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/2/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Cullen, and Members of the Committee:

I submit this testimony in opposition to HB 1576 HD1. This bill does not help Hawai‘i’s film industry — it adds administrative layers and hands more control to the same DBEDT bureaucracy that has already failed this industry for years. Productions have waited years for credits legally owed to them. Local crew have been passed over. Local vendors have been undercut by imported equipment. The state’s response is to require more website postings.

On the BLNR exemption: Removing prior BLNR approval for studio lands is a significant land-use policy change that deserves its own hearing — not a rider on a notification bill.

Real transparency means a public dashboard with mandatory data submissions, independent governance, and measurable performance benchmarks. HB 1576 HD1 offers none of that. I urge the Committee to hold this bill and direct its energy toward structural reform that works for the people who actually live and work here.

Mahalo for your consideration.