

Written Statement of
Trung Lam, Executive Director

before the
Senate Committee on Economic Development and Tourism

Tuesday, March 17, 2026
1:00 PM
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

In consideration of
HB 1614 HD 1
RELATING TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of HB1614 HD1.

HTDC supports the amendments in HB1614 HD1 that prioritize:

- (A) Federal grants that leverage state funds at a ratio of at least one to five; and
- (B) Proposals that are projected to generate state revenues.

The inclusion of a minimum 1:5 leverage ratio for federal grants is a strong policy signal. Hawai'i must compete aggressively for federal resources, particularly in sectors such as ocean technology, space, advanced manufacturing, bio manufacturing, and climate resilience. A five-to-one leverage threshold ensures that limited state dollars are deployed strategically to unlock significantly larger pools of federal funding. In practice, this approach can multiply the impact of state appropriations and reduce long-term reliance on general funds.

This standard also aligns with HTDC's role as a field catalyst — positioning the State to secure competitive awards from agencies such as the Department of Defense, Department of Energy, NOAA, NSF, and others. In an era of heightened federal investment in domestic manufacturing and dual-use technologies, clear leverage expectations are both fiscally responsible and economically strategic.

With respect to the requirement that proposals be "projected to generate state revenues," HTDC supports the intent but respectfully requests clarification. Clear statutory or administrative guidance will help ensure consistent evaluation and avoid unintended disqualification of high-impact projects that generate meaningful but delayed returns.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify, and we respectfully urge your continued support of this measure.



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Economic Development and Tourism
Senator Lynn DeCoite, Chair
Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair**

**Tuesday, March 17, 2026, at 1:00PM
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference**

RE: HB1614 HD1 Relating to Economic Development

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

My name is Sherry Menor, President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber"). The Chamber supports House Bill 1614 House Draft 1 (HB1614 HD1) which establishes the Hawai'i Technology Development Corporation Revolving Fund for the purpose of financing the State's matching contributions required by federal grants.

HB1614 HD1 aligns with our 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii: An Economic Action Plan, specifically under the policy pillar for Small Business. This bill emphasizes strengthening Hawaii's small business ecosystem by expanding access to capital, supporting innovation and technology adoption, and enabling local entrepreneurs to compete in global markets.

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

HB 1614 HD1 addresses this challenge by creating a flexible funding mechanism that allows the state to respond in a timely manner when federal awards are secured. By improving Hawai'i's ability to leverage federal dollars, this measure would expand the impact of public investment, support small business growth, and enhance competitiveness in research, technology, and advanced manufacturing fields.

We respectfully ask to pass House Bill 1614 House Draft 1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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

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.



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LATE

TO: Committee on Economic Development and Tourism

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: March 17, 2026

TIME: 1pm

RE: HB1614 HD1 Relating to Economic Development

Position: Support

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

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

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

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



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March 17, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

TESTIMONY ON HB 1614, HD1
RELATING TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Conference Room 229 & Videoconference
1:00 PM

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

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawai'i's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate, and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau supports HB 1614, which establishes the Hawai'i Technology Development Corporation Revolving Fund for the purpose of financing the State's matching contributions required by federal grants.

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

HB 1614, HD1 establishes a revolving fund within the Hawai'i Technology Development Corporation to provide timely state matching funds for eligible federal grants. We appreciate that the bill addresses a long-standing misalignment between federal grant timelines and the State's budgeting process, which has resulted in missed opportunities to draw down federal dollars.

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

We appreciate that funds may only be allocated after a federal award requiring a state match has been secured, and that priority is given to grants that significantly leverage

state dollars and are projected to generate measurable economic return. This structure helps safeguard state resources while maximizing the return on public investment.

By improving the State's capacity to leverage federal funding, HB 1614, HD1 supports economic diversification, innovation, and long-term growth across sectors, including agriculture. We respectfully urge the Committee to support this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

HB-1614-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 7:27:46 PM

Testimony for EDT on 3/17/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Anonsen	Testifying for The Maritime Group	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Subject: Testimony in Support of H.B. 1614, H.D. 1 – Relating to Economic Development

Please accept my brief testimony in support of H.B. 1614, H.D. 1. I regret that I am currently traveling overseas and unable to testify in person, but I appreciate the opportunity to submit these comments for the record.

Establishing the Hawai‘i Technology Development Corporation Revolving Fund is a practical step that will strengthen the State’s ability to secure federal grants that require matching funds. By creating a dedicated mechanism to meet these requirements, Hawai‘i can better leverage federal resources to support innovation, technology development, workforce advancement, and economic diversification.

This measure provides an important financial tool that helps multiply the impact of State investments while supporting local businesses, research initiatives, and emerging industries that contribute to Hawai‘i’s long-term economic resilience.

Mahalo for your leadership and consideration of this important measure.

Respectfully submitted,

William F. “Bill” Anonsen

Principal, The Maritime Group, LLC

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NO 1614 HD1, RELATING TO
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Position: **Support**

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sincerely,



Marie-Joelle Simonpietri

President

About Simonpietri Enterprises LLC

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



LATE

Statement of
Hermann Kugeler
Vice President of Business Development
Makai Ocean Engineering, Inc.

before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

Tuesday, March 17, 2026

1:00 pm

In consideration of

HB1614

RELATING TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

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

Makai Ocean Engineering, Inc. (Makai) **SUPPORTS HB1614** that Establishes the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation Revolving Fund for the purpose of financing the State's matching contributions required by federal grants. As described in the bill, this fund is intended to help Hawaii remain competitive for federal awards that support innovation, technology, research, and manufacturing initiatives.

Makai is a locally owned technology and engineering company that has been based in Hawaii for over 50 years. Over that time, Makai has grown into a developer of advanced ocean, energy, and subsea technologies, while continuing to create high-skilled engineering and technical jobs in Hawaii.

HTDC has played an important role in supporting Makai and many other Hawaii technology businesses. Programs administered by HTDC have helped local companies pursue innovation, strengthen manufacturing capability, and compete for federal research and development funding. For companies like Makai, these efforts are not abstract. They directly affect our ability to grow new technologies here in Hawaii, retain highly skilled employees, and transition federally funded research into products, services, and long-term economic activity.

HTDC's ability to secure and administer federally funded programs directly benefits Makai and other Hawaii technology businesses, because those programs support innovation, technology development, manufacturing, and commercialization opportunities within the State. That means more work performed in Hawaii, more opportunities for local engineers and technical staff, and more chances for Hawaii companies to compete nationally and internationally.

Strengthening HTDC's ability to secure and administer these opportunities will help a broader group of local companies grow, diversify the economy, and build long-term resilience in sectors such as engineering, clean energy, manufacturing, and innovation.

For these reasons, Makai Ocean Engineering supports HB1614 and respectfully asks the committee to pass this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer these comments.