



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

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR

JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA
DIRECTOR

DANE K. WICKER
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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Statement of
JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA
Director
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TECHNOLOGY

Friday, February 6, 2026
8:30 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 423

In consideration of
HB2037
RELATING TO TAXATION.

Chair Ilagan, Vice Chair Hussey, and Members of the Committee,

The Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism (DBEDT) supports H.B. 2037, which increases the annual aggregate cap for the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit from \$50,000,000 to \$60,000,000. This measure is an important step in maintaining Hawai'i's competitiveness in a global production marketplace that has become significantly more aggressive, better capitalized, and more incentive-driven.

Hawai'i's film and digital media sector is not just part of the visitor industry, it is a targeted economic diversification industry. Under DBEDT's economic strategy, creative industries, including film, digital content, animation, and emerging media, represent:

- High-wage technical and creative jobs
- Transferable skills across tech, design, AI-driven media, and digital platforms
- Small business growth in post-production, sound, design, wardrobe, and digital services
- Exportable services that bring outside dollars into Hawai'i's economy

Film production is one of the few industries where capital comes to Hawai'i, hires local workers, rents local facilities, and spends immediately in the local economy.

Since the production credit was last materially adjusted, the cost of producing content has risen substantially due to:

- Inflation in materials, construction, and logistics
- Increased insurance and safety requirements
- Labor cost increases nationwide
- Rising transportation and shipping expenses for island locations

At the same time, other states and countries have:

- Increased credit percentages
- Removed or significantly raised caps
- Offered stackable incentives
- Streamlined approval and payment processes

Without adjustments to Hawai'i's program structure, the State risks losing productions to jurisdictions that offer both higher incentive value and greater certainty. Increasing the cap helps ensure that Hawai'i can actually utilize its incentive tool in years when demand is strong, rather than turning productions away once the cap is reached.

Film and digital media production has a broad multiplier effect:

- Local hiring of crew across trades (electricians, carpenters, drivers, medics, caterers)
- Utilization of local vendors (equipment, vehicles, accommodations, food services)
- Facility use that supports long-term infrastructure viability
- Skill development pathways that feed into digital media, gaming, animation, and emerging content sectors

A higher cap helps stabilize the production pipeline, which in turn supports:

- Retention of skilled local crew
- Development of post-production and digital media capacity
- Growth of Hawai'i-based creative businesses

Without steady production flow, workforce leaves the state, contributing to the very brain drain the Legislature seeks to reverse.

The Legislature has asked DBEDT to grow industries beyond tourism, including:

- Creative Industries
- Digital Media and Content Creation
- Technology-enabled sectors

Film production is a foundational on-ramp into these sectors. It builds the workforce, supplier base, and infrastructure that support a broader digital and creative economy. H.B. 2037 does not create a new program; it strengthens an existing tool that has demonstrated economic impact and industry demand.

DBEDT Testimony
HB2037
February 6, 2026
Page 3 of 3

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

JOSH GREEN M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION

Ka 'Oihana 'Auhau

P.O. BOX 259

HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

PHONE NO: (808) 587-1540

FAX NO: (808) 587-1560

GARY S. SUGANUMA
DIRECTOR

KRISTEN M.R. SAKAMOTO
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

**TESTIMONY OF
GARY S. SUGANUMA, DIRECTOR OF TAXATION**

TESTIMONY ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

H.B. No. 2037, Relating to Taxation

BEFORE THE:

House Committee on Economic Development & Technology

DATE: Friday, February 6, 2026

TIME: 8:30 a.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 423

Chair Ilagan, Vice-Chair Hussey, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Taxation (DOTAX) offers the following comments regarding H.B. 2037 for your consideration.

H.B. 2037 amends section 235-17(n), Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), to increase the allowable film tax credit maximum yearly cap amount from \$50,000,000 to \$60,000,000.

This measure shall apply to taxable years beginning after December 31, 2026, and will be repealed on January 1, 2033, to coincide with the repeal date of Act 88, Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH) 2006, and its amendments. Section 235-17, HRS, will then be reenacted in the form in which it read on the day before the effective date of Act 88, SLH 2006.

DOTAX recommends that the effective date of the bill be amended to apply to costs incurred after December 31, 2025.

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



**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS,
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**
KA 'OIHANA HO'OMOHALA PĀ'OIHANA, 'IMI WAIWAI
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Statement of
GEORJA SKINNER
Division Chief, Creative Industries
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

Friday, February 6, 2026
8:30 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 423

In consideration of
HB2037
RELATING TO TAXATION

Chair Ilagan, Vice Chair Hussey, and members of the Committee. The Creative Industries Division of the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) supports HB2037, which increases the annual aggregate cap on the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit by \$10 million, from \$50 million to \$60 million.

HB2037 aligns with DBEDT's administrative measures SB3088 and HB2269, which promote industry stability, production retention, and sustained economic activity. Increasing the aggregate cap supports these objectives by ensuring that Hawai'i's film, television and digital media industry can reinvigorate jobs, business opportunities, and sustained workforce development.

Raising the cap also shows the state's commitment to the industry, providing business certainty and the predictability studios and productions considering Hawai'i for their projects.

Greater predictability also allows local entertainment industry workers to build long-term careers in Hawai'i rather than seeking opportunities elsewhere, strengthening workforce retention, skills development, and upward mobility.

By stabilizing production activity year-round, the higher cap will reinforce the sustainability of Hawai'i's creative economy while ensuring that the layers of economic benefits of production continue to flow to Hawai'i residents and locally owned businesses statewide.

This approach is consistent with the Administration's measures this session, SB3088 and HB2269 and a shared legislative and industry objective of modernizing the tax credit framework to support continued industry growth, expand workforce opportunities, and maintain Hawai'i's position as a premier production destination.

For these reasons DBEDT supports HB2037 and respectfully urges its passage. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



February 6, 2026

Committee on Economic Development & Technology
Chair Ilagan
Vice Chair Hussey

The House of Representatives
The Thirtieth-Third Legislature
Regular Session of 2026

[RE: HB 2037 RELATING TO TAXATION](#)

DATE: Friday, February 6, 2026

TIME: 8:30am

PLACE: Conference Room 423

State Capitol 415 South Beretania Street, Honolulu HI

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of [RE: HB 2037 RELATING TO TAXATION](#).

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.

As the latest DBEDT figures indicate, in 2025 our film and television industry generated \$79,839,500 in sales or economic activity, \$4,984,200 in estimated tax revenues, and \$18,460,000 in Hawaii household income generated because of the qualified productions.¹ Compare this with 2024 numbers, 2024 our film and television industry generated \$324,150,100 in sales or economic activity, \$20,235,960 in estimated tax revenues, and \$74,948,000 in Hawaii household income generated because of the qualified productions.²

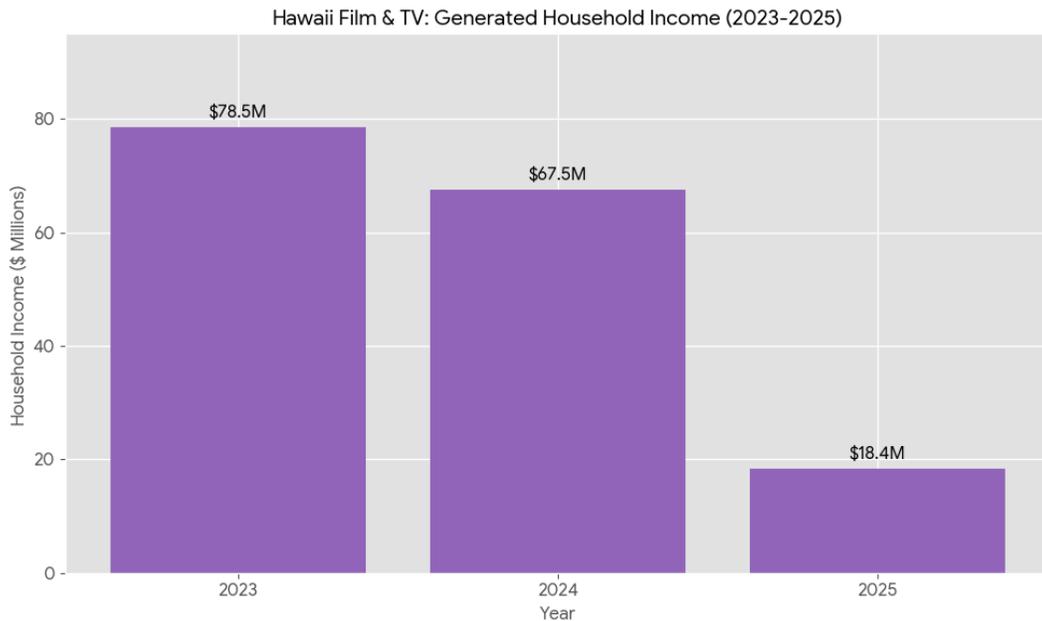
¹<https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/annuals/2025/2025-cid-act217.pdf>

²<https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/annuals/2024/2024-cid-act217.pdf>

Mericia Palma Elmore, JD/MLSc
Executive Director
SAG-AFTRA Hawai'i Local
mericia.palmaelmore@sagaftra.org
201 Merchant St. Suite 2301
Honolulu, HI 96813
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

Last year we experienced a very real slowdown in production, and our members, local people with families, our friends and neighbors - your constituents, felt it acutely.



3

HB 2037 will protect local jobs. Film and TV production provides high-quality jobs, healthcare, and pension benefits. This bill makes it more affordable for productions to stay in Hawaii and hire local talent.

This measure is a **direct investment in Hawaii's creative workforce.** It provides the stability needed to keep our local actors and crew members working right here at home.

Respectfully,

Mericia Palma Elmore

Mericia Palma Elmore, Executive Director SAG-AFTRA Hawai'i Local

³ Reports found here: <https://dbedt.hawaii.gov/overview/annual-reports-reports-to-the-legislature/>



Testimony in Support of HB 2037

Relating to Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Tax Credits

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

My name is Gerard Elmore, and I am the Executive Director of 'Ohina Labs, a Hawai'i-based nonprofit focused on developing local film, television, and digital media talent and ensuring that Hawai'i's creative workforce can build sustainable careers here at home. We support HB 2037 as a direct investment in local talent and the families who depend on this industry.

HB 2037 strengthens Hawai'i's film and digital media incentive by increasing the aggregate annual cap on tax credits from \$50 million to \$60 million. While this change may appear technical, its impact on local workers is very real. By expanding the total pool of available credits, the state can accommodate more productions at the same time, rather than forcing projects to delay, relocate, or leave Hawai'i altogether.

For local crew members, cast, and vendors, this means fewer "dry spells" between jobs and more consistent employment throughout the year. Stability matters. When work is steady, families can plan, young professionals can stay in Hawai'i, and experienced workers are less likely to leave the state in search of reliable opportunities elsewhere.

These productions are not simply using Hawai'i as a backdrop, they are employing Hawai'i residents, hiring union crews, training the next generation of local talent, and spending money with local businesses. Increasing the cap ensures that when interest in filming here is high, Hawai'i can say yes more often, keeping jobs and economic activity in-state.

For 'Ohina Labs, which invests heavily in workforce development, a robust and predictable production environment is essential. HB 2037 helps ensure that the talent we train has real opportunities to work locally, support their families, and contribute to Hawai'i's creative economy.

We respectfully urge your support of HB 2037 and thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gerard Elmore".

Gerard Elmore

Executive Director

'Ohina Labs

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 10:57:27 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pride at Work – Hawai‘i	Pride at Work – Hawai‘i	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

Pride at Work – Hawai‘i is an official chapter of [Pride at Work](#) which is a national nonprofit organization that represents LGBTQIA+ union members and their allies. We are an officially recognized constituency group of the AFL-CIO that organizes mutual support between the organized Labor Movement and the LGBTQIA+ Community to further social and economic justice.

Pride at Work – Hawai‘i fully supports HB 2037.

We ask that you support this needed piece of legislation.

Mahalo,

Michael Golojuch, Jr. (he/him)

President

[Pride at Work – Hawai‘i](#)

TAX FOUNDATION OF HAWAII

735 Bishop Street, Suite 417

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 Tel. 536-4587

SUBJECT: Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit; Aggregate Cap

BILL NUMBER: HB 2037

INTRODUCED BY: HUSSEY, AMATO, BELATTI, GRANDINETTI, ILAGAN, IWAMOTO, KAPELA, KILA, LEE, M., MATSUMOTO, MURAOKA, OLDS, PERRUSO, POEPOE, REYES ODA, SHIMIZU, SOUZA, TAM

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Increases the aggregate cap on credits allowed in any given year for the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit from \$50,000,000 to \$60,000,000.

SYNOPSIS: Amends sec 235-17(n), HRS, to increase the total amount of tax credits in any particular year to \$60,000,000.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Taxable years beginning after December 31, 2026; provided that on January 1, 2033, this Act shall be repealed to coincide with the repeal date of Act 88, Session Laws of Hawaii 2006, as amended by Act 89, Session Laws of Hawaii 2013, as amended by Act 143, Session Laws of Hawaii 2017, as amended by Act 217, Session Laws of Hawaii 2022, and section 235-17, Hawaii Revised Statutes, shall be reenacted in the form in which it read on the day before the effective date of Act 88, Session Laws of Hawaii 2006

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 is proposing an increase to the aggregate credit cap from \$50 million to \$60 million .

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: 2/4/2026

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 8:24:38 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

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

I am writing in strong support of HB 2037 on behalf of my Hawai‘i-based talent agency and the many local professionals we represent within the film and creative industries.

HB 2037 proposes raising the annual film tax credit cap from \$50 million to \$60 million, an adjustment that reflects the increased demand for production in Hawai‘i and the rising costs of doing business.

Under the current cap, productions are often turned away once the limit is reached, workforce readiness, and economic benefit. We lose opportunities for local workers, vendors, and small businesses.

Raising the annual cap allows Hawai‘i to fully realize the economic return of film production while providing consistency and reliability to productions considering Hawai‘i as a filming location.

HB 2037 supports sustainable industry growth, protects local jobs, and ensures Hawai‘i does not lose projects due to arbitrary limitations rather than capacity.

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

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

I am writing in strong support of **HB 2037** on behalf of my Hawai‘i-based talent agency and the many local professionals we represent within the film and creative industries.

HB 2037 proposes raising the annual film tax credit cap from \$50 million to \$60 million—an adjustment that reflects the increased demand for production in Hawai‘i and the rising costs of doing business.

Under the current cap, productions are often turned away once the limit is reached, despite available infrastructure, workforce readiness, and economic benefit. This creates unnecessary bottlenecks and lost opportunities for local workers, vendors, and small businesses.

Raising the annual cap allows Hawai'i to fully realize the economic return of film production while providing consistency and reliability to productions considering Hawai'i as a filming location.

HB 2037 supports sustainable industry growth, protects local jobs, and ensures Hawai'i does not lose projects due to arbitrary limitations rather than capacity.

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

Mahalo,
Aubrey Lee Staley
Owner of ALA Hawaii

February 6, 2026

House Committee on Economic Development and Technology
Representative Greggor Ilagan, Chair
Representative Ikaika Hussey, Vice Chair

Friday, February 6, 2026, 8:30 a.m.
Conference Room #423 and via video conference



RE: HB 2269 Relating to Taxation (Motion Picture, Digital Media and Film Production Income Tax Credit)

Dear Chair Ilagan, Vice Chair Hussey 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, Nānakūli, 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 of HB 2037**, which increases the aggregate annual cap on the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit from \$50,000,000 to \$60,000,000.

For West O'ahu businesses, film and television productions have long provided meaningful economic activity that extends well beyond the production itself. Local restaurants, food vendors, transportation companies, equipment suppliers, cleaning services, and other small businesses benefit when productions are active and able to reliably plan projects in Hawai'i.

The current \$50,000,000 aggregate cap has lost real value over time and no longer reflects the costs of production in today's market. **When the cap is reached early or uncertainty exists around credit availability, productions are more likely to shift projects to other jurisdictions with more reliable incentive structures.** This has direct downstream impacts on small businesses and workers who depend on consistent production activity.

HB 2037 takes a measured and fiscally responsible step by modestly increasing the annual cap to \$60,000,000. This adjustment helps preserve the effectiveness of the existing program without expanding its structure, while improving predictability for productions considering Hawai'i as a filming location. Increasing the aggregate cap will help ensure that Hawai'i remains competitive, support continued economic activity for local businesses, and sustain employment opportunities for local workers. **For regions like West O'ahu—where film-related infrastructure and workforce capacity already exist—this stability is especially important.**

For these reasons, the Kapolei Chamber of Commerce **strongly supports HB 2037** and respectfully urges the Committee to pass this measure.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

Respectfully,

Kiran Polk
Executive Director & CEO

State of Hawai'i
The Thirty-Third Legislature
State House of Representatives
Committee on Economic Development and Technology (ECD)

Friday, February 6, 2026
8:30 AM – Room 423, HI State Capitol

TESTIMONY IN **SUPPORT OF HB 2037**
RELATING TO TAXATION

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

Mahalo, Representative Ilagan, for scheduling HB 2037 and allowing us to testify on this measure. The Hawai'i Film Alliance (HFA) submits this testimony in **strong support of HB 2037**.

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 which includes crew, talent, producers, and supporting business owners.

Strengthens Hawai'i's competitiveness in film and digital media

Increasing the annual tax credit cap improves Hawai'i's ability to compete for film, television, and digital media projects. In an industry where production decisions hinge on financial certainty, a higher cap reduces risk for producers and makes Hawai'i a more reliable and attractive location.

Expands employment for local residents

Additional productions generate more jobs for Hawai'i-based workers across a wide range of roles, including on-set, technical, and support services such as construction, catering, transportation, and post-production. This helps retain and grow a skilled local workforce and reduces reliance on out-of-state labor.

Supports small businesses and the broader economy

Film and media productions bring substantial in-state spending that benefits hotels, restaurants, equipment rental companies, local vendors, and creative professionals. These expenditures circulate through the economy, creating multiplier effects beyond the production sector itself.

Encourages steadier, year-round economic activity

A higher cap allows multiple projects to move forward within the same year without credits



being depleted early. This promotes more consistent work for residents and greater predictability for businesses that depend on production activity.

Enhances Hawai‘i’s global visibility and long-term economic value

Productions filmed in Hawai‘i showcase the state’s landscapes, culture, and talent to global audiences. This exposure strengthens Hawai‘i’s brand, supports tourism, and can attract future investment in creative and related industries.

Supports future growth in local and culturally grounded content

Expanding the program’s capacity creates opportunities to support a broader range of projects, including those centered on local stories and Hawai‘i-based creators, aligning economic development goals with community and cultural values.

Alongside other measures aimed at improving the state’s film industry, HB 2037 sends a clear message that Hawai‘i is serious about supporting its workforce and maintaining a fair, competitive environment for production.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony. **HFA SUPPORTS HB 2037.**

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 7:43:37 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

My name is Tyler Young, and I run Tyler Young Films, LLC., a production company based here in Honolulu, Hawaii. I am a Creative Producer, Line Producer, and Unit Production Manager. 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 television networks, streamers, and productions companies. I am writing in support of HB2037 to increase the annual film tax credit cap.

Hawaii's current film tax incentive is relatively good, but not competitive enough to attract bigger film and television productions to the state. Productions are turning to other states with more competitive film tax incentives, leaving Hawaii with a weaker economy.

With tighter 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.

Passing HB2037 will increase the cap from \$50M to \$60M, which will attract larger scale film productions. This increase will help develop a more sustainable film and television production industry in Hawaii. Studios, networks, streamers, and producers like me will be able to stay in Hawaii, and hire more local people and vendors, spend more of our budget dollars in the state. It will also create a more viable career path for our keiki who want to work in film & television production. I urge you to pass HB2037 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



MAUI

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

VOICE OF BUSINESS

**HEARING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TECHNOLOGY
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM 423
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2026 AT 8:30 A.M.**

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

SUPPORT HB2037 RELATING TO TAXATION

The Maui Chamber of Commerce supports policies that attract new industries and create high-quality jobs for local residents. HB2037, which proposes to increase the aggregate cap on the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit, is important as it directly impacts the creative sector and the broader economy, particularly in communities still recovering from recent economic challenges.

Raising the cap on this tax credit aligns with our goal of fostering a more resilient and diversified economy. The film and digital media industries have demonstrated the potential to generate new employment opportunities, stimulate local spending, and attract outside investment. By increasing the aggregate cap, Hawai'i can remain competitive with other jurisdictions that offer similar incentives, encouraging more productions to choose our islands as their filming locations. This, in turn, supports local businesses, from hospitality to construction, and helps to build a skilled workforce in creative and technical fields.

Additionally, supporting the creative industries helps reduce our over-reliance on traditional sectors such as tourism, which have proven vulnerable to external shocks. By nurturing a broader economic base, Hawai'i can better weather future downturns and provide more stable opportunities for residents. The proposed increase in the cap is a measured approach that balances the need for fiscal responsibility with the benefits of attracting new investment and diversifying the state's economy.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share our support of HB2037.

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.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 9:49:45 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daniel Rosner	Hawaii Media Inc.cAloha Chair Ilagan, Vice Chair Hussey, and Members of the Committee, My name is Da	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Danny Rosner. I am president of Hawaii Media Inc., 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 HB2269 relating to taxation.

I want to thank Representative Ilagan for his tireless efforts to enhance 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.

Mahalo!

Danny Rosner

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 9:59:29 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Donna Ambrose	Donna's Detours - Private Tours of Oahu, LLC	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a tour guide on Oahu I receive requests from many visitors to take them to TV and movie filming sites. From “Hawai’i 5-0” to “Lost”, “Magnum PI” and most recently “Chiefs of War.” Unfortunately, I have to relay that the majority of “Chiefs of War” was not filmed locally, but in New Zealand. The ability to recommend custom filming site tours or incorporate them into general sightseeing helps my small business and others in the tourism industry. I strongly support bills to encourage more film and television production in the islands, including increasing the amount of tax incentives to \$60M.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/6/2026 1:03:31 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Angela Young	CARES	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Support

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 8:57:00 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Romano	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support the people of Hawaii ! Please support this bill and help keep us employed .
Mahalo nui loa! Lisa Romano

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:48:20 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha mai kākou,

My name is Shereen Balles and I SUPPORT HB2037

By increasing the total "pot" of available credits, the state can host more productions at once. For our industry professionals, this means fewer "dry spells" between gigs and more opportunities for local crew and cast to stay home rather than traveling for work.

Thank you Committee for hearing HB2037.

Me Ke Aloha,

Shereen Balles

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 10:51:23 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha. My name is Randall Yokota and I'm a small farmer and a SAG-AFTRA union actor. This bill is of most important because it will give us locals more of a steady work throughout the year, which will help keep us locals here in Hawai'i. We need to make a change and seriously think how the film industry adds to diversifying our economy and coexist with the tourists industry. Mahalo

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 8:46:43 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Edward C Lou-Goode	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

More film and tv biz benefits everyone!

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 8:50:36 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mason McEwen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

By increasing the total "pot" of available credits, the state can host more productions at once. For you, this means fewer "dry spells" between gigs and more opportunities for local crew and cast to stay home rather than traveling for work.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 9:52:42 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eric K. Keawe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

By increasing the total "pot" of available credits, the state can host more productions at once. For you, this means fewer "dry spells" between gigs and more opportunities for local crew and cast to stay home rather than traveling for work.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 9:55:27 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ivana Skelin	Hawai'i Film Alliance	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please vote to increase the cap to 60 million thereby allowing our exceptionally talented and hardworking filmmaking community and our beautiful Hawai'i landscape to be captured cinematically and to thrive!!!

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 9:59:08 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

I strongly support this bill.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 10:00:35 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Beatriz Talerico	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Beatriz, and I am a writer based in Hawai‘i working in film, television, and digital media. I strongly support the proposed increase to the annual cap on the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit from \$50 million to \$60 million.

Hawai‘i has the talent, locations, and cultural depth to support a thriving film and television industry. What we are competing against is not other states’ scenery, but their financial certainty. Raising the cap sends a clear signal that Hawai‘i is serious about welcoming productions and sustaining them once they arrive.

When productions come to Hawai‘i, they do more than create short-term jobs. They invest in local writers, crew, vendors, post-production, and long-term workforce development. A higher cap increases predictability for studios and streamers while expanding real opportunities for local creatives to build careers without leaving home.

This is a smart, targeted investment in Hawai‘i’s creative economy. I urge you to support this measure.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
Beatriz
Writer, Hawai‘i

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 10:20:03 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kamuela Chandler	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Kamuela Chandler, and I stand in strong support of HB 2037, which increases the annual aggregate cap on the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Income Tax Credit from \$50 million to \$60 million.

I work professionally here in Hawai‘i as an actor and independent filmmaker, and like many creative professionals in our state, I rely on a thriving local production ecosystem to sustain my craft and livelihood. Over the past several years, Hawai‘i’s film and digital media industry has provided meaningful work — from small independent productions to major television series — that supports not just actors, but crew members, vendors, local businesses, and community service providers. When productions film here, they hire local talent, pay local wages, rent local equipment, and generate economic activity that ripples across our islands.

Unfortunately, the current annual cap on the film tax credit — set at \$50 million — has frequently been reached or exceeded before the end of the year, meaning productions that intend to shoot here either delay their work, pull expenditure out of state, or choose to relocate entirely once the cap is hit. This undermines Hawai‘i’s competitiveness as a production destination, especially compared to other states and countries offering larger incentives to attract projects.

By raising the cap to \$60 million, HB 2037 helps ensure that productions can continue shooting in Hawai‘i throughout the year, and that local workers have access to consistent opportunities rather than sporadic or short-lived bursts of activity. This benefits not just high-profile projects, but also the emerging independent filmmakers like myself. Increased credit availability means there is less risk of projects losing access to incentives mid-year, which in turn preserves and grows local jobs and creative careers without forcing workers to leave Hawai‘i to find work elsewhere.

Furthermore, expanding the cap supports the broader creative economy — from writers and actors to grips, cinematographers, editors, and every person whose livelihood is tied to a vibrant production sector. It also signals that Hawai‘i values creative professions as real, sustainable parts of our economic future.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to support HB 2037 and help strengthen Hawai‘i’s film industry, create year-round job opportunities for local talent, and foster an environment where creative careers can flourish here at home.

Mahalo nui loa for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kamuela Chandler

Actor & Independent Filmmaker

Member - Hawaii Film Alliance

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 10:26:48 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kayli Vanaken	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this and would love to see the film industry expand for local talent here in Hawaii.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 11:18:32 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cheryl Ho	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm in support of bill HB 2037

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 12:21:29 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jason Fong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a union member, I support HB 2037. Raising the film tax credit cap allows more productions to film here at once, meaning steadier work and more opportunities for Hawaii-based performers and technicians.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 12:32:46 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Inge Romoschan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support HB 2037.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 12:37:28 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cassie Fillhart	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support!!

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 12:54:55 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Soraya-Elena Perez and I support this bill.

HB 2037: Strengthening the Incentive

- **Goal:** To increase the aggregate annual cap on film tax credits from \$50 million to \$60 million to accommodate more simultaneous productions.
- **Why It Matters:** By increasing the total "pot" of available credits, the state can host more productions at once. For you, this means fewer "dry spells" between gigs and more opportunities for local crew and cast to stay home rather than traveling for work. Mahalo

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 1:00:30 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha

I support HB2037, as increasing the annual cap will help ensure productions can do business in Hawaii and employ local film industry employees. This is crucial in reviving the film industry in Hawaii and lessening our reliance on tourism.

I suggest a consideration for an amendment that requires any film project that applies for this tax credit is required to provide a report of where their local spending has gone, so the public and lawmakers are aware of their impact on our economy.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Keoni Shizuma

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 2:26:46 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

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

My name is Travis Asaeli, and I respectfully submit testimony in support of HB 2037 Relating to Taxation.

I support this measure because responsible and strategic tax policy is essential to strengthening Hawai‘i’s economy, supporting local businesses, and promoting long-term financial sustainability for the State. Tax measures that encourage economic activity and business investment help create job opportunities, stimulate spending within local communities, and support workforce development.

HB 2037 represents an opportunity to strengthen Hawai‘i’s economic foundation by encouraging responsible growth while helping maintain a fair and competitive business environment. When businesses are able to grow and operate successfully, it creates ripple effects across multiple industries including hospitality, transportation, public safety, service providers, and other workforce sectors that support Hawai‘i’s economy.

As someone working in an industry that supports business operations and public safety, I have witnessed how economic investment directly contributes to job stability, career development, and financial security for local workers. Policies that promote economic sustainability help ensure that residents have access to employment opportunities that allow them to remain and thrive in Hawai‘i.

It is important that Hawai‘i continues to pursue balanced tax policies that support both economic growth and responsible fiscal management. HB 2037 represents a positive step toward strengthening our State’s economic resilience and supporting local communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure and for your continued commitment to supporting Hawai‘i’s workforce and economy.

Respectfully submitted,

Travis Asaeli

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 2:34:43 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 2:51:40 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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 support of HB 2037 because this bill advances policy solutions that support workforce sustainability and economic stability within Hawai‘i’s creative industries.

Creative professionals contribute to Hawai‘i’s economy across multiple sectors, including film and digital media, tourism, education, and small business development. However, creative work is often project-based and cyclical, making long-term stability difficult without thoughtful policy frameworks in place. HB 2037 helps address these challenges by recognizing the unique structure of creative labor and the need for policies that support consistent participation in the local economy.

From a workforce perspective, policies like HB 2037 help retain local talent, reduce workforce attrition, and strengthen career pathways for residents who want to build long-term futures in Hawai‘i. When creatives are able to remain in the state, they reinvest locally, support small businesses, and contribute to a more diversified and resilient economy.

HB 2037 also aligns with broader state goals related to economic diversification and community investment. Supporting creative professionals is not a niche concern — it is a strategic approach to sustaining industries that generate cultural value while also producing measurable economic impact.

As a working creative, I see HB 2037 as a practical and forward-thinking measure that supports both individuals and the systems they operate within. I respectfully urge the committee to pass

HB 2037 and continue advancing policies that strengthen Hawai'i's creative workforce and long-term economic health.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Nicole Rombaoa

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 3:35:01 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dave Klec	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB 2037.

A competitive cap helps ensure productions can remain in HI and is essential for stability.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 4:26:19 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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 HB 2037, which increases the annual cap on Hawai‘i’s motion picture, digital media, and film production income tax credit.

Hawai‘i’s current annual cap has become a significant limiting factor in attracting and retaining film and television productions. Even when Hawai‘i is creatively desirable and logistically viable, productions are often unable to commit because the credit is exhausted early in the year or cannot accommodate multiple overlapping projects. This uncertainty alone is enough to push productions to other states and countries with higher or more flexible caps.

HB 2037 addresses this issue by allowing Hawai‘i to compete at scale. Increasing the annual cap does not mean unlimited credits — it means predictability. Productions need confidence that if they commit to Hawai‘i, the incentive will be available throughout the year, not only to the first few projects in line.

When the cap is reached too quickly:

- Productions cancel or relocate
- Local crew lose months of work
- Small businesses lose contracted income
- Workforce stability is undermined

An increased cap allows Hawai‘i to host multiple productions simultaneously, which is critical for maintaining a steady, experienced local workforce. Consistent employment keeps skilled workers in-state and reduces the cycle of boom-and-bust that has historically hurt Hawai‘i’s film economy.

Film and television production generates substantial in-state spending across lodging, food service, transportation, construction, equipment rental, and professional services. Increasing the cap strengthens this economic multiplier while keeping accountability and in-state spending requirements firmly in place.

As someone who works in Hawai‘i’s film industry, I have seen firsthand how lost productions translate directly into lost jobs. HB 2037 helps ensure that Hawai‘i can say “yes” to work that wants to be here — rather than turning it away due to an artificially low cap.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to pass HB 2037 with a favorable recommendation.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Grace Hall

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 4:59:41 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Becky Maltby	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill. The film industry has grown tremendously since the beginning of this century. Tourists travel here still to visit sites where they filmed LOST. The industry is a money-maker for Hawaii.

But last year we lost productions because it was too expensive. Thousands were out of work that we had come to rely on, myself included. It is essential for Hawaii to remain a top choice for productions. Otherwise we'll have places like New Zealand doubling for our islands. No one wants that.

Mahalo.

Becky Maltby

SAG-AFTRA

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 6:50:46 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James Sclafani	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in complete support of HB 2037. This bill will be of great benefit for film production to REMAIN in Hawaii and employ our locals for work and opportunity to learn acquire skills on island. A stable film continuity is of great import for our people to find skilled jobs and remain on island. This bill will also be of benefit to our state economy.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 6:53:28 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Terrie Wehrli	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support for this measure is submitted. Mahalo.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 7:16:23 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Brian Wallace. I was **born and raised in Hawai‘i**, and I am a Hawai‘i-based film professional and a **second-generation film worker**, with over 17 years of experience working on film and television productions in this state. My father worked in Hawai‘i’s film industry for more than 45 years. I currently serve as Vice President of IATSE Local 665 and am a founder and leader of the Hawai‘i Film Alliance.

I support **HB 2037**.

The annual cap on the film tax credit plays a direct role in whether productions are able to commit to Hawai‘i. When the cap is reached too early or becomes uncertain, productions are forced to delay, reduce scope, or move elsewhere—often after local crews have already been lined up and planning is underway. That uncertainty has real consequences for workers and small businesses that depend on consistent production schedules.

Raising the annual cap from \$50 million to \$60 million improves predictability. For local crews, predictability means being able to plan work, support families, and stay in Hawai‘i rather than chasing jobs elsewhere. For productions, it means confidence that Hawai‘i can support sustained filming without mid-year disruptions.

HB 2037 helps prevent productions from leaving the state due to funding bottlenecks that have nothing to do with workforce availability or local capacity. Hawai‘i has the skilled crews and infrastructure to support these projects; the cap should not be the limiting factor.

A competitive and reliable annual cap is essential to maintaining a stable film and television economy in Hawai‘i. HB 2037 is a practical adjustment that supports long-term employment and economic continuity.

I respectfully urge your support of HB 2037.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 9:23:39 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

It helps. It's a start. This number should be raised more. \$100,000,000.00.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 9:45:56 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members,

My name is Malik Haynes, I support HB2037.

Increasing the tax credit cap helps local businesses grow, supports local jobs, and creates more opportunities for people working in Hawaii. A stable tax structure encourages investment and helps build a stronger creative economy, including opportunities for the next generation of Hawaii filmmakers.

Mahalo

M

Valerie Matsunaga PO 330519 Kahului, Maui, HI 96733

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2037
Relating to Film and Television Production Incentives**

To: House Committee on Economic Development

From: Valerie Matsunaga, Maui Resident & SAG-AFTRA Member

Date: 2/3/2026

Position: Support

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Valerie Matsunaga. I am a longtime Maui resident and a member of SAG-AFTRA. I am writing in strong support of **HB 2037**, which helps protect local jobs by ensuring Hawai'i remains a viable and affordable place for film and television production.

As SAG-AFTRA Hawai'i Executive Director Mericia Palma Elmore shared in her testimony, Hawai'i experienced a very real slowdown in production over the past year, and local families—our friends, neighbors, and your constituents—felt the impact immediately. These slowdowns are not abstract industry cycles; they translate directly into lost household income, fewer workdays, and increasing pressure on working families trying to remain in Hawai'i.

On Maui and the Neighbor Islands, these impacts are especially pronounced. Film and television production provides high-quality, middle-class jobs with healthcare and pension benefits—jobs that allow local residents to stay rooted in their communities. When productions leave Hawai'i because costs are too high or incentives are uncompetitive, local actors, crew members, and small businesses lose critical income, and many are forced to consider leaving the state altogether.

HB 2037 is a **direct investment in Hawai'i's creative workforce**. It helps make it more affordable for productions to stay in Hawai'i and hire local talent, rather than taking jobs and spending elsewhere. When a production chooses Hawai'i, the economic benefits extend well beyond performers to include crew members, drivers, carpenters, caterers, equipment vendors, and post-production professionals—many of whom live and work on the Neighbor Islands.

This bill provides much-needed stability at a time when our creative workforce is vulnerable. It helps ensure that local talent can continue working right here at home, supporting families, local businesses, and the broader economy.

I respectfully urge the Committee to pass **HB 2037** and stand with Hawai'i's local film and television workforce.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Valerie Matsunaga

Maui Resident

SAG-AFTRA Member

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 10:06:47 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jean Simon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am strongly in favor of HB 2037. By increasing the total amount, the "pot" of available credits, this will (hopefully!) increase filming in Hawaii, lessening the effects of the "dry spells". We were just on the verge of "booming". Now we have had a major dry spell. We really need to revive the film industry in Hawaii.

I'm an access. I didn't work at all last year.

The film industry brings in a lot of money to the state. the credits give a percentage back. We really can't afford to lose the large amount of money that the film industry brings in.

I personally have a friend who drives "LOST Tours". Tourists pay to see locations used by the show LOST. This is how he makes his living.

On Facebook every day, on groups for Magnum PI, Hawaii 5-0 and LOST (to name just a few!) I see posts by tourists who visit Hawaii as a pilgrimage and seek out filming locations and post pictures.

By keeping film production in Hawaii we keep local people working, we bring in tourists, Hawaii makes money. Personally, I think it's worth it.

Mahalo,

Jean Simon

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 11:13:42 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Hi, my name is Michelle Stefanik, I reside in Hawai'i in Waikoloa Village. I am writing in support of this Bill. It is very important for us to retain and attract the film industry. It is a shame that the last two films about Hawai'i were filmed mostly in New Zealand. That is because we do not offer enough benefits to attract film production here. The government should DO MORE to attract and retain the film industry in Hawai'i.

Thank you for your time.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 12:15:56 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

As someone that has worked in this field I support this bill.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 12:17:19 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

As someone that has worked in this field I support this bill.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 12:19:03 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

My son has worked in this field. I support this bill.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 6:02:15 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jonathan Tagad	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support

Aloha,

My name is Bruce Vollert and I am a member of I.A.T.S.E. Local 665. I have worked in the film and entertainment industry in Hawaii for over 30 years.

I STRONGLY SUPPORT HB 2037

Updating the film tax is essential to keeping work in Hawaii. HB 2037 strengthens our local work force, supports long term industry stability and helps the state of Hawaii remain a competitive production destination.

Mahalo for allowing me to submit my testimony

Bruce Vollert

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 7:47:40 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melinda Santhany	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Mahalo!

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 9:31:35 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Diana Seppelfrick	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee:

I respectfully submit testimony in support of **HB 2037**, which increases the annual cap on film tax credits from \$50 million to \$60 million.

By expanding the total amount of available credits, Hawai‘i can host more productions at the same time, creating steadier work opportunities for local cast and crew. This helps reduce gaps between jobs and allows more industry professionals to remain in Hawai‘i rather than seeking work elsewhere.

HB 2037 strengthens the film incentive program, supports local jobs, and keeps production spending in our local economy. I urge your favorable consideration of this measure.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Seppelfrick, SAG/AFTRA Member

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 11:01:05 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
claudia kühn	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

ich möchte die Filmindustrie auf Hawaii unterstützen,es hängen viele

Arbeitsplätze daran und viele Menschen leben davon,

Danke

claudia kühn

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 12:00:45 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Hello,

I am an actor, writer, and director born and raised on Oahu. I have worked in the film industry for 20+ years and have seen increasing economic benefits by having productions shoot in our state. I fully support bills such as this one that will help secure more employment opportunities and fiscal growth for Hawaii and its residents.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 12:01:48 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

I support HB 2037.

Increasing the annual cap helps ensure productions can remain in Hawaii and continue employing local workers. A competitive cap is essential for a stable film economy.

Please support HB 2037.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 12:01:52 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Mahalo, Representative Ilagan, for proposing this thoughtful bill that will help make Hawai'i competitive with other states by raising the annual cap on production credits to \$60M. I fully support this bill.

Angie Hamilton-Lowe, Manoa resident & UH employee

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 12:14:07 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

My name is La Fa'amausili-Siliato, and I strongly support HB 2037. Increasing the tax credit cap allows more productions to film in Hawai'i without being turned away once the cap is reached. That directly translates to more jobs, more consistent work, and more economic activity for local communities.

For those of us who rely on this industry, this bill helps create opportunity and sustainability. I urge you to pass HB 2037.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 12:21:27 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Genaro Hale Gualdarama	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

in support fo bill HB2037.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 12:53:05 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

I strongly support hb 2037 to do whatever it takes to increase film and tv in Hawaii. Because the more people around the world see Hawaii in film the more it supports Tourism; the most important thing to help Hawaii and it's citizens and businesses. And it creates and new and different industry here for our locals to have as a great career. thanks very much. Mark Rosner

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 1:12:46 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glen Kagamida	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SUPPORT

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 1:28:42 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Zenues-Jay Vaimanino	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

With great confidence and utmost respect for those who have trailblazed the film industry, I stand in ageement with those supporting the passing of this bill. To further the dreams of young kids, adults, & the generation who' has lived multiple decades. The dream doesn't die at a specific age.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 2:15:37 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noelle Yoza	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB 2037.

Increasing the annual cap helps ensure productions can remain in Hawai'i and continue employing local workers. A competitive cap is essential for a stable film economy.

Please support HB 2037.

Mahalo,

Noelle Yoza, Honolulu, Hawaii

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 2:20:24 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Armani Makaiwa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Armani Makaiwa, and I'm a high school senior and SAG-AFTRA member from Hawai'i. I strongly support HB 2037 because increasing the total cap on film tax credits from \$50 million to \$60 million allows more productions to happen here at the same time. This creates steady work for local actors, crew, and students like me who want to pursue a career in the film industry without leaving Hawai'i. I respectfully urge the committee to pass this bill.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 2:26:48 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keith Merritt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB 2037. This is highly crucial to Hawaii's future.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 2:37:49 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

As a film and TV worker for the last 25 years i support HB2037. Increasing the annual cap helps ensure productions can remain in Hawaii and continue employing local workers. A competitive cap is essential for a stable film economy. CA for example has a \$750 million dollar cap so raising our to \$60 will prevent productions leaving Hawaii due to funding shortages. this will in turn imporve predicability for local works like myself. Thanks you

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 2:51:49 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kulani Watson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I stand in strong support of HB 2037. Hawai‘i has long been recognized around the world through the films and television shows that showcase our islands, yet the local writers, crew members, artists, and small businesses behind those productions often face limited and inconsistent opportunity at home. Investing in our film and creative infrastructure is not simply about entertainment, it is about economic development, workforce stability, and cultural representation. When we strengthen this industry, we are empowering local voices to tell authentic stories while also supporting the many residents whose livelihoods depend on production activity across hospitality, transportation, construction, and service sectors.

I support HB 2037 because increasing the annual cap helps ensure productions can remain in Hawai‘i and continue employing local workers. A competitive cap is essential for a stable film economy. With stronger and more reliable incentives, Hawai‘i becomes not just a beautiful backdrop, but a practical and sustainable place to produce content. This stability encourages long-term planning, attracts responsible productions, and provides our youth with viable creative career paths without having to leave the islands. Supporting this bill is an investment in keeping talent here, strengthening local businesses, and allowing Hawai‘i to grow as both a destination and a storytelling powerhouse.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 3:23:46 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
SCOTT SWARTZ	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am an actor, a member of SAG-AFTRA, and a full-time resident of Oahu.

I am testifying in strong SUPPORT of HB 2037.

Mahalo,

Scott Swartz

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 3:37:58 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Parker Ellenburg	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello,

I'm submitting testimony to ask for your support to increase the aggregate annual cap on film tax credits from \$50 million to \$60 million to accommodate more simultaneous productions.

Incentivizing the industry in this way helps provide meaningful work that is essential to me and my family being able to live and love Hawai'i and to support its local culture and economy.

Thank you,

Parker Ellenburg (Stunt Performer/SAG-AFTRA Member)

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 3:58:37 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Richard Aiwohi-Kim	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I Support HB2037

This increase in the tax cap can help bring more productions and ensures that they remain in the islands and continue to employ local workers. It is essential for the local economy and to stabilize the local film industry.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 4:00:43 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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 HB 2037. I was born and raised in Hawai‘i and am an aspiring actor who hopes to build a future in the creative industries here at home.

HB 2037 matters to me because it helps strengthen opportunities for local creatives and supports the long-term health of Hawai‘i’s creative economy. I respectfully urge you to pass this measure.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 4:19:22 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
lila gutierrez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in support of HB 2037. I was born and raised in Hawai‘i and support efforts that invest in local creative industries.

HB 2037 matters to me because it helps support local creatives and contributes to the long-term sustainability of Hawai‘i’s creative economy. I respectfully urge you to pass this measure.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 4:41:43 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

I am Sally "Kalei" Davis. I am a SAG/AFTRA member and have worked in the Hawai'i film business since 1980's. This is the worst it has ever been. Producers chase tax incentives and we are way behind. Please pass this bill to help get the thousands of local film workers back to work!

Mahalo,

Kalei

Written Testimony In Support of HB 2037

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 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 films and television series like HAWAI'I FIVE-0, MAGNUM, P.I., TRIPLE FRONTIER, and NCIS: HAWAI'I. 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 and the annual tax credits cap 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%, increasing their state's annual cap 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, increase its annual cap for tax credits 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 annual tax cap to \$60 million** it gives the best chance to kickstart the studios wanting to come back to Hawai'i for longer productions instead of just two to three weeks that has been for the last few years now. It will allow more moneys to be divided among the various productions filming in the state. It's not just about Hawai'i as 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

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

Testimony by IATSE 665
February 6th, 2026

HB 2037 - RELATING TO TAXATION.

Aloha Chair Ilagan, Vice Chair Hussey, and members of the House committee,

My name is Tuia'ana Scanlan, IATSE International Trustee. The International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees represents more than 170,000 Entertainment industry artisans and technicians in the United States, its territories, and Canada. **I strongly support HB2037**, Relating to Taxation.

Bills similar to this have had significant positive effects on state and local economies across the US and Canada. This bill is a direct investment in stable, middle-class jobs for Hawaii's creative workforce. By increasing the overall Film Production Income Tax Credit, HB 2037 will take meaningful steps to draw business and thriving wage jobs toward Hawai'i.

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. HB 2037 will take meaningful steps to empower our film tax incentive program, and will support thousands of working families in Hawai'i.

I strongly support HB 2037. I urge your committee to do the same. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tuia Scanlan', written in a cursive style.

Tuia'ana Scanlan
IATSE International Trustee
He/him

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 8:17:26 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Rep. Greggor Ilagan, Chari and Rep. Ikaika Hussey, Vice Chari and members of the committee,

Thank you so much for the opportunity to submit my testimony in support of HB2037. I have had many wonderful opportunities to work as a background actor with many productions that have filmed in our great state. I have made many friends that have had productive careers and have been able to sustain their careers while living in Hawaii by working in the film and television industry. All of this has come to a concerning halt in the past going on approximately three years. Many of us have had to seek employment in other areas, rethinking / revising our careers. I have had to revise and pause my career shift plans that I had made to move towards working full time in the film industry. This bill capturing increasing the aggregate annual cap on film tax credits from \$50 million to \$60 million would work towards keeping back-to-back momentum with productions filming in Hawaii. In turn this would bring back and keep jobs happening in this industry. The outcome would be me being able to fulfill my dream of working in the film industry full time and my friends being able to do the same. Thank you for your time in reviewing my testimony in support of this bill.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 9:41:28 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Thank you

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 9:56:09 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Mitchell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Ilagan, Vice Chair Hussey, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Lisa Lee Mitchell. I am a member of IATSE Local 665 and the Hawai'i Film Alliance, with over 25 years of experience in Hawai'i's film and television industry. I am writing to express my support for HB 2037.

A competitive and adequate annual cap is the foundation of a stable film economy. When the annual cap is too low, it creates a "bottleneck" that forces productions to bypass Hawai'i in favor of other jurisdictions that can offer more financial certainty. HB 2037 is essential to ensuring that Hawai'i remains a viable and attractive destination for global productions.

Increasing the annual cap directly impacts the local workforce in several key ways:

- **Year-Round Employment:** A higher cap allows for multiple large-scale productions to operate throughout the year, preventing the "boom and bust" cycles that leave local crews struggling during gaps in production.
- **Predictability for Studios:** Major studios plan their budgets years in advance. By increasing the cap, Hawai'i provides the fiscal predictability required for studios to commit to our islands for the long term.
- **Economic Stability:** During my ten years working on Hawaii Five-0, I saw how a single, well-supported production creates a ripple effect of economic activity for local restaurants, hardware stores, and other services, not limited to just those working on the production.

I support HB 2037 and respectfully urge your committee to pass this bill. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Lisa Lee Mitchell

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 10:07:01 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

I support HB 2037, it's vital for us to raise our tax credit. A higher cap will bring more productions, more economic impact, and just as many local jobs.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 10:17:38 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hannah Rodriguez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Hannah-Grace Rodriguez, I am a professional stuntwoman and intimacy coordinator in the TV & Film Industry.

I strongly support HB 2037!

Increasing the annual cap helps ensure productions can remain in Hawai'i while contiuing to employee local workers & support local bussinesses. A competitive cap is very esseential for a stable film economy.

Please support the Hawai'i film industry!

Mahalo,

Hannah-Grace Rodriguez (McDermott)

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 10:44:12 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kelsey Sugai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB 2037.

Increasing the annual cap helps ensure productions can remain in Hawai'i and continue employing local workers. A competitive cap is essential for a stable film economy.

Please support HB 2037.

Mahalo nui loa

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 11:08:43 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Hello, I write in support of HB2037. It is so important we raise our tax cap. We are losing out on projects coming to the islands because of it and that takes jobs away from a tremendous amount of local families both inside the film and outside of it. Please raise the cap! Mahalo!

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 11:20:55 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William G. Meyer III	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Statement of William G. Meyer III

In strong support of HB 2037

Hearing: Friday February 6, 2026, at 8:30 am

Dear Chair Iligan, Vice Chair Hussey and Members of the Committee:

My name is William G. Meyer III, and I hereby express my strong support of HB 2037.

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.

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 will greatly enhance the overall attractiveness of Hawaii's film industry tax incentive program

My thanks to the House for taking this matter up and supporting this important industry.

Respectfully submitted

William G. Meyer III

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 12:14:51 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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 this bill. The passage of this bill will help draw productions back to Hawai'i, boost our economy, uplift local talent and help the thousands employed by the Hawai'i film industry get back to work.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 12:15:45 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deenie TKam	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chief of War is an incredible production and has been a lucrative addition to Apple TV. Although it's about Hawaiians, set in Hawaii, and is one of the most accurate portrayals of Hawaiians it was only partially produced in Hawaii. The production had to be completed in New Zealand. Raising the Annual Film Tax Credit Cap could decrease the risk of this happening for future episodic productions like Chief of War. This would enable local film workers to establish more consistent employment and grow/sustain the local economy. Tourism is becoming unsustainable. Growing the film industry is a step towards much needed economic diversity. Please support HB2037.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 1:15:29 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT 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 this measure with amendments, guided by the principles outlined in A Smarter Blueprint for Hawai‘i’s Film Industry .

This bill correctly recognizes that Hawai‘i is operating in a far more competitive global production environment than when the current incentive structure was designed. Updating definitions to reflect streaming platforms, extending the sunset date, and adjusting headline credit percentages are all reasonable responses to market reality.

However, raising incentive levels without modernizing how performance is measured and rewarded risks repeating the same structural failures that have limited Hawai‘i’s return on investment for years. The goal should not simply be to spend more public dollars, but to spend them more effectively.

Incentives Must Be Performance-Based, Not Automatic

The bill increases the base credit to 27% on O‘ahu and 32% on neighbor islands based largely on population thresholds.

While competitiveness matters, automatic increases untethered from outcomes do not improve ROI. A smarter approach is to treat these percentages as maximums, earned through measurable local impact.

Recommended amendment:

Tie incremental credit increases to verifiable benchmarks such as:

- Minimum local crew hiring thresholds
- In-state spending requirements
- Use of Hawai‘i-based post-production, sound stages, or certified vendors

Public incentives should reward real investment, not simply higher budgets.

The Neighbor Island Incentive Is Outdated and Ineffective

The bill continues reliance on a flat 5% neighbor island bonus, a structure that no longer reflects the real cost of filming outside O‘ahu.

That additional 5% does not meaningfully offset:

- Interisland airfare and housing costs
- Shipping and barging of equipment and vehicles
- Smaller labor pools requiring travel or split crews
- Duplicated infrastructure expenses

In practice, filming on a neighbor island can increase production costs by 10–20% or more. As a result, the existing bonus is largely symbolic and does not change production behavior.

Recommended amendment:

Replace the flat bonus with a performance-based or cost-offset model, such as:

- Tiered incentives tied to verified neighbor island spending
- Additional credits for interisland logistics, housing, or shipping
- Scaled bonuses that reflect actual cost differentials

If the Legislature intends to drive real neighbor island production, the incentive must be material enough to matter.

The \$60 Million Per-Production Cap Waiver Creates Fiscal Risk

The bill lifts the \$17 million per-production cap entirely for projects spending \$60 million or more.

As written, this provision:

- Concentrates a disproportionate share of the annual cap into a single production
- Risks crowding out multiple mid-sized projects with stronger local ROI
- Favors scale over sustained ecosystem growth

Recommended amendment:

- Restore a graduated per-production cap, even for large projects; or
- Create a separate mega-production allocation with its own ceiling and safeguards

Competitiveness should not come at the expense of fiscal discipline.

Annual Cap Increases Should Be Conditioned on Outcomes

Raising the annual cap from \$50 million to \$60 million is not inherently problematic, but it should not be unconditional.

Recommended amendment:

Condition the higher cap on:

- Verified local hire ratios
- In-state spend thresholds
- Timely reporting and certification

Incentives should scale with impact, not simply with total spend.

Certification Requirements Should Be Proportionate

Clarifying third-party certification improves transparency, but blanket requirements risk disproportionately burdening smaller local and independent productions.

Recommended amendment:

- Tier certification requirements by production size
- Allow streamlined options for smaller projects

Transparency should protect the program without discouraging participation.

Address the Missing Structural Issue: Local Vendor GE Tax Parity

Finally, while the bill expands credits, it does not address General Excise Tax pyramiding, which quietly disadvantages Hawai'i-based vendors.

Local rental and service providers pay GE repeatedly on the same assets, making them structurally more expensive than imported alternatives and discouraging local capital investment.

Recommended amendment:

Provide GE tax parity or pass-through relief for qualified local production rentals, aligned with certified productions. This strengthens local infrastructure without increasing the credit rate or annual cap.

Conclusion

This bill moves in the right direction, but percentages alone will not fix Hawai'i's film economy.

With targeted, performance-based amendments, this measure can:

- Improve competitiveness
- Protect taxpayers
- Build a durable, Hawai‘i-owned film ecosystem

I respectfully urge the Committee to advance this bill with amendments that reward real jobs, real investment, and real infrastructure — not just higher spending totals.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 6:57:32 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer Nelson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The film industry in Hawai'i needs these expanded changes to become more competitive with other locations. These changes will encourage long-term investment, and protects jobs for local crews and talent. The benefit for the state shows up in jobs, local spending and an increased tax base.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 7:03:44 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John Salanoa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Ilagan,

My name is John Salanoa and I stand in strong support of bill HB2037.

In support of bill HB 2037

I am writing to express my support for Bill HB 2037, which proposes to raise the annual cap for Hawaii's film tax credit from \$50 million to \$60 million. My name is Bryan Spicer, and I have served as a film director on Hawaii Five-0 and Magnum PI for over a decade, contributing to more than 250 episodes. Throughout this time, I have witnessed both the incredible potential and the challenges facing our state's film industry.

Increasing the annual cap is essential for several key reasons:

- **Attracting More Productions:** An increased cap will make Hawaii a more appealing destination for filmmakers, allowing us to compete more effectively with other states and countries that offer generous incentives. This change could encourage more diverse productions to choose Hawaii as their filming location.
- **Economic Benefits:** A thriving film industry brings jobs and economic growth to our communities. Raising the cap means more productions can take advantage of the tax credit, leading to increased spending in local businesses and services.
- **Cultural Representation:** By attracting more productions, we can better showcase the unique stories and culture of Hawaii to a global audience. This not only benefits our local community but also enhances Hawaii's reputation in the film industry.
- **Sustainability of the Industry:** An increased cap provides stability for filmmakers, allowing them to commit resources to projects with greater confidence. This fosters a more sustainable and vibrant film ecosystem in Hawaii.

I strongly urge you to support Bill HB 2037. By raising the annual cap, we can help revitalize and strengthen Hawaii's film industry, ensuring it remains a key player in the global marketplace.

Sincerely,
Bryan Spicer
DGA Director

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 7:54:53 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

As a working film professional in Hawai‘i, I support HB2037, which proposes raising the annual film tax credit cap to \$60 million. Increasing the cap allows Hawai‘i to compete effectively with other production markets and prevents qualified projects from being turned away once the current limit is reached. This bill directly supports local jobs, keeps experienced crews employed year-round, and encourages long-term investment in Hawai‘i’s film infrastructure. HB2037 strengthens an industry that provides meaningful employment for Hawai‘i residents while delivering broad economic benefits that extend well beyond the screen.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 8:01:30 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nickoma Ing	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 8:02:25 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lukas s Seno	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Committee on Economic Development & Technology

RE: HB 2037 – Relating to Film, Digital Media, and Television Production

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is **Lukas Seno**, and I am the **Business Representative for IATSE Local 665**, representing behind-the-scenes film, television, and live-event workers across Hawai‘i. I respectfully submit this testimony **in support of HB 2037**.

HB 2037 helps strengthen Hawai‘i’s film and television industry in a way that directly supports **local jobs, working conditions, and resident workers**. Policies that improve stability and predictability in production lead to **more consistent work, longer schedules, and better hours** for Hawai‘i-based crews.

For our members, this means the ability to stay employed here at home, maintain healthcare and benefits, and build long-term careers in the creative industries without having to leave the state for work. Supporting a stable production environment also benefits small local businesses and strengthens Hawai‘i’s overall economy.

HB 2037 is an important step toward ensuring that Hawai‘i remains competitive while keeping the focus on **local hiring, fair work standards, and sustainable employment for residents**.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Lukas Seno

Business Representative

IATSE Local 665

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 8:06:30 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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'ian industry I was able to meet my now wife (Hannah-Grace Rodriguez"McDermott ") she's an amazing stunt performer and Intimicy 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/name/nm0744868/)

Stunt Performer & Fight Coordinator

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 8:18:08 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha, I am in support of HB2037. We need to bring more work to Hawai'i and support the communities and families of Hawai'i. This will allow more opportunities and more growth BEYOND the tourism industry. Supporting cultural education and expansion.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 8:24:51 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ricardo Galindez	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Island Film Group is submitting this testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 2037

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 8:27:32 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amy Adams	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

supporting this bill keeps Hawaii competitive and supports all the local film professionals and the myriad other industries the film business by nature supports by visiting.

please support this bill

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 8:27:35 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alana Eagle	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members, my name is **Alana Eagle** from Honolulu. When Hawai‘i loses productions, the consequences are immediate: friends leave for months at a time to work elsewhere, kids get left behind to stay in school, and families end up selling homes or moving away. If we want **real economic diversification beyond tourism**, we need consistent production work that **supports local crew and local vendors**. HB2037 strengthens Hawai‘i’s ability to attract and retain productions, raising the cap to \$60 million so productions don't move elsewhere, keeping jobs and dollars in Hawai‘i.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 8:33:29 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

increasing the annual cap helps ensure productions can remain in hawaii and continue to employ local.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 8:41:43 AM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sheela Sharma	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

By raising the film tax credit, this bill will ensure that Hawai'i 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.

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2037
KIMEE BALMILERO

February 5th 2026

Aloha,

My name is Kimee Balmilero. I was born and raised in Hawai'i and am an actor, homeowner, and small-business owner here. I support HB 2037.

When film and television work is happening in Hawai'i, it supports real people. It supports families, small businesses, and local workers who want to stay and build their lives here. When that work slows or stops because the tax credit cap has been reached, those jobs don't disappear. They leave the state.

Raising the annual cap allows Hawai'i to say yes to work that already wants to come here. It means productions don't have to walk away simply because the program ran out of room. For people like me, that difference is personal. It means the ability to continue working from home rather than seeking opportunities elsewhere.

Film and television production brings outside money into Hawai'i and spends it locally. That spending supports jobs, keeps small businesses running, and helps families stay rooted in their communities. When we turn that work away, we lose more than projects. We lose income and stability for real local people.

HB 2037 is a practical step that helps keep Hawai'i competitive and keeps this economic activity here rather than pushing it out.

I urge you to support HB 2037.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kimee J. Balmilero". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "P" at the end of the last name.

Kimee J. Balmilero

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 12:25:29 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Angelica Quinn	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of this bill to continue to help our local film industry in Hawaii. Let's keep all of our film ohana working.

Angelica Quinn

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 12:59:02 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Luis Linares	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As we rebuild our Hawai'i Film Insustry, let's make sure that we don't shoot ourselves in the foot by not staying competitive for the major productions that might consider the islands as a location for their project. It is important to understand that the bigger the production, the more benefisial it will be for everyone that is directly and indirectly involved in the production. This bigger productions are the ones that have the biggest impacts around the communities and small business that surround them and at time life changing opportunities for local talent in a variety of fields. So as important as it is for our legislature to support and incentivise the "little guy" with small and mid size productions. It is paramount that we support the "BIG DOGS" or the Large and extra large productions that often have the potential to bring HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF DOLLARS into the states economy with huge ripple effects among multiple industries all accross the islands and often have the biggest reach to influence around the world. Let's make sure that we don't rob the islands once again from the opportunity to be a part of this at times history making projects like most recently "Chief Of War" and the opportunity for our local Hawai'i people to get their fair share. Therefore let's make sure we make Hawai'i a desirable and competitive destination for this giant projects that have the potential to touch and affect possitively so many lives. Pls. Strongly support this bill. Mahalo

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 1:35:16 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Moana Coloma Quintanilla	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB 2037.

Increasing the annual cap helps ensure productions can remain in Hawai'i and continue employing local workers.

A competitive cap is essential for a stable film economy.

Please support HB 2037.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 2:02:11 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nancy D Moser	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In opposition

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 4:44:38 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shaun Skinner Wolfe	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The film industry in Hawai'i has been suffering for some time with many professionals in the industry either unemployed or barely scraping by (including myself in the later category). This bill would help revitalize the film industry in Hawai'i and all of the locals that it employs. Please consider it.

HB-2037

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 4:55:48 PM

Testimony for ECD on 2/6/2026 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeff Juett	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments: