

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

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DAWN N.S. CHANG
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
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RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE
FIRST DEPUTY

CIARA W.K. KAHAHANE
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES
ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

Testimony of
RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE
Acting Chairperson

Before the House Committee on
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TECHNOLOGY

Friday, February 6, 2026
8:30 AM

State Capitol, Conference Room 423 and Via Videoconference

In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 2266
RELATING TO THE HAWAII FILM STUDIO

HB2266 proposes to provide an exemption to dispositions of lands set aside for film studio and film studio operation from prior approval of the Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) pursuant to section 171-11, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, thus streamlining the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism's (DBEDT) use of the Hawaii Film Studio for filming activity and other film-related business in order to more efficiently develop Hawai'i's film, media, and creative industries. The studio falls under DBEDT through its Hawaii Film Office (HFO). **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports the measure and offers the following comments.**

HB2266 proposes to eliminate the need for HFO to get approval of new tenants from the BLNR. The Department has no objections to this as historically, once every few years, HFO would enter into a revocable permit agreement with a production company, the most recent production being "NCIS Hawai'i" until it was recently replaced by "Untamed". The proposed change would reduce workload for the BLNR and the Department, while streamlining HFO's use of the film studio.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

HB-2266

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 8:47:21 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barry Cheung	Department of Land and Natural Resources	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Testimony submitted on main account DLNR Testimony. Request for zoom link for additional staff to attend remotely and as backup.



**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

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

In consideration of
HB2266
RELATING TO THE HAWAII' I FILM STUDIO

Chair Ilagan, Vice Chair Hussey, and members of the Committee. The Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) strongly supports HB2266 relating to the Hawai'i Film Studio, to amend section 171-11 Hawai'i Revised Statutes to streamline the ability to meet production timelines by providing the Director of DBEDT the ability to authorize and approve production tenancy at the site through an amendment to this section. Productions frequently need to confirm stage tenancy on short notice as financing, shipping, and episodic schedules change. When studio tenancy approvals must wait for an external meeting cycle, the result can be avoidable production delays or a reduction in the number of shoot days completed in Hawai'i. In today's competitive environment, productions can and do relocate portions of work elsewhere when timelines cannot be met.

Hawai'i's film and television activity represents substantial in-state spending and local hiring. DBEDT's cost-benefit reporting shows qualified expenditures in recent years ranging from approximately \$169 million to over \$333 million statewide, supporting thousands of hires and significant payments to Hawai'i-based businesses.

Ensuring Hawai'i can execute quickly on facility access is a practical competitiveness issue.

This measure is intended to remove scheduling friction, not to reduce accountability. DBEDT will continue to require appropriate insurance, enforce facility terms and conditions, and maintain written policies and documentation for tenancy approvals.

This administrative bill optimizes the process for this purpose-built facility which the state has invested more than \$25 million in capital improvements over the time the department has held the executive order for oversight. Through this administration proposed amendment, DBEDT is able to ensure productions an efficient and effective process which aligns with the specific needs of the industry, particularly series productions who are core to the growth of our production workforce.

We appreciate this opportunity to testify.



**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 ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TECHNOLOGY

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

In consideration of
HB2266
RELATING TO THE HAWAI'I FILM STUDIO

Chair Ilagan, Vice Chair Hussey, and members of the Committee. The Creative Industries Division (CID) of the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) strongly supports HB2266 relating to the Hawai'i Film Studio on 18th Avenue, to amend section 171-11 Hawai'i Revised Statutes to streamline the ability to meet production timelines by providing the Director of DBEDT the ability to authorize and approve production tenancy at the site through an amendment to this section.

This administrative bill optimizes the process for this purpose-built facility which the state has invested more than \$25 million in capital improvements over the time the department has held the executive order for oversight. Through this administration proposed amendment, DBEDT is able to ensure productions an efficient and effective process which aligns with the specific needs of the industry, particularly series productions who are core to the growth of our production workforce.

We appreciate this opportunity to testify.

**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 STRONG SUPPORT OF HB 2266
RELATING TO TAXATION**

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

Mahalo, Representative Ilagan, for scheduling HB 2266 and allowing us to testify on this measure. The Hawai'i Film Alliance (HFA) submits this testimony in **strong support of HB 2266**.

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.

HB 2266 modernizes Hawai'i's film production infrastructure policy by removing a procedural barrier for land dispositions tied to the Hawai'i Film Studio at Diamond Head. By exempting studio-related land use approvals from prior Board of Land and Natural Resources review, this measure enables the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism to more efficiently activate and manage film-related facilities.

Streamlining Operations for Diverse Productions

The Hawai'i Film Studio is an important asset for local, independent, and major productions seeking space for shooting, soundstages, and related activities. Reducing administrative hurdles supports a wider range of projects including feature films and television to commercials, documentary work, animation, and emerging digital media which helps Hawai'i to compete nationally and globally.

Expanding Local Economic Opportunity

More efficient use of studio facilities means more production days, which drives spending that benefits local crew, talent, vendors, and service businesses. This measure helps create consistent opportunities for Hawai'i residents to participate in all aspects of production and supports sustainable job growth.



Strengthening Hawai'i's Creative Ecosystem

By making it easier to leverage public studio infrastructure, HB 2266 supports a broader ecosystem of creative industries. Film, television, and media production not only generate direct economic activity but also enhance Hawai'i's cultural visibility and offer platforms for sharing local stories and voices with global audiences.

Alongside other measures aimed at improving the state's film industry, HB 2266 sends a clear message that Hawai'i is serious about supporting its workforce and maintaining a fair, competitive environment for production. For these reasons, we respectfully urge the committee to pass HB 2266 which will reinforce Hawai'i's film industry infrastructure and expand the diversity of production activity across the state.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony. **Please pass HB 2266.**

HB-2266

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

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

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

Comments:

Island Film Group is submitting this testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 2266

HB-2266

Submitted on: 2/6/2026 1:10:46 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-2266

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 5:30:29 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
lynne matusow	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This will help our film industry, which is now on life support. We must build the industry. Please vote yes.

HB-2266

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 12:36:44 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 of bill HB2266.

HB-2266

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 9:39:38 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-2266

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 7:04:48 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 support of bill HB2266

HB-2266

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 8:42:58 AM

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

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

Comments:

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO H.B. 2266, UNLESS AMENDED

Relating to the Hawai‘i Film Studio; Public Lands; BLNR Approval

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee:

I submit this testimony in opposition to H.B. 2266 unless it is amended to include clear transparency, oversight, and accountability safeguards.

I strongly support Hawai‘i’s film industry and the continued use of the Hawai‘i Film Studio at Diamond Head as a public asset that supports jobs, local businesses, and creative opportunity.

However, this bill removes an important layer of public and inter-agency oversight without replacing it with any meaningful guardrails.

Streamlining cannot come at the cost of accountability.

CORE CONCERN: REMOVING BLNR OVERSIGHT WITHOUT REPLACEMENT

H.B. 2266 exempts dispositions of public lands set aside for film studio and film studio operations from prior approval by the Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR).

This is a significant policy shift.

BLNR review is not a formality — it is a check on how public land is leased, licensed, or otherwise disposed of, ensuring consistency with public purpose, land use, and long-term stewardship.

Removing that check without adding substitute oversight is not acceptable.

WHY THIS BILL SHOULD NOT MOVE AS WRITTEN

1. Public Lands Require Independent Oversight

The Hawai‘i Film Studio sits on public land set aside by executive order.

Decisions about tenants, leases, and use of that land should not rest solely within a single department without independent review.

BLNR oversight provides:

- Transparency
- Cross-agency accountability
- A public record of decisions affecting public land

This bill removes that safeguard entirely.

2. “Streamlining” Is Undefined and Unlimited

The bill allows DBEDT to enter into leases, licenses, and other dispositions without BLNR approval, but does not define:

- Limits on lease length
- Limits on use types
- Competitive bidding requirements
- Public notice or disclosure standards

This creates unchecked discretion over a valuable public asset.

3. No Transparency or Reporting Requirements

As written, the bill does not require:

- Public reporting of studio tenants

- Disclosure of lease terms
- Accounting of revenues generated
- Explanation of how studio use aligns with public benefit

This mirrors the same transparency problem seen in other film-related special fund proposals.

Public assets must remain publicly accountable.

4. Sets a Dangerous Precedent for Other Public Lands

Exempting film studio lands from BLNR approval opens the door to:

- Similar exemptions for other agencies
- Gradual erosion of public-land oversight
- Policy decisions driven by convenience rather than public interest

Public land governance should be consistent, not carved up bill by bill.

MINIMUM AMENDMENTS REQUIRED FOR CONSIDERATION

I would only consider supporting this bill if it is amended to include, at minimum:

1. Public transparency requirements, including:
 - Posted lists of studio tenants
 - Lease or license durations
 - Revenue generated from each disposition
2. Clear limits on DBEDT authority, such as:
 - Caps on lease length
 - Defined allowable uses consistent with the public purpose
3. Public notice or review mechanisms, including:
 - Public posting before long-term dispositions
 - Periodic reporting to the Legislature
4. Legislative oversight, including:
 - Regular reporting on studio use and outcomes
 - Sunset or review provisions tied to performance

If BLNR approval is removed, equivalent safeguards must replace it.

BOTTOM LINE

I support efficient use of the Hawai'i Film Studio.

I do not support removing public-land oversight without transparency, limits, or accountability.

Public land is not a private convenience — it is a public trust.

Until this bill is amended to protect that trust, it should not advance.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify

HB-2266

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 9:15:00 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patrick Ah Loy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the committee. My name is Patrick Ah Loy, I've worked in the industry for 17 years. I stand on my written testimony in support of HB2266 Thank you for the opportunity to testify”

HB-2266

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 12:16:27 PM

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

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

Comments:

My name is Joshua J. Meredith. I'm a member of IATSE Local 665, the union representing technicians and artisans in the entertainment industry in Hawai'i. I strongly support HB 2266.

HB-2266

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 4:34:58 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: