



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA

House Committee on Finance

February 26, 2026

10:00 a.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308 and Videoconference

In Support

House Bill No. 2268, HD1, Relating to Film Production

Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

The Office of the Governor supports H.B. No. 2268, HD1, Relating to Film Production. This bill authorizes the Hawai'i Tourism Authority to market and promote film production as part of its statutory powers.

Film production is a proven driver of tourism, workforce development, and economic growth. Productions filmed in Hawai'i showcase the State's landscapes, culture, and creative talent to global audiences, generating long-term visitor interest. A 2024 DBEDT report found that film-related tourism influenced 12.7 percent of visitors in 2022 and generated approximately \$1.0 billion in visitor spending, resulting in \$121.6 million in state tax revenues.

By authorizing HTA to promote film production, the State can leverage HTA's established marketing infrastructure, global partnerships, and commitment to cultural stewardship to attract high-value productions that support local jobs, reflect Hawai'i's values, and promote sustainable visitor engagement.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.



**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 FINANCE

Thursday, February 26, 2026
10:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

In consideration of
HB2268, HD1
RELATING TO FILM PRODUCTION

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

The Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) **strongly supports HB2268, HD1**, which adds the marketing and promotion of film productions filmed in the State as a power of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA).

Adding film promotion complements the HTA's existing tourism promotion functions, aligning HTA's tools with how visitors discover and select destinations. Film and television are among the most influential drivers of travel inspiration worldwide. According to DBEDT's report on the impacts of the film industry on 2022 tourism in Hawai'i, published in February 2024, 12.7% of visitors either were motivated by film or participated in a film-location tour in 2022, and film-related visitation accounted for \$1.0 billion in visitor spending, which generated \$121.6 million in state tax revenues.

This measure is a pragmatic and forward-thinking step toward building a more resilient economy. By integrating film promotion into HTA's brand and destination management work, it creates a synergistic opportunity with Hawai'i's largest economic driver to leverage film exposure and showcase Hawai'i's culture, hospitality and breathtaking scenery to global audiences. Beyond tourism marketing, other strategic benefits include generating opportunities for local crews, production companies, service providers and the hospitality sector, all while amplifying destination storytelling. If additional funds are available, DBEDT requests \$1 million to be allocated toward film promotion in the HTA's 2027 budget.

DBEDT Testimony
HB2268, HD1
February 26, 2026
Page 2 of 2

Including film production with HTA's powers aligns seamlessly with its mission and existing mandates, integrating destination management principles and strengthening Hawai'i's brand – diversifying our economy while reinforcing Hawai'i's unique identity.

Thank you for the opportunity to support this measure.

February 26, 2026

The House Committee on Finance
Representative Chris Todd, Chair
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

Thursday, February 26, 2026, 10:00 a.m.
Conference Room #308 and via video conference



RE: HB 2268 HD1 – Relating to the Film Industry

Dear Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, 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 **supports HB 2268 HD1**, which adds the marketing and promotion of film production as a power of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority. Recognizing film and television production as part of the State's marketing and branding strategy aligns policy with modern economic realities and ensures that Hawai'i remains competitive in attracting productions that generate long-term value beyond the screen.

Film and television production are powerful tools for promoting Hawai'i, supporting local jobs, and driving sustained economic activity. In West O'ahu, film production supports a wide network of small businesses—including food vendors, transportation providers, equipment suppliers, and service companies—while also showcasing emerging communities and diverse landscapes beyond traditional visitor areas. With a film studio planned for the region, **strategic marketing of the industry is especially important to maximize workforce opportunities, strengthen small business participation, and reinforce the connection between film, tourism, and economic development in a way that benefits local communities.**

For these reasons, the Kapolei Chamber of Commerce **supports HB 2268 HD1**. Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

Respectfully,

Kiran Polk
Executive Director & CEO



TESTIMONY OF
CAROLINE ANDERSON
Interim President & CEO
Hawai'i Tourism Authority

before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Thursday, February 26, 2026
10 a.m.
State Capitol, Room 308

In consideration of
HB 2268 HD1
RELATING TO FILM PRODUCTION

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

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) **supports HB 2268 HD1**, which adds the marketing and promotion of film production as an express power of HTA by amending section 201B-3(a), Hawai'i Revised Statutes.

Film and television productions help shape Hawai'i's image in global markets and can translate into travel demand and visitor spending. The February 2024 DBEDT report on the impacts of film on tourism found that approximately 12.7% of all visitors in 2022 were motivated at least in part to visit Hawai'i due to television programs and movies filmed in Hawai'i or participated in a filming-location tour.

DBEDT further estimated that film-related motivation and filming-location tours accounted for approximately 4.5 million visitor days (5.3%) and \$1.0 billion in visitor spending (5.3%) in 2022. Those visitor expenditures were associated with broader economic impacts, including \$1,163.5 million in gross domestic product (GDP), \$543.6 million in earnings, and \$121.6 million in state tax revenues.

HB 2268 HD1 aligns with this evidence by clearly recognizing film promotion as part of the State's tourism marketing toolkit. Establishing this authority in statute supports coordination between tourism marketing and film-related visitor interest—particularly for managing and guiding visitor demand that may concentrate at well-known filming locations.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share our support for HB 2268 HD1.



State of Hawai'i
The Thirty-Third Legislature
State House of Representatives
Committee on Finance

Hearing Date: Thursday, February 26, 2026
10:00 AM – Room 308, HI State Capitol

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2268 HD 1
RELATING TO FILM PRODUCTION

Aloha Chairs Tam and Ilagan, Vice Chairs Templo and Hussey, and Members of the Joint Committees,

The Hawai'i Film Alliance (HFA) is a member-based organization comprised of Hawai'i film and television professionals, entertainment union members, creative workers, production companies, small businesses, and allied industry partners who live and work in the State of Hawai'i. Our members represent the full production ecosystem, from crew and talent to supporting business owners.

HFA submits this testimony in **SUPPORT of HB 2268 HD 1** which proposes to expand the statutory authority of the Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA) to include the marketing and promotion of film production in Hawai'i.

HB 2268 HD 1 recognizes an important reality: film and television production are no longer isolated entertainment activities. They are powerful economic and branding engines that directly influence travel behavior, workforce development, and global perception of Hawai'i. Aligning film promotion within HTA's existing destination marketing framework is a strategic and forward-looking step. Below are comments regarding the cross promotion of the two industries.

1. Strategic Alignment: Film as a Tourism Multiplier

HTA's core mission is destination marketing and brand stewardship. Film production naturally complements this mission. Unlike traditional advertising campaigns that run for a defined period, filmed content lives indefinitely across streaming platforms, broadcast television, and digital media worldwide.

When audiences see Hawai'i on screen, they experience it through narrative and emotion. They are not responding to an advertisement; they are responding to a story. That connection inspires travel in a way conventional marketing cannot replicate.

By integrating film promotion into HTA’s portfolio, Hawai’i can:

- Coordinate global marketing efforts with productions filming in the state
- Leverage premieres, press tours, and digital campaigns for broader reach
- Align visitor messaging with the communities and locations featured on screen
- Amplify earned media value that the State does not directly pay for

This is not an expansion outside of HTA’s mission. It is a strategic enhancement of it.

2. Government Efficiency and Coordinated Strategy

HTA already manages international marketing contracts, branding initiatives, and global outreach campaigns. Creating a separate marketing infrastructure for film would risk duplication of effort and fragmented messaging.

HB 2268 HD1 allows Hawai’i to utilize existing networks and expertise to promote film production efficiently and cohesively. A unified promotional strategy ensures that:

- Film marketing aligns with cultural stewardship and sustainability goals
- Messaging remains consistent with Hawai’i’s long-term brand identity
- Public resources are leveraged rather than dispersed

Rather than expanding bureaucracy, this measure strengthens coordination and clarity.

3. Economic Diversification and Year-Round Impact

Hawai’i’s economy has long relied heavily on visitor arrivals. Film production strengthens that foundation by adding a complementary economic pillar that generates year-round activity.

Productions support a wide range of industries, including construction, logistics, hospitality, transportation, digital media, and professional services. They:

- Create high-wage employment opportunities for local residents
- Engage small businesses across multiple sectors
- Invest in local infrastructure and services
- Generate lasting visibility that continues attracting visitors long after filming concludes

Positioning film promotion within HTA acknowledges that economic diversification and destination branding are interconnected strategies, not separate pursuits.

4. Accountability and Clear Scope

HB 2268 HD 1 focuses specifically on marketing and promotion. It does not shift responsibility for tax incentives, infrastructure development, or regulatory oversight.

It is important to recognize that film production is a specialized industry with unique operational needs. While HTA is well-positioned to support marketing and visibility efforts, industry expertise and stakeholder collaboration remain essential.

To ensure transparency and measurable success, the Legislature may consider:

- Establishing performance benchmarks tied to production attraction
- Requiring periodic reporting on marketing outcomes and economic impact
- Formalizing advisory input from industry professionals

We also recommend or would like to ensure that TELEVISION SERIES AND STREAMING are included in the definition of FILM PRODUCTION. With defined guardrails and collaboration, HTA can integrate this responsibility effectively while maintaining accountability.

5. Global Competitiveness

Jurisdictions around the world actively market themselves to film studios and streaming platforms. States and countries that integrate film into broader economic strategy are capturing increased production volume.

HB 2268 HD 1 signals that Hawai'i intends to remain competitive.

Studios evaluate destinations not only on tax policy, but also on marketing support, brand alignment, and government coordination. A unified promotional framework strengthens Hawai'i's negotiating position and demonstrates strategic readiness in the global creative economy.

6. Long-Term Brand Stewardship

Film and television shape global perception more powerfully than conventional campaigns. They influence how audiences imagine places, cultures, and experiences.

When coordinated thoughtfully, film promotion can:

- Showcase local talent and authentic cultural narratives
- Encourage responsible and sustainable visitation
- Highlight diverse communities across the islands
- Reinforce stewardship messaging consistent with Hawai'i's values

Integrating film promotion within HTA ensures that these narratives align with the State's long-term destination management goals.

7. Addressing Concerns Thoughtfully

It is important to acknowledge potential concerns. Tourism marketing and film industry development are not identical missions. Film production requires workforce development, infrastructure support, and regulatory coordination beyond marketing alone.

However, HB 2268 HD 1 does not attempt to consolidate all film-related functions under HTA. It simply recognizes that marketing and promotion are natural areas of overlap.

By maintaining clear boundaries and ensuring industry engagement, Hawai'i can capture the synergy between film and tourism without diluting either mission.

▪
Conclusion

HB 2268 HD 1 represents strategic integration, not expansion for its own sake. It acknowledges that film production and tourism are interconnected drivers of economic vitality and global visibility.

By empowering the Hawaii Tourism Authority to market and promote film production, the Legislature positions Hawai'i to strengthen economic diversification, enhance global competitiveness, and maximize the long-term branding impact of every production that chooses to film here.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify. **We respectfully urge the Committees to PASS HB 2268 HD1.**



February 24, 2025

Committee on Economic Finance
Chair Todd
Vice Chair Takenouchi

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

RE: [HB 2268 HD 1 RELATING TO FILM PRODUCTION](#)

DATE: Thursday, February 26, 2026

TIME: 10:00 am

PLACE: VIA Videoconference

State Capitol 415 South Beretania Street, Honolulu HI

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of [HB 2268 HD 1 RELATING TO FILM PRODUCTION](#).

SAG-AFTRA represents over 1400 actors, recording artists, and media professionals in our state. We are the professional performers working in front of the camera and behind the microphone.

Making movies (and TV) isn't just about art, it is storytelling that drives economic engines. By adding the marketing and promotion of film productions filmed in the state as a power of the Hawai'i Tourism Authority, we contribute fuel to the economic engine of tourism. Currently, our film industry is a "silent partner" in our tourism strategy. By explicitly including film in HTA's marketing mandate, we are able to find ways to capitalize on that partnership.

Respectfully,

Mericia Palma Elmore

Mericia Palma Elmore, Executive Director SAG-AFTRA Hawaii Local

Mericia Palma Elmore, Executive Director
SAG-AFTRA Hawaii Local
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SCREEN ACTORS GUILD - AMERICAN
FEDERATION OF
TELEVISION AND RADIO ARTISTS
SAGAFTRA.org
Associated Actors & Artistes of America / AFL-CIO

HB-2268-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2026 12:18:31 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Angela Young	CARES Community Advocacy Research Education Services	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Support

HB-2268-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 10:32:08 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I submit this testimony in STRONG OPPOSITION to HB2268 HD1.

This measure adds the authority to “market and promote film productions” to the [Hawaii Tourism Authority](#) without guardrails, metrics, reporting requirements, or defined coordination with existing film functions under DBEDT and the [Hawaii Film Office](#). That is an expansion of power without accountability.

Film production is not tourism branding. It is an operational economic sector that depends on workforce depth, infrastructure, permitting reliability, and cost certainty. This bill does nothing to strengthen those fundamentals. Instead, it risks duplication, mixed messaging, and consultant-driven marketing efforts while real production bottlenecks remain unresolved.

Without required performance measures—such as productions secured, local hire percentages, neighbor island impact, or local vendor spend—there is no way for the Legislature or the public to evaluate whether this authority produces meaningful results.

If the intent is to grow Hawai‘i’s film industry, the focus should be on measurable economic development tools and clear interagency coordination—not vague promotional language placed inside an agency whose core mission is tourism management.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to DEFER this measure or amend it to include mandatory coordination, defined funding limits, and annual outcome reporting tied to job creation and local economic impact.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

HB-2268-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 10:58:16 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aye! Yes! Please, vote Yes!

Brining film production up in the state for the betterment of all businesses. The money stays here.

HB-2268-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 2:50:19 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 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 2268.

HB-2268-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2026 11:57:34 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2026 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha. I am writing in strong support of this legislation which is intended to strengthen this important industry that is undergoing significant challenges and, ultimately, the very businesses, individuals, contractors, who contribute to Hawaii's creative industry. I also acknowledge and have read previous testimony regarding the opposition to the bill when it was heard by the Tourism Committee. The primary opposition ultimately, is about the administration and stewardship of this significant sector under the auspices of the Hawaii Tourism Authority. I humbly request for your support and passage of this bill and to consider amendments with regards to issues raised about the administration and appropriate support and oversight within HTA and, ultimately, Department of Business Economic Development and Tourism. Aloha.