

Written Statement of
Trung Lam, Executive Director

before the
Senate Committee on Economic Development and Tourism

Thursday, March 19, 2026
1:00 pm
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

In consideration of
HB2545, HD1
RELATING TO THE HAWAII TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

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

As the state agency dedicated to advancing Hawai'i's innovation ecosystem, the Hawai'i Technology Development Corporation (HTDC) recognizes HB2545 HD1 as a critical step toward strengthening the state's technology sector and diversifying its economy. The bill's focus on supporting small business innovation, STEM education, and comprehensive economic planning aligns directly with HTDC's mission to position Hawai'i as a leading hub for technology development, particularly in the space and ocean sectors.

HSBIR, MAP, and Accelerator are core programs of HTDC aimed at supporting research and development, commercialization, and training for growing companies in technology and innovation industries.

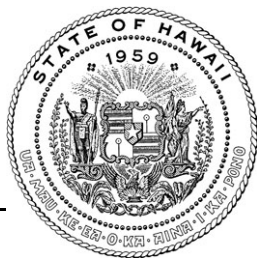
HTDC suggests that companies applying for match must meet additional criteria than what is currently in the bill. We recommend including in subsection (b), the requirements listed below which are already included in our current program:

- Be registered to do business in Hawai'i
- Be compliant in Hawai'i Compliance Express (HCE)
- Have project work done in Hawai'i
- Agree to complete NIST MEP and HTDC impact metrics surveys

In addition, we ask that approval period be extended from 30 days to 60 days to provide enough time to review all SBIR submissions during the application period.

HTDC respectfully urges the Committee to include the above recommended changes and to pass HB2545, HD1. Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.





**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS,
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**

KA 'OIHANA HO'OMOHALA PĀ'OIHANA, 'IMI WAIWAI
A HO'OMĀKA'IKA'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
LAURIE MCALLISTER MOORE
Executive Director
Military and Community Relations Office
Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism
before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

Thursday, March 19, 2026
1:00PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 229
TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB2545 HD1
RELATING TO THE HAWAII TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION.

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

On behalf of the Military and Community Relations Office (MACRO) within the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, I respectfully submit testimony in **strong support** of this measure.

As the HTDC's small business innovation research program has demonstrated quantitative success, MACRO supports HB2545 HD1 as it will utilize the Small Business Innovation Research Matching Program to establish STEM outreach and mandate a strategic plan for diversification – both of which are critical to Hawai'i's economy and security.

Section II(b) removes additional state-level technical reviews for companies that have already cleared the rigorous federal approval process, which will act as a fast-track approach, allowing local innovators to work at a more efficient pace.

The requirement for HTDC to develop an economic diversification strategic plan is timely. Hawai'i's unique geography and military presence offer a competitive advantage in the global innovation economy. By integrating STEM outreach with the Department of Education, we ensure that the high-wage jobs created by this bill will be filled by Hawai'i's own residents, fostering a sustainable local workforce to keep our keiki home.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

Date: 03/19/2026
Time: 01:00 PM
Location: CR 229 & Videoconference
Committee: EDT

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Title of Bill: HB2545, HD1, RELATING TO THE HAWAII TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION.

Purpose of Bill: Requires the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation to establish the Small Business Innovation Research Matching Program. Requires the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation, in collaboration with the Department of Education, to establish a STEM education outreach program. Requires and appropriates funds for the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation to develop an economic diversification strategic plan. Appropriates funds for economic diversification and defense ecosystem development. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

Department's Position:

The Hawai'i State Department of Education (Department) appreciates the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2545 HD1. This bill directs the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation to establish a STEM education outreach program to be conducted in collaboration with the Department, including coordination to schedule presentations and identify appropriate schools and grade levels.

Efforts that increase student awareness of STEM careers and programs of study can help build meaningful connections between classroom learning and workforce pathways in our state. The Department appreciates the intent of the bill and encourages continued clarity regarding roles, expectations, and implementation support as the measure advances. Presentations during the instructional day should support student learning and minimize disruption to core instruction.

The Department defers to the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation regarding the implementation of this bill.

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

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

**Thursday, March 19, 2026, at 1:00PM
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference**

RE: HB2545 HD1 Relating to the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation

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

My name is Sherry Menor, President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber"). The Chamber supports House Bill 2545 House Draft 1 (HB2545 HD1), which requires the Hawai'i Technology Development Corporation to establish the Small Business Innovation Research Matching Program; requires the Hawai'i Technology Development Corporation, in collaboration with the Department of Education, to establish a STEM education outreach program; requires and appropriates funds for the Hawai'i Technology Development Corporation to develop an economic diversification strategic plan; and appropriates funds for economic diversification and defense ecosystem development.

HB2545 HD1 aligns with our 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii: An Economic Action Plan, specifically under the policy pillar for Small Business. By establishing the SBIR Matching Program, the state can continue to help these important innovation companies grow scale and retain local talent. Access to capital is a consistent barrier to growth for our small business. Access to capital remains top priority for the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii's Small Business policy pillar. HTDC's efforts at economic diversification and small business support have yielded significant financial return and continue to be an attractive investment by the state.

The Chamber strongly supports the education component of this legislation, requiring recipients of SBIR match funds to work in collaboration with UH to provide presentations to public school students showcasing their work in innovation and technology development. Encouragement towards these careers is crucial for retaining our local workforce and carrying the momentum of state investments in research and development. This component of the legislation increases the states return of investment for SBIR, with feedback loops enriching public school education and workforce development.

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii is the state's leading business advocacy organization, dedicated to improving Hawaii's economy and securing Hawaii's future for growth and opportunity. Our mission is to foster a vibrant economic climate. As such, we support initiatives and policies that align with the 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii that create opportunities to strengthen overall competitiveness, improve the quantity and skills of available workforce, diversify the economy, and build greater local wealth.

We respectfully ask to pass House Bill 2545 House Draft 1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



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Eddie Asato, Pint Size Hawaii, *Advisor*
Gary Okimoto, Safeway, *Advisor*
Maile Miyashiro, C&S Wholesale, *Immediate Past Chair*

TO: Committee on Economic Development and Tourism

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: March 19, 2026

TIME: 1pm

RE: HB2545 HD1 Relating to Hawaii Technology Development Corporation

Position: Support

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

HFIA is in support of this measure for the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation (HTDC) to establish the Small Business Innovation Research Matching Program, for to establish a STEM education outreach program and to develop an economic diversification strategic plan

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

These new HTDC programs can help small businesses in our state grow and thrive. Research, innovation, and STEM education will create and stronger more diverse economy for Hawaii. We urge the Committee to pass this measure and we thank you for the opportunity to testify.



Written Statement of
DR. PATRICK SULLIVAN
FOUNDER & CEO, OCEANIT

Before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

Thursday, March 19, 2026
1:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 229 and Videoconference

In Support of
**HB2545 HD1 RELATING TO THE HAWAII TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT
CORPORATION**

To: Chair Senator Lynn DeCoite, Vice Chair Senator Glen Wakai, and Members of the Committee

From: Dr. Patrick Sullivan, Founder & CEO, OCEANIT

Re: Testimony in Support of HB2545 HD1

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

Oceanit Laboratories, Inc. strongly supports HB2545 HD1, which establishes a permanent \$5 million appropriation for Hawai'i's Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) matching program. For over 40 years, Oceanit has been a Hawai'i-based technology and innovation company, developing solutions in defense, energy, healthcare, and infrastructure. We have direct experience with federal SBIR awards and understand how critical state matching support is for growing innovation companies and creating high-wage jobs here in Hawai'i.

The Economic Opportunity: Hawai'i's economy faces significant headwinds: UHERO projects slow growth in 2026 with declining tourism and federal workforce reductions. Economic diversification is not optional; it is essential. The federal SBIR program, often called "America's Seed Fund," offers a proven pathway. Unlike venture capital, which concentrates in established tech hubs, SBIR awards are merit-based and available to any qualified small business nationwide. The National Academies of Sciences found that states underserved by venture capital, like Hawai'i, benefit disproportionately from SBIR programs. Federal SBIR/STTR programs distribute over \$4 billion annually. This bill helps Hawai'i companies compete for those dollars.

Proven Results: Hawai'i has operated the nation's longest-running state SBIR matching program since 1988, 37 years of proven performance. In FY25, the program's \$1.5 million state investment leveraged \$13.22 million in federal SBIR awards. That funding supported 144 jobs in Hawai'i, with 62% paying over \$80,000 annually. The National Academies documented that SBIR firms attract more than four dollars in additional federal R&D funding for every dollar invested, and firms receiving state matching support show higher rates of follow-on federal contracts, patent generation, and successful technology commercialization.

The Problem: The program works, but it is severely underfunded. Current funding means Phase II and Phase III companies, those closest to commercialization and large-scale job creation, receive only 25% of the matching support the program is designed to provide. In FY25, five applicants received no funding at all. Companies that could create high-wage jobs in Hawai'i are being turned away or underfunded because the state appropriation cannot meet demand.

What HB2545 HD1 Does: This bill provides \$5 million as a permanent annual appropriation, enough to fully fund current applicants at program caps while maintaining modest capacity for growth. Critically, the bill streamlines administration by eliminating duplicative state technical review. Companies that have already won competitive federal SBIR awards have demonstrated technical and business merit through a rigorous federal evaluation process; requiring a second state-level review adds delay without value. The bill also establishes pro-rata distribution when demand exceeds funds, ensuring all eligible applicants receive support.

Investing in the Next Generation: HB2545 HD1 requires grant recipients to deliver two STEM education presentations annually to Hawai'i public school students through a new HTDC-DOE partnership. At \$5 million funding with approximately 20-30 recipient companies, this generates 40-60 school presentations per year. This outreach shows students that high-wage innovation careers exist right here at home, building the workforce pipeline Hawai'i's technology sector needs to grow.

This legislation represents a commitment to building an economy based on ideas, innovation, and intellectual capital. It is a smart, proven investment with clear accountability measures and meaningful returns.

Oceanit urges the committee to pass HB2545 HD1.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE HAWAII TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the Hawaii
2 technology development corporation is advancing economic
3 diversification and strengthening the innovation economy by
4 supporting more than sixty-five small businesses, catalyzing the
5 creation of high-wage jobs, and fostering new research and
6 development in emerging sectors. The legislature further finds
7 that the small business innovation research program has
8 demonstrated measurable success, rising in national ranking from
9 ninth place in 2012 to 2014 to sixth place in 2022 to 2024 in
10 the country for small business innovation research funding per
11 \$1,000,000 gross domestic product. This shows a significant
12 economic return on investment. In 2024, the twenty-seven Hawaii
13 companies that received a total of \$2,500,000 in state funds
14 leveraged approximately \$33,000,000 in federal awards.

15 The legislature also finds that the high cost of living in
16 Hawaii necessitates the creation of higher-salary jobs in fields
17 such as artificial intelligence, computer software,



1 biotechnology, ocean science, renewable energy, nanotechnology,
2 medical testing and devices, aerospace, and defense.

3 The legislature additionally finds that states underserved
4 by venture-capital markets, including Hawaii, benefit
5 disproportionately from the federal Small Business Innovation
6 Research and Small Business Technology Transfer programs, which
7 help build regional innovation ecosystems. A 2026 review by the
8 National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine
9 concluded that these programs generate strong returns by
10 enabling participating firms to attract significant additional
11 federal research and development funding, serving as key entry
12 points into the defense innovation ecosystem, and supporting
13 higher rates of patenting, follow-on financing, and successful
14 technology transition—particularly for firms receiving multiple
15 awards. The review further found that companies receiving state
16 matching support are more likely to secure federal contracts,
17 generate intellectual property, and contribute to national
18 security capabilities.

19 The legislature notes that Hawaii's strategic Indo-Pacific
20 location, together with the presence of federal facilities,
21 military installations, and research institutions, presents



1 exceptional opportunities for Hawaii-based companies to
2 contribute to defense and dual-use technology development. The
3 federal competitive review process already provides rigorous
4 technical and business evaluation, and additional state-level
5 review would impose unnecessary administrative burden and delay
6 time-sensitive innovation.

7 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to promote economic
8 diversification by:

- 9 (1) Requiring the Hawaii technology development
10 corporation to establish the small business innovation
11 research matching program;
- 12 (2) Requiring the Hawaii technology development
13 corporation to establish a science, technology,
14 engineering, and mathematics education outreach
15 program in collaboration with the department of
16 education;
- 17 (3) Requiring the Hawaii technology development
18 corporation to develop an economic diversification
19 strategic plan for the State; and
- 20 (4) Appropriating funds.



1 SECTION 2. Chapter 206M, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
2 amended by adding a new section to part I to be appropriately
3 designated and to read as follows:

4 **"§206M- Small business innovation research matching**

5 **program.** (a) There is established within the development
6 corporation the small business innovation research matching
7 program to provide matching grants to companies based in the
8 State that have received federal small business innovation
9 research or small business technology transfer awards.

10 (b) Any company with a principal place of business in the
11 State that has received a federal phase I or phase II small
12 business innovation research and small business technology
13 transfer awards from any federal agency shall be eligible for
14 state matching funds under this section without additional state
15 technical or business review. Receipt of a federal small
16 business innovation research and small business technology
17 transfer award shall constitute sufficient evidence of technical
18 and business merit.

19 (c) New small business innovation research and small
20 business technology transfer participants and companies with



1 demonstrated track records in the programs shall be eligible for
2 matching funds under this section.

3 (d) State matching funds shall equal fifty per cent of the
4 federal small business innovation research and small business
5 technology transfer award amount.

6 (e) Companies shall submit an application to the
7 corporation within ninety days of receiving a federal small
8 business innovation research and small business technology
9 transfer award notification, including:

10 (1) A copy of the federal award notice;

11 (2) Documentation of the principal place of business
12 operating in the State;

13 (3) A brief description of how state matching funds will
14 be used to advance the project; and

15 (4) Acknowledgment of annual reporting requirements.

16 (f) The development corporation shall approve or deny
17 applications within thirty days of receipt. Companies meeting
18 eligibility requirements in subsection (b) shall be
19 automatically approved unless insufficient funds remain.

20 (g) The development corporation shall establish an annual
21 application period for matching fund requests. If applications



1 for matching funds exceed available appropriations, the
2 development corporation shall distribute funds as follows:

3 (1) All eligible applications received within the
4 application period shall be considered together;

5 (2) If total requested matching funds exceed available
6 funds, the corporation shall distribute available
7 funds on a pro-rata basis to all eligible applicants,
8 calculated proportionally based on each applicant's
9 requested matching amount relative to the total
10 requested matching funds; and

11 (3) Any funds remaining unallocated at the end of the
12 fiscal year may carry forward to the next fiscal year,
13 subject to any constitutional limitations and
14 applicable appropriation laws.

15 (h) The development corporation shall establish a science,
16 technology, engineering, and mathematics education outreach
17 program in collaboration with the department of education to
18 promote science, technology, engineering, and mathematics
19 education and career awareness. Under this program:

20 (1) Each company receiving matching funds pursuant to this
21 section shall deliver a minimum of two presentations



- 1 to public school students within one year of receiving
2 matching funds;
- 3 (2) Presentations shall showcase innovation and technology
4 development occurring in the State, describe career
5 pathways in science and technology fields, and
6 encourage students to pursue science, technology,
7 engineering, and mathematics education and careers;
8 and
- 9 (3) The development corporation shall coordinate with the
10 department of education to schedule presentations and
11 identify appropriate grade levels and schools, with
12 priority given to schools in underserved communities.
- 13 (i) The development corporation shall track and report
14 annually to the legislature no later than twenty days prior to
15 the convening of each regular session on:
- 16 (1) The total state matching funds provided and total
17 federal small business innovation research and small
18 business technology transfer awards leveraged;
- 19 (2) The number of applications received, approved, and
20 denied, including reasons for denial;
- 21 (3) The average time from application to approval;



- 1 (4) Distribution of awards by company;
- 2 (5) Any instances where insufficient funds required
- 3 equitable distribution measures under subsection (g);
- 4 (6) Follow-on federal research and development contracts
- 5 and procurement awards received by supported
- 6 companies;
- 7 (7) Number of phase I to phase II transitions;
- 8 (8) Patents filed and awarded;
- 9 (9) Private sector investment attracted;
- 10 (10) Jobs created and retained in the State, including the
- 11 number of jobs and salary ranges reported in the
- 12 following bands:
- 13 (A) Under \$50,000;
- 14 (B) \$50,000 to \$79,999;
- 15 (C) \$80,000 to \$99,999;
- 16 (D) \$100,000 to \$124,999;
- 17 (E) \$125,000 to \$149,999;
- 18 (F) \$150,000 to \$199,999; and
- 19 (G) \$200,000 or more;
- 20 (11) Technologies transitioned into defense or commercial
- 21 use;



- 1 (12) Partnerships established with defense prime
2 contractors and federal facilities;
- 3 (13) Geographic distribution of supported companies across
4 all counties;
- 5 (14) Total payroll dollars generated by supported companies
6 in the State;
- 7 (15) Company revenue growth, including total annual
8 revenues and percentage change from prior year;
- 9 (16) Number of science, technology, engineering, and
10 mathematics education presentations delivered to
11 public school students pursuant to subsection (h),
12 including the number of schools reached, students
13 engaged, and grade levels served;
- 14 (17) Technology sector and industry classification of
15 supported companies; and
- 16 (18) Return on investment ratio, calculated as total
17 federal funding secured per state dollar invested."

18 SECTION 3. (a) The Hawaii technology development
19 corporation shall develop an economic diversification strategic
20 plan for the State. The economic diversification strategic plan
21 shall include:



- 1 (1) Clear goals and objectives;
- 2 (2) Measurable outcomes and performance indicators; and
- 3 (3) Recommended timelines and actions to strengthen
- 4 emerging industries and high-wage job sectors.

5 (b) The Hawaii technology development corporation shall
 6 submit the strategic plan and any proposed legislation to the
 7 legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
 8 the regular session of 2027.

9 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
 10 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
 11 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2026-2027 for
 12 economic diversification and defense ecosystem development
 13 pursuant to this Act, to be allocated as follows:

14 (1) \$ for the Hawaii small business innovation
 15 research matching program established in section 2 of
 16 this Act;

17 (2) \$ for the Hawaii technology development
 18 corporation to develop an economic diversification
 19 strategic plan pursuant to section 3 of this Act;

20



- 1 (3) § for the manufacturing assistance program,
2 to help Hawaii-based manufacturers become globally
3 competitive and support the scale-up and transition of
4 technologies developed under the federal small
5 business innovation research and small business
6 technology transfer programs into production; and
- 7 (4) § for commercialization and technology
8 transition support, including:
- 9 (A) Accelerator and small business training programs
10 to help develop companies that are solving large-
11 scale problems in the community using innovative,
12 advanced manufacturing, and technology-based
13 solutions;
- 14 (B) Support for intellectual property protection,
15 market research, and business development
16 activities identified by the National Academies
17 of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine as
18 critical success factors for small business
19 innovation research and small business technology
20 transfer commercialization;



1 (C) Facilitation of partnerships between Hawaii small
2 business innovation research and small business
3 technology transfer companies and defense prime
4 contractors, acquisition program offices, and
5 research institutions to support technology
6 transition; and

7 (D) Assistance in navigating federal procurement
8 processes and transitioning technologies into
9 programs of record.

10 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the Hawaii
11 technology development corporation for the purposes of this Act.

12 SECTION 5. New statutory material is underscored.

13 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000.



Report Title:

HTDC; Small Business Innovation Research Matching Program; STEM Education Outreach Program; Economic Diversification Strategic Plan; Appropriations

Description:

Requires the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation to establish the Small Business Innovation Research Matching Program. Requires the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation, in collaboration with the Department of Education, to establish a STEM education outreach program. Requires and appropriates funds for the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation to develop an economic diversification strategic plan. Appropriates funds for economic diversification and defense ecosystem development. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.



**TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL NO 2545 HD1, RELATING TO
THE HAWAII TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

Position: **Strong support**

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

Please accept this testimony in **strong support** of this bill, to establish a permanent annual appropriation for Hawaii's SBIR matching program.

Simonpietri Enterprises LLC is an O'ahu-based small business that is working to develop solutions for wastes generated in Hawai'i. We have received several federal SBIR awards over the past 5 years which have allowed us to expand our team and continue progressing our work to develop sustainable solutions for Hawai'i's challenging wastes.

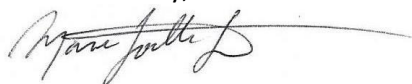
We are committed to the STEM education outreach requirement and have been partnered with the University of Hawai'i Schools (College of Engineer, College of Tropical Agriculture & Human Resiliency, Shidler School of Business, and West O'ahu) to offer paid STEM and field adjacent internships, paying higher than average wages to interns with a focus recruiting local undergraduate students. Hawai'i's innovation economy needs a pipeline of local talent, and connecting students with successful technology companies helps build that pipeline.

Our company has directly benefited from Hawaii's current SBIR matching program, and we can attest to its impact. The state matching funds we received allowed us to support workforce development efforts through paid internships, five of whom are University of Hawaii undergraduate interns, three of whom are now full-time employees on our team and are earning over \$80,000 annually. We also applied for and received our first-ever patent and now are now working on four international patents.

The bill's streamlined administration is critical for small business technology advancement. We appreciate the amendment to the measure to accept the federal award as evidence of merit without requiring the need for additional state review. This decision is both efficient and appropriate.

We appreciate the opportunity to testify on this measure, and urge your support for **HB2545 HD1**.

Sincerely,



Marie-Joelle Simonpietri
President

[About Simonpietri Enterprises LLC](#)

Simonpietri Enterprises is a Kailua, Hawaii-based woman- and veteran-owned small business with ten employees, focused on technical innovation and first-of-kind project development of emerging clean and renewable technologies. Since founding in 2006, we have helped dozens of small and large industrial companies in Hawaii, the continental U.S., Australia, and Canada improve the environmental and economic sustainability of their operations through technical and business advice in renewable

energy conversion, waste reduction and re-use, and greenhouse gas lifecycle impact reduction. Simonpietri Enterprises' founder and employees have participated in the strategy, planning, design, financing, development, construction, and energy efficiency/greenhouse gas reduction/sustainability renovation for over \$400 million in new renewable and first-of-kind sustainable fuel projects over the past 15 years. Since launching the Aloha Carbon waste-to-fuel technical development process in August 2020, Simonpietri Enterprises is now developing renewable fuel production facilities in its own right, starting with the Aloha Sustainable Materials Recycling and Fertilizer Facility (SMRFF) in Kapolei, Hawaii to divert wastes generated in Honolulu from landfilling and transform it to renewable fuel, organic fertilizer, and recycled-material building products.

Statement of
Gregory Wong
Co-Founder and COO
WaiHome LLC
before the

Senate Committee on Economic Development and Tourism

Thursday, March 19, 2026 | 1:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

In consideration of
HB2545

RELATING TO HAWAII TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

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

WaiHome LLC stands in strong support of HB2545 HD1. As a Hawaii-based startup, our mission is to utilize our locally developed technology to solve one of our state's most pressing environmental and economic challenges: the 2050 cesspool conversion mandate.

We urge your support for this measure for the following reasons:

- **Solving Hawaii Problems with Local Innovation:** WaiHome was founded specifically to address the high cost and geographic difficulty of cesspool conversions in our islands. **The SBIR Matching Program has ensured that local companies like ours can build solutions designed specifically for Hawaii's unique environment**—rather than relying on mainland technology that often doesn't fit our local needs.
- **Leveraging Federal Investment for Local Jobs:** We have already successfully brought federal research dollars from the NSF and NOAA into the state. This money is spent directly in Hawaii, allowing us to **hire 4 high-skilled staff from our local workforce and establish permanent manufacturing facilities here.**
- **Diversifying the Economy & Inspiring the Next Generation:** We strongly support the STEM outreach requirement in this draft. This bill helps transition Hawaii from a tourism-dependent economy to a self-reliant innovation hub that protects our natural resources while creating high-wage careers.

WaiHome is proof that Hawaii's innovation sector can solve our own environmental challenges while diversifying our economy. I urge the committee to pass HB2545, HD1.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer these comments,



Gregory Wong
Co-founder and COO
WaiHome LLC



Senate Committee on Economic Development and Tourism

Thursday, March 19, 2026

1:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 229 & Videoconference

In consideration of

HB 2545 HD1

RELATING TO HAWAII TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee on Economic Development and Tourism.

Hawaii Fish Company (HFC) strongly supports HB 2545 HD1 that supports the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Matching Program to empower local technology companies to leverage federal research funding, accelerating commercialization and job creation in high-growth sectors such as aquaculture, aquaponics, renewable energy, biotechnology, and advanced manufacturing. This approach is consistent with best practices in technology-based economic development, where targeted matching programs have been shown to increase the competitiveness of small businesses and stimulate private investment. The bill's provisions directly support HTDC's core objectives by strengthening the innovation pipeline and developing a robust economic diversification strategy, and is the most comprehensive and supportive bill for Hawaii's SBIR technology sector to date!

Established in 1978, HFC is Hawaii's oldest land-based commercial fish farm, and a federal SBIR awardee and Hawaii SBIR matching grant awardee since 1993. In 2000, HFC was awarded the U.S. Small Business Administration's Tibbitts Award as a national model of excellence for the SBIR program and inducted into the SBIR Hall of Fame in Washington DC. Our continuing SBIR success, with fourteen awards to date, has been made possible by the HTDC training workshops and supplemental research support received from the HSBIR matching grant program.

As recent examples of the benefits of the HSBIR matching grant program, HFC was able to utilize two Phase I matching grant awards received in 2022 and 2023, totaling \$82K, to successfully compete for two Phase II awards with the U.S. Department of Energy and U.S. Department of Agriculture totaling \$1.8M to support sustainable aquaculture and aquaponic food production in Hawai'i and nationally. We were awarded our U.S. patent for our aquaculture technology in January 2026.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of HB2545 HD1.



MAUI
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
VOICE OF BUSINESS

LATE

**HEARING BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, SENATE CONFERENCE ROOM 229
THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 2026 AT 1:00 P.M.**

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

SUPPORT HB2545 HD1 RELATING TO THE HAWAII TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT CORP.

The Maui Chamber of Commerce recognizes the importance of HB2545 HD1 in supporting small businesses, fostering innovation, and building a more resilient and diverse economy. The proposed initiatives—establishing a Small Business Innovation Research Matching Program, launching a STEM education outreach program, and developing an economic diversification strategic plan—are directly aligned with our priorities to strengthen the state’s economic foundation and ensure long-term prosperity for residents and businesses. Therefore, we support HB2545 HD1.

The bill’s focus on supporting small business innovation is timely and critical, especially as many local businesses continue to recover from recent economic disruptions. By providing matching funds for research and development, the measure encourages entrepreneurship and investment in high-growth sectors, which can lead to job creation and higher incomes. Additionally, the collaboration between the Hawai’i Technology Development Corporation and the Department of Education to promote STEM education will help develop a skilled workforce, positioning Hawai’i to compete in technology-driven industries and attract new investment.

We also strongly support the bill’s emphasis on economic diversification. We have seen the demonstrated risks of overreliance on a single industry, and a strategic plan for diversification is essential to building resilience against future shocks. By investing in sectors such as technology, creative industries, manufacturing, and defense ecosystem development, Hawai’i can broaden its economic base and create more opportunities for residents.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share our support of HB2545 HD1.

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.