



**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
GEORJA SKINNER
Division Chief, Creative Industries
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the
COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TECHNOLOGY

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

In consideration of
HB2590
RELATING TO TAXATION

Chair Ilagan, Vice Chair Hussey, and members of the Committee. Creative Industries (CID), a division of the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) supports HB 2590, which imposes the manufacturing general excise tax rate on motion picture, digital media, and film productions; repeals the provision in the definition of “qualified production costs” that applied the term to costs subject to the highest general excise tax rate; and exempts from the general excise tax amounts received by a motion picture project employer from a client company that are disbursed for employee wages, salaries, payroll taxes, insurance premiums, employment benefits, and payments to loan-out companies.

When the majority of film and television series production left the state in summer 2024, an additional impact from the GET cost on motion picture project employers became a dis-incentive for attracting productions to the state. This included a major feature film pulling up stakes and moving the production elsewhere.

This measure seeks to exclude payroll pass-through reimbursements from taxable income, removes structural disadvantages faced by productions operating in Hawai'i and improves the State's competitiveness as a production destination. While this provision is not included in DBEDT's administrative measures, SB3088 and HB2269, the department supports the clarification.

Aligning Hawai'i's tax treatment with standard industry payroll practices reduces administrative friction, compliance risk, and cost uncertainty for productions. By improving predictability and reducing barriers, HB 2590 strengthens the overall effectiveness of Hawai'i's film tax credit program and complements DBEDT's broader policy objectives to enhance industry competitiveness, attract sustained production investment, and support a stable local workforce.

Such improvements directly support workforce stability, enhance production planning certainty, and reinforce Hawai'i's position as a viable long-term production location. CID will defer to the Department of Taxation regarding the fiscal impact of the proposed tax changes, revenue implications and any technical administration considerations. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



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

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

In consideration of
HB2590
RELATING TO TAXATION

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

The Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism (DBEDT) supports HB 2590, which modernizes the State's tax treatment of motion picture, digital media, and film production activities.

HB 2590 makes two important structural changes that strengthen Hawai'i's competitiveness as a production location:

1. Aligning film and digital media production with the manufacturing General Excise Tax (GET) classification, and
2. Providing a GET exemption for payroll pass-through amounts handled by motion picture project employers.

Together, these provisions address cost drivers that directly influence whether large-scale productions choose Hawai'i over competing jurisdictions.

Film and television production operate much like advanced manufacturing:

- It assembles labor, technology, and physical inputs
- It produces a finished product for global distribution
- The primary revenues are generated outside Hawai'i, with local spending functioning as export-based economic activity

This structure aligns with DBEDT's strategy to diversify Hawai'i's economy toward high-value, export-driven sectors, including creative industries, digital media, and content production.

Other leading production jurisdictions recognize film and digital production as an industrial sector and structure tax systems accordingly. Aligning Hawai'i's tax framework with these models improves the State's ability to compete for large-budget productions that bring significant local spending, skilled workforce development, infrastructure utilization, and long-term industry anchoring. Major productions frequently use payroll service companies ("motion picture project employers") to manage hiring and compliance for cast and crew. HB 2590 exempts from GET those amounts received by such employers that are passed through for:

- Wages and salaries
- Payroll taxes
- Insurance
- Employee benefits
- Payments to loan-out companies

These funds do not represent profit to the payroll company and function as administrative pass-throughs. Providing this exemption brings film payroll treatment in line with similar employer-of-record structures in other industries and removes a layer of cost that can otherwise disadvantage Hawai'i in competitive bidding decisions.

Production costs nationwide have increased significantly in recent years due to labor, materials, logistics, and insurance. At the same time, competing states and countries have refined their tax structures to reduce embedded production costs. While Hawai'i offers unique locations and a skilled workforce, cost differentials remain a decisive factor in site selection. Structural tax alignment such as that proposed in HB 2590 helps ensure Hawai'i remains a viable option for feature films, episodic television, streaming content, and digital media production. This measure complements, rather than replaces, other policy tools aimed at maintaining a sustainable and competitive production ecosystem.

DBEDT and the Hawai'i Film Office support the economic development objectives of this measure. Matters related to tax administration, fiscal impact, and implementation mechanics fall within the purview of the Department of Taxation and other relevant agencies, and DBEDT defers to those departments on those specific issues.

HB 2590 supports Hawai'i's transition toward a more diversified economy by strengthening the tax framework for one of the State's most export-oriented creative industries. By aligning production tax treatment with industrial practices and reducing payroll-related friction, this bill improves Hawai'i's ability to attract and retain high-value film and digital media projects. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

JOSH GREEN M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION

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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. 2590, 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. 2590 for your consideration.

H.B. 2590, under Section 1, amends the motion picture, digital media, and film production income tax credit (aka the "film tax credit") by removing the requirements in the definition of "qualified production costs" under section 235-17(o), Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), that the costs incurred are subject to the general excise tax "at the highest rate of tax," and subject to income tax "if the costs are not subject to general excise tax."

Under Section 2 of the bill, section 237-13(1)(A), HRS is then amended so that the imposition of tax on manufacturers at the 0.5 percent rate includes "production as defined in section 235-17."

Additionally, Section 3 of the bill amends section 237-24.75, HRS, by adding a new subsection (4), which acts to exempt amounts received by a motion picture employer from a client company that are equal to amounts paid by the motion picture

employer for employee wages, salaries, payroll taxes, insurance premiums, and benefits including retirement, vacation, sick leave, health benefits, and similar employment benefits for motion picture project workers, and payments made to loan-out companies.

“Motion picture project employer” and “motion picture project worker” are defined as having the same meanings as in section 3512 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.

The bill is effective upon approval, with the Section 1 amendment applicable for tax years beginning after December 31, 2026, and Sections 2 and 3 amendments applicable beginning on and after January 1, 2027.

For taxpayer clarity in determining what costs are exempt with these changes, and departmental ability to administer and verify the film tax credit amounts, DOTAX requests the following amendment to the added language in the bill:

“Amounts received by a motion picture project employer from a client company equal to amounts that are disbursed by the motion picture project employer for employee wages, salaries, payroll taxes, insurance premiums, and benefits, including retirement, vacation, sick leave, health benefits, and similar employment benefits with respect to motion picture project workers at a client company and for payments to loan-out companies.

The exemption shall apply only to amounts that are separately stated and documented as reimbursements for actual wages, payroll taxes, insurance premiums, and benefits paid to motion picture project workers or loan-out companies and shall not apply to other amounts, including service fees, administrative fees, or markups.

As used in this paragraph, “motion picture project employer” and “motion picture project worker” have the same meanings as in section 3512 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.”

Additionally, DOTAX recommends that section 237-30.7, which requires persons making payments to loan-out companies at the highest rate of tax, be amended to require that the withholding be calculated based on the rate under section 237-13(1)(A). Otherwise, the withholding on loan-out companies will exceed the amount actually due.

DOTAX further recommends that the effective date for section 1 of the bill be amended to apply to costs incurred after December 31, 2026.

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



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 2590 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 2590 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

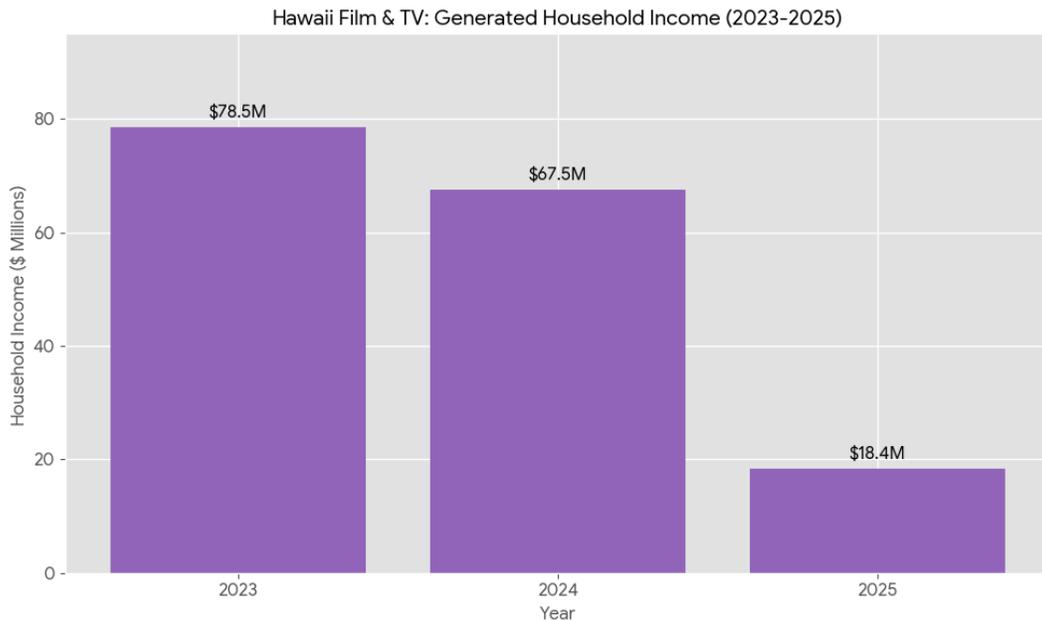
¹<https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/annuals/2025/2025-cid-act217.pdf>

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

Mericia Palma Elmore, JD/MLSc
Executive Director
SAG-AFTRA Hawai'i Local
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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 2590 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/>

TAX FOUNDATION OF HAWAII

735 Bishop Street, Suite 417

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 Tel. 536-4587

SUBJECT: INCOME, GENERAL EXCISE, Restores Manufacturing Rate for Media Production Companies and Exempts Payroll Reimbursement from MPPSC Entities

BILL NUMBER: SB 2796, HB 2590

INTRODUCED BY: SB by DECOITE; HB by QUINLAN, KAPELA, KEOHOKAPU-LEE LOY, KILA, KUSCH, MARTEN, PERRUSO, POEPOE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Imposes the manufacturing general excise tax rate on motion picture, digital media, and film productions and repeals the provision in the definition of "qualified production costs" that applied the term to mean costs incurred that are subject to the highest general excise tax rate. Exempts from the general excise tax amounts received by a motion picture project employer from a client company equal to amounts that are disbursed by the motion picture project employer for employee wages, salaries, payroll taxes, insurance premiums, and employment benefits and payments to loan-out companies.

SYNOPSIS: Amends section 235-17, HRS, to delete the requirement that qualified production costs be subject to the highest rate of general excise tax.

Amends section 237-13(1), HRS, to include within the manufacturing rate production as defined in section 235-17.

Amends section 237-24.75, HRS, by adding a new paragraph (4) that exempts amounts received by a motion picture project employer from a client equal to amounts that are disbursed by the motion picture project employer for employee wages, salaries, payroll taxes, insurance premiums, and benefits, including retirement, vacation, sick leave, health benefits, and similar employment benefits with respect to motion picture project workers at a client. The terms "motion picture project employer", "client", and "motion picture project worker" shall have the same meaning as in section 3512 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended.

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2027; income tax provisions effective for taxable years beginning after December 31, 2026.

STAFF COMMENTS: The proposed amendments restore key elements of the general excise tax treatment of media production as they existed prior to 2021.

Production tax treatment has been the subject of many flip-flops in position:

- 2007-08: Proposed Administrative Rules
 - DOTAX publishes comprehensive proposed Administrative Rules that categorize motion picture production as manufacturing.

- 2019: Flip-Flop #1
 - Upending 10-year reliance on published guidance, DOTAX secretly revokes 2007-08 and other guidance (explained later in 2021) and starts enforcing changed position.
- 2020-21: Flip-Flop #2
 - DOTAX audits EP, one of the motion picture payroll companies. Asserts 9-figure GET deficiency because of payroll issue.
- 2022: Act 217, SLH 2022
 - Tax credit amended to disallow production expenses subject to GET at 0.5%.

With regard to the proposed exemption for motion picture project employers:

The legislature enacted exemptions specific to several discrete industries. Act 175, SLH 1988 (section 237-23.5b), HRS), provides that the GET does not apply to common paymasters reimbursed by related corporations that actually employ the workers paid. Act 351, SLH 1989 (section 237-24.7(1), HRS), provides that the GET does not apply to amounts received for employee wages, salaries, payroll taxes, insurance premiums, and benefits, including retirement, vacation, sick pay, and health benefits, by a hotel operator. Act 252, SLH 1992 (section 237-24.7(4), HRS), provides that the GET does not apply to similar amounts received by an orchard operator. Act 214, SLH 1998 (section 237-24.7(8), HRS), provides that the GET does not apply to similar amounts received by a management company from related entities selling telecommunications services.

In addition, per section 237-24.75(3), HRS, the GET does not apply to similar amounts received by a professional employer organization (PEO) registered with DLIR.

Tax Information Release 2024-04 states that the GET applies to ALL amounts that a production payroll service company receives from a film production company. Here is an example of how that affects productions, taken from a release from one such production service company:

This change means that our clients with Hawaii production activity will see an appreciable increase in XXX's GET charge on Hawaii-related payroll invoices issued on or after the XXXXX, 2024 cutover date. As an example, a Hawaii production's \$1 million total gross payroll invoices with a \$20,000 net payroll handling fee would include a \$45,000 GET charge (4.5% x \$1M gross) after the XXXXXX, 2024 cutover instead of a \$900 GET charge (4.5% x \$20,000 net) under existing practice.

We have previously seen instances of DOTAX flip-flopping on the film industry, as noted in the list above and in the article reprinted below. All taxpayers, not just this industry, should be entitled to reasonable certainty in tax treatment, justifying the changes proposed.

More Taxes for Movies and TV

by [Tom Yamachika](#) | posted in: [Weekly Commentary](#) | March 1, 2021

We have been railing for some weeks now about the goings-on at our Legislature. This week we spotlight the Department of Taxation.

On February 16th, the Department published a [Tax Information Release](#), a public statement of interpretation of the law, relating to the TV and movie production industry. To understand that release, we need to go into a little background first.

When we see Hawaii's General Excise Tax or GET, it is usually on a sales receipt and the tax shown is 4.712% or 4.166%, depending on the island you are on. That rate is driven by what we call the retail tax rate, which is applied to sales from a seller to an end user.

The GET also is applied to intermediate stage products and services, namely those that are sold not to an end user but to a retailer, or someone further up the production chain. For example, consider a farmer selling vegetables to a market, or a fashion designer selling artwork to a manufacturer who will be making aloha shirts with that artwork. There, the GET is imposed at the "wholesale rate" of 0.5% instead.

When movie and TV productions are made, not all of the people participating in the production are on the payroll. A few, such as principal cast, the director, and others in key roles like the director of photography, are independent contractors to the production. Many of them have entities they own, known as "loan-out entities," which then contract out to the production.

What, then, is the GET rate that applies when a loan-out entity is paid by the production company?

In 2008, the Department of Taxation published proposed rules containing several key GET interpretations. In Proposed Admin. Rule sections 18-237-13-01.01(b) and 18-237-13(6)-10(b), which appeared in [Tax Information Release 2008-02](#), the Department said that a production company is in the business of manufacturing, and a loan-out entity providing services to the production company qualified for the 0.5% wholesale rate. The proposed rules were repropoed in modified form in [Tax Information Release 2009-05](#), but in the same proposed rule sections the Department reaffirmed that the GET interpretations above were still good and could be relied upon by taxpayers.

During the next ten years, the Department decided not to finalize these proposed rules, instead publishing revised temporary rules that only addressed the income tax credit for productions and did not include any GET rules. After finalizing the rules, the Department published an [Announcement](#) in November 2019 ostensibly to summarize the rules that were adopted, but it added a note, seemingly out of right field, saying that a "production company is not considered to be in the business of 'manufacturing' [for GET purposes]."

[Tax Information Release 2021-01](#), the interpretation published on February 16, explains that "the Department reviewed its position on deeming a motion picture or television film production

company to be engaged in the business of manufacturing. Through this review, the Department determined that this prior position was inappropriate.” In other words, the Department changed its mind, and loan-out entities are now taxable at the full retail GET rate. Neither the Release nor the prior announcement showed any reasoning from the applicable law (which did not change in the meantime) even attempting to justify the Department’s about-face.

“I am altering the deal,” the Department is effectively saying. “Pray I don’t alter it any further.”

Folks, this is Hawaii, not “The Empire Strikes Back.” The Department is given authority to make published pronouncements and adopt rules so people know and can plan business activities that follow the law. If the law changes because of legislative action or a court decision, that’s one thing. Or if the Department made a mistake in coming to its earlier ruling and can explain what the mistake was and why it was wrong, maybe that is okay as well. But changing the rules in midstream just because someone feels like it sends the message that the Department can act arbitrarily. We need our government to keep its word, give adequate notice of any material changes, and rein in any Vaderesque action.

Digested: 2/4/2026

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 8:26:05 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,

My name is Aubrey Staley, and I submit testimony in strong support of HB 2590 on behalf of my talent agency and the local film professionals we serve.

HB 2590 is critical to leveling the playing field for Hawai‘i’s film industry by returning the General Excise Tax treatment of film production to the manufacturing classification. This change reduces structural cost disadvantages that currently make Hawai‘i less competitive compared to other production hubs.

Film production is a manufacturing process, ne that generates wages, contracts, tourism exposure, and long-term economic impact. Treating it accordingly helps ensure Hawai‘i remains attractive to productions while supporting local talent and crew.

Without GET relief, Hawai‘i risks losing productions to other states and countries that offer more favorable and modernized tax structures. HB 2590 directly addresses this issue in a practical and impactful way.

This bill supports economic growth, workforce stability, and Hawai‘i’s ability to compete on a national and global level.

Thank you for your consideration.

Mahalo,
Aubrey Staley
Owner of ALA Hawaii

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 8:34:44 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Henry Fordham	IATSE LOCAL 665	Support	In Person

Comments:

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

My name is Henry Fordham. 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 2590**, Relating to taxation.

The changes proposed in HB 2590 will protect local jobs for local working families. By exempting amounts disbursed for local employee wages, salaries, taxes, and benefits from the GET, as well as applying the lower manufacturing GET rate to film production, this bill makes hiring Hawai'i talent a more financially viable choice for productions.

Hawai'i's film industry supports thousands of working families in the state of Hawai'i. These thriving wage jobs are irreplaceable by other industries. When the film tax incentive is empowered, this industry contributes significantly to state GDP, earnings, and even visitor spending. When the film tax incentive is restrained, we not only lose the economic benefits of the industry, but we also lose the ability to tell our own stories. To remain competitive in the global market, it is imperative that Hawai'i strengthens and stabilizes the film tax incentive program. HB 2590 will support thousands of working families in Hawai'i.

I strongly support HB 2590. I urge your committee to do the same. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,

Henry Fordham

IATSE Mixed Local 665

Executive Board

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 2590 Relating to Taxation

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 2590**, which imposes the manufacturing general excise tax rate on motion picture, digital media, and film productions and repeals the provision in the definition of "qualified production costs" that applied the term to mean costs incurred that are subject to the highest general excise tax rate. The measure also exempts from the general excise tax amounts received by a motion picture project employer from a client company that are disbursed for employee wages, salaries, payroll taxes, insurance premiums, employment benefits, and payments to loan-out companies.

HB 2590 provides critical clarity and consistency in the tax treatment of film and television productions and more accurately reflects how these project-based productions operate in practice. By distinguishing production revenues from pass-through workforce and payroll costs, the bill promotes transparency and fair tax treatment while avoiding unintended burdens on employment.

For West O'ahu, where film and television activity has supported small businesses and local jobs, clear and predictable tax policy is an important component of maintaining a competitive production environment.

The Kapolei Chamber of Commerce appreciates the thoughtful approach reflected in HB 2590 and respectfully urges your support of 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 STRONG SUPPORT OF HB 2590
RELATING TO TAXATION

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

Mahalo, Representative Ilagan, for scheduling HB 2590 and allowing us to testify on this measure. The Hawai'i Film Alliance (HFA) submits this testimony in **strong support of HB 2590**.

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 that enable films to operate locally.

One of the most significant cost concerns facing film and television productions in Hawai'i is the current application of the General Excise Tax (GET) to payroll. When productions remit payroll funds to a payroll service, those payments are subject to GET, and the same wages are later subject to income tax withholding before workers are paid. Films that shoot here will have to trim total shoot days to cover the higher cost of the payroll.

HB 2590 will help bring mainland production money to the islands and ensure those funds flow into Hawai'i's economy through local labor and businesses. This bill is not about lowering taxes for corporate studios; it is about stopping the practice of overtaxing local workers' wages.

Alongside other measures aimed at improving the state's film industry, HB 2590 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 2590**.



MOTION PICTURE ASSOCIATION

House Bill 2590 – MEMO IN SUPPORT

The Motion Picture Association (MPA) and its members are pleased to support House Bill 2590 (HB 2590 or the Bill). The Bill will make Hawai'i's Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Tax Credit program more effective in attracting motion picture, television and streaming production projects to the state and the good middle class jobs created by these productions. MPA is a not-for-profit trade association founded in 1922 to address issues of concern to the motion picture industry. Since that time, MPA has advanced the business and art of storytelling, protected the creative and artistic freedoms of storytellers and brought entertainment and inspiration to audiences worldwide. The MPA's members are: Amazon Studios, LLC, Netflix Studios, LLC, Paramount Pictures Corporation, Sony Pictures Entertainment Inc., Universal City Studios LLC, Walt Disney Studios Motion Pictures, and Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc.

HB 2590 addresses three issues. **First**, the Bill ensures that payroll service companies will be assessed General Excise Tax (GET) on only that portion of their receipts that is attributed to the service fee paid by their customers, film and television production companies, and not on the amounts that are paid out to production workers, as well as the applicable taxes and other fringe benefit payments¹. In addressing this first issue, the bill restores the GET treatment of payroll service companies from 2006 to approximately 2021, on which the film industry has relied for production and budgeting purposes.

Second, HB 2590 restores the classification of motion picture and television production as “manufacturing.” From the inception of the production tax credit program in 2006 until 2019, film production was treated as manufacturing by DoTAX. The Department's published guidance, including Tax Information Release 2009-05,² stated that a motion picture or television production company was considered to be in the business of

¹ The bill provides that whether the payments are made directly to a film worker or the film worker's 'loan-out' company which is the professional service company that many creative personnel are hired through, the tax relief is consistently applied.

² DoTAX removed TIR 2009-05 from its website and instructed the Hawaii Film Office to do the same, in approximately April 2019.

manufacturing³, so long as the company was selling, leasing or otherwise exploiting the film product for profit.

That 2009 guidance was then and continues today to be an accurate assessment of motion picture and television production. The physical production of a movie or TV series encompasses many processes. Some examples include building sets, using raw materials that include lumber and paint, among other materials; creating costumes, using fabric, thread and other materials; utilizing practical locations for filming which will include the use of trucks and vehicles to transport cast, crew and equipment to the location; payment of wages to cast and crew through specialized payroll service companies. Only when all these components are undertaken successfully does the production process come to fruition and become a motion picture, or television or streaming program that can be sold or licensed or otherwise used commercially.

Furthermore, all motion picture and television productions are copyrighted. The Copyright Act, 17 U.S.C. § 102(a), states that copyright protection subsists in original authorship *fixed in any tangible medium of expression*. Thus, there must be some tangible medium of expression in which a production must be fixed, and the products, services, and effort that went into making it can be considered inputs to manufacture that tangible object.

The longstanding classification of production as manufacturing changed in 2019, upending more than a decade of settled expectations. See Tax Information Release [2021-01](#). The practical effect was the GET rate increased, from the lowest rate (.5%) to the highest rate (4%) for many elements of production, driving up the cost of production and making Hawai'i a less competitive motion picture production destination. By restoring the treatment of production as manufacturing, the GET rate can be reduced for the transactions associated with motion picture and television production, which will reduce the cost of production in Hawai'i and better position the state to compete for film and television production jobs.

And the **third** issue HB 2590 addresses is a repeal of a provision enacted in 2022, that changed the definition of “qualified production costs.” That change provided that only those productions transactions which were assessed GET at the highest rate would be eligible for the production tax credit. The repeal of this provision will ensure that costs of production can be assessed the lower GET rate and retain their status as qualified expenditures on the tax credit program. This will make Hawai'i's production tax credit

³ Manufacturing in Hawaii under the Gross Excise Tax includes activities broadly stated to include, ‘*canning, preserving, packing, printing, publishing, milling, **processing**, refining or preparing for sale, profit, or commercial use, any article, substance or commodity.*’

program more effective and attractive for film and television producers committed to filmmaking in Hawai'i.

HB 2590 incremental modifications to the taxation of the film industry in Hawai'i reverses legislative and administrative changes over recent years that eroded the state's competitive position and hindered efforts to attract and sustain film, television, and streaming production in an increasingly competitive global marketplace. For these reasons, MPA supports HB 2590 and urges the Committee's support for the Bill.

February 5, 2026

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 7:29:54 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. 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 HB2590.

The current state of the GET creates an unnecessary tax burden on productions and discourages production companies from filming and operating in Hawaii. With tighter 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.

HB2590 proposes to move the film and media production classification back under manufacturing for GET which will reduce the unnecessary tax burden on productions. This will make Hawaii more production-friendly, and will be more attractive to production companies looking for competitive locations that are fiscally feasible. Passing HB2590 is crucial to supporting a more sustainable film and television production industry in Hawaii. Networks, streamers, and producers like me will be able to hire more local people and vendors, spend more of our budget dollars in the state, and create a more robust career path for our keiki.

I urge you to pass HB2590 to encourage more film and television production, and to boost our local economies where everyone benefits from a robust film and television industry.

Sincerely,

Tyler Young

Creative Producer

Tyler Young Films LLC.

Honolulu, Hawaii

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 8:29:08 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ricardo Galindez	Island Film Group	Support	In Person

Comments:

Island Film Group is submitting this testimony in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 2590



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 HB2590 RELATING TO TAXATION

The Maui Chamber of Commerce recognizes the importance of policies that strengthen local industries, create jobs, and foster long-term resilience. We have long been supporters of the film industry and attracting more projects to Hawai'i. HB2590 is a key tool for building on Hawai'i's film industry, by providing the manufacturing GET rate to motion picture, digital media, and film productions.

The bill lowers the tax burden on film, digital media, and related productions, potentially making Hawai'i more competitive as a production location. This may attract more productions, increasing local spending, job creation, and economic activity.

We appreciate the Legislature's attention to economic diversification and respectfully urge continued support for measures that foster sustainable, broad-based growth.

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-2590

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 9:48:05 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daniel Rosner	Hawaii Media Inc.	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 the motion picture, digital media, and film production income tax credit.

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-2590

Submitted on: 2/6/2026 1:10:18 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-2590

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 8:46:14 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-2590

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 8:49:54 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:

Protects local jobs and makes hiring Hawaii talent a more financially viable choice for productions.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 9:43:08 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ivana Skelin	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Structural cost disadvantages need to be reduced in order to restore vitality to Hawai'i's rich, creative, world renowned film industry. We can't let it die on the vine! Other regions would do anything to have half the beauty and cinematic landscape and historical significance and talented community that Hawai'i has. Let's nurture what everyone has worked so hard to build over the years!!!

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 9:49:52 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:

It protects local jobs and makes hiring Hawaii talent a more financially viable choice for productions.

I also would like to include the food vendors. Keep it local as well.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 9:58:03 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-2590

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 10:04:26 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 Hawai‘i-based writer working in film, television, and digital media. I support this measure to clarify and adjust the general excise tax treatment for motion picture, digital media, and film productions.

Applying the manufacturing general excise tax rate to productions creates consistency and predictability while removing ambiguity tied to the highest general excise tax rate. Clear rules matter in production decisions, and this change helps Hawai‘i remain competitive with other production hubs.

Exempting pass-through payroll-related amounts from the general excise tax is especially important. Wages, benefits, payroll taxes, and payments to loan-out companies should not be taxed multiple times. This provision directly supports local workers by ensuring more production dollars go to people, not redundant taxation.

Together, these changes reduce uncertainty, protect local jobs, and encourage productions to hire and invest in Hawai‘i’s workforce. I urge your support of this measure.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
Beatriz
Writer, Hawai‘i

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 10:13:46 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jessica K Perry-Ah Hoy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HB2590 is crucial to leveling the playing field for HI (Hawai'i) productions. A lot of films want to use Hawai'i's aesthetic but not entirely pay for it. Hence why films end up being filmed in NZ. HI legislation needs to make amends to the tax incentives in order to bring & KEEP more production in HI. In forth, this would help HI economy and put a little less emphasis on the need for the tourism industry.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 10:24:32 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 respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of HB 2590, which makes important updates to the taxation framework underpinning Hawai‘i’s motion picture, digital media, and film production ecosystem. Personally, as an actor and independent filmmaker, I know firsthand how the structure of tax policy affects not only major productions but also smaller local projects — from narrative short films to independent features that are rooted in our communities here in Hawai‘i.

HB 2590 makes two key changes that will positively impact the business environment for film and media production:

1. **Aligning Film Productions with a Favorable General Excise Tax Classification** — The bill proposes to impose the manufacturing general excise tax rate on motion picture, digital media, and film productions rather than the standard, higher commercial rate. This change recognizes the unique nature of production work as a creative and labor-intensive industry that should be treated more like manufacturing activity for tax purposes. Lowering the effective tax cost of production here will help Hawaii compete with other states and jurisdictions that aggressively court production dollars with tax incentives and differential tax classifications.
2. **Exempting Wages and Certain Pass-Through Compensation from GET for Project Employers** — HB 2590 expressly exempts from the general excise tax the amounts that motion picture project employers receive from client companies when those dollars are directly passed through to pay wages, salaries, payroll taxes, insurance premiums, and benefits for local production workers. This change helps ensure that Hawai‘i’s tax system doesn’t inadvertently penalize employment of local cast, crew, and creatives — workers whose livelihoods depend on fair, competitive structure and who contribute directly to our communities.

These changes may seem technical, but for people like me and my peers they translate into more sustainable opportunities, jobs, and creative work that can stay here instead of moving offshore or to other states due to higher operating costs.

Hawai‘i already offers one of the most competitive refundable film production tax credits in the nation, providing 22-27 % incentives on qualified production expenditures. However, tax incentives alone are only part of a competitive strategy. Our overall tax burden, including general excise tax treatment on production activity and payroll flows, influences where companies choose to shoot, hire, and invest. By modernizing these tax rules, HB 2590 helps strengthen Hawai‘i’s reputation as a creative economy that values local talent and treats production spending in a way that attracts real jobs — from actors to grips, editors to post-production engineers, and the vital support businesses around them.

As someone who works here and depends on a vibrant local production ecosystem, I strongly support HB 2590 and urge you to pass this bill. The changes it proposes will help Hawai‘i retain and grow high-value creative industries, which create meaningful careers for residents while also contributing to economic growth for our state.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to testify and for your continued consideration of the needs of Hawai‘i’s creative economy.

Sincerely,

Kamuela Chandler

Actor & Independent Filmmaker

Member - Hawaii Film Alliance

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 11:39:34 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mark Petritz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

GE tax is what shot this industry in the foot for 2024 and 25. Let's diversify the economy away from tourism.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 11:56:36 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
fabienne lequertier	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To the Hawai‘i State Legislature,

I am writing to express my strong support for **HB2590**, a bill that is crucial to leveling the playing field for film and television productions in Hawai‘i.

By moving the General Excise Tax (GET) classification for film back to manufacturing, this legislation helps reduce structural cost disadvantages and makes Hawai‘i a far more competitive location for production. This is an essential step toward attracting projects, supporting local jobs, and strengthening the state’s creative economy.

When House bills align with their Senate counterparts, it reinforces the path toward meaningful and lasting change. Such alignment demonstrates a shared commitment to economic growth, workforce development, and the long-term sustainability of Hawai‘i’s film industry.

Supporting HB2590 means supporting local talent, local businesses, and the many families whose livelihoods depend on this sector.

Thank you for your time, leadership, and thoughtful consideration.

Respectfully,
Fabienne Lequertier

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 12:04:23 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Vincent Laurent Loïc LEQUERTIER	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Members of the Legislature,

I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 2590 and its critical role in strengthening Hawai'i's film and television industry.

HB 2590 is essential to leveling the playing field for productions in Hawai'i. By reclassifying the film General Excise Tax under manufacturing, this bill addresses long-standing structural cost disadvantages that have made it more difficult for local productions to compete with other U.S. states and international locations. This change would significantly improve Hawai'i's competitiveness as a place to produce film and television.

Beyond competitiveness, this legislation directly supports local employment. A stronger production environment means more jobs for Hawai'i residents, greater use of local talent, and increased economic activity for small businesses across the islands. Supporting HB 2590 is not only an economic decision, but a moral one: providing meaningful work opportunities for Hawai'i's people should be a priority.

Finally, alignment between House and Senate efforts on this issue demonstrates a clear and unified commitment to Hawai'i's creative economy. Such coordination increases the likelihood of durable, positive change that benefits workers, businesses, and the broader community.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to support HB 2590.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued service to the people of Hawai'i.

Sincerely,

Vincent LEQUERTIER

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 12:20:55 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 actor, I support HB 2590. Reducing the GET burden helps productions afford more local hires, ensuring that Hawaii's creative professionals can make a living doing what they love at home.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 12:34:30 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 make it more affordable for film productions to hire our talented local cast and crew.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 12:34:44 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-2590

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 12:50:54 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 2590 Reduce General Excise Tax (GET) Burden

- **Goal:** Make it more affordable for productions to hire local cast and crew.
- **Key Changes:**
- Applies the lower manufacturing GET rate to film production.
- Exempts amounts disbursed for local employee wages, salaries, taxes and benefits from the GET.
- **Why it Matters:** Protects local jobs and makes hiring Hawaii talent a more financially viable choice for productions.

Mahalo

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 1:08:07 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:

Aloha, i strongly support HB2590!

Film production funtions as manufactureing and needs to be taxed accordingly. Adjusting the GET rate will reduce overall costs and make Hawaii a more appealing destination to studios looking for filming locations, which in turn is a boost to our local economy.

thanks for time!

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 1:33:22 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marlena Silva	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Marlena Silva. I am a SAG-AFTRA member since 1996. I strongly support HB2590. Film production functions as manufacturing and should be taxed accordingly. Adjusting the GET rate helps reduce the costs that directly impact local jobs. HB2590 supports Hawai'i's film workforce and strengthens the local economy.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 2:22:18 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 2590 Relating to Taxation.

I support this measure because thoughtful and strategic tax policies play a critical role in strengthening Hawai‘i’s economy, supporting local businesses, and creating sustainable employment opportunities for residents. Legislation that encourages responsible economic investment helps diversify Hawai‘i’s economic base while ensuring long-term financial stability for the state.

HB 2590 has the potential to stimulate economic activity by encouraging business development, increasing job opportunities, and promoting industry growth. Measures that incentivize investment and economic participation can lead to increased revenue generation through job creation, consumer spending, and overall economic expansion. These outcomes not only benefit businesses but also support working families and local communities.

Additionally, policies that promote economic development help strengthen supporting industries such as security services, hospitality, transportation, and other workforce sectors that rely on business growth and tourism-related activities. As someone working in an industry that supports public safety and business operations, I have seen firsthand how economic investment directly contributes to workforce stability and career opportunities for local residents.

It is important that Hawai‘i continues to remain competitive with other states by maintaining fair and balanced tax policies that attract investment while supporting local workforce sustainability. HB 2590 represents a step toward achieving that balance.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Travis Asaeli

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 2:35:05 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-2590

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 3:09:43 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Debra Grey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To the Hawai‘i State Legislature,

I write to express my full support for HB2590, which is crucial to leveling the playing field for Hawaii productions.

Providing jobs and valuing the talents of Hawaiians is not only an economic necessity—it is a moral responsibility. This bill represents an important step toward making local hiring and skill development the standard within the industry.

By supporting HB2590, this will help get back to manufacturing and reduce the structural costs, which then creates a more competitive advantage within the film industry. You are then supporting Hawaii’s people and ensuring that the benefits of film and television production remain within the community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,
Debra Grey

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 3:32:39 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 strongly support HB 2590.

The bill supports the film workforce of Hawai'i, and will help bring production and local jobs to Hawai'i.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 4:22:34 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 2590, which restores the General Excise Tax (GET) manufacturing rate for motion picture, digital media, and film production in Hawai‘i.

Film and television production is, by nature, a manufacturing activity. Productions create a tangible product through a time-limited, labor-intensive process that employs hundreds of local workers and relies heavily on in-state spending. Treating this industry differently from other manufacturing sectors places Hawai‘i at a clear competitive disadvantage.

The current GET structure increases production costs in a way that is out of step with other states and jurisdictions that actively compete for the same projects. In an industry where budgets are tight and decisions are made quickly, even small cost differences can determine whether a production chooses Hawai‘i or takes its jobs elsewhere.

HB 2590 corrects a long-standing structural issue by aligning film production with the manufacturing rate it historically and logically belongs under. This change directly impacts:

- Production budgets and location decisions
- The ability to hire local crew and vendors
- The length of time productions can remain in Hawai‘i
- The overall economic return to the state

When productions leave Hawai‘i, the loss is felt immediately by local workers, small businesses, and families who depend on this industry for stable income. Restoring the manufacturing GET rate is not a giveaway — it is a common-sense correction that helps keep jobs, spending, and economic activity in Hawai‘i.

As someone who has worked in Hawai‘i’s film industry, I have seen firsthand how sensitive productions are to cost structures, and how quickly work disappears when Hawai‘i becomes financially uncompetitive. HB 2590 helps remove an unnecessary barrier to doing business here and supports a sustainable production environment that benefits local residents.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to pass HB 2590 with a favorable recommendation.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Grace Hall

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 4:58:06 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.

Rebecca Maltby

SAG-AFTRA

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 6:42:42 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 fully support this bill that will be of great benefit for the local community in regards to work and skills opportunity grstly needed. It can only be of benefit!

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 6:51:57 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-2590

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 7:19:07 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 strongly support **HB 2590**.

Film and television production function as manufacturing. A production assembles a large workforce, sources materials and services locally, and produces a finished product that is distributed globally. Treating film differently under the GET creates unnecessary cost burdens that directly impact whether productions choose to film in Hawai‘i.

The GET rate matters in real terms. When production costs increase due to outdated tax treatment, those costs are absorbed through fewer workdays, smaller crews, or productions choosing to leave the state altogether. Adjusting the GET rate to treat film production as manufacturing is a practical correction that reflects how the industry actually operates.

HB 2590 supports local hiring by making it easier for productions to budget for Hawai‘i crews and vendors. It improves Hawai‘i’s competitiveness, helps retain productions that are already considering our state, and ensures more outside capital continues to circulate through our local economy.

This bill is a common-sense update that supports Hawai‘i’s film workforce and strengthens long-term production retention.

I respectfully urge your support of HB 2590.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 8:26:25 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:

I strongly support HB 2590.

Film production functions as manufacturing and should be taxed accordingly. Adjusting the GET rate helps reduce costs that directly impact local jobs.

HB 2590 supports Hawaii's film workforce and strengthens the local economy.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/3/2026 9:43:38 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 strongly support HB 2590. This bill would make it more affordable for productions to hire local cast and crew. Hiring local cast and crew would mean jobs for local cast and crew! As an actress, I would really like to work. The crew would really love to be back to work.

This is the proper category for the GET taxes that apply to film in Hawaii.

Mahalo,

Jean Simon

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 12:16:15 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-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 12:17:45 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-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 12:19:27 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-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 6:03:04 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 2590

Updating the film tax is essential to keeping work in Hawaii. HB 2590 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-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 7:46:05 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-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 9:25:33 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 strong support of **HB 2590**, which reduces the General Excise Tax (GET) burden on film and media productions operating in Hawai‘i.

The goal of this measure—to make it more affordable for productions to hire local cast and crew—is both timely and necessary. Labor is one of the largest costs for any production, and Hawai‘i’s current GET structure can unintentionally discourage productions from maximizing local hires.

HB 2590 makes two important and impactful changes. First, it applies the lower manufacturing GET rate to film production, recognizing that film and digital media production is a form of creative manufacturing that produces exportable intellectual property. Second, it exempts amounts disbursed for local employee wages, salaries, payroll taxes, and benefits from the GET. This directly incentivizes productions to invest more heavily in Hawai‘i’s local workforce.

These changes matter because they protect and strengthen local jobs. When productions are able to hire more Hawai‘i-based actors, crew members, and creative professionals, fewer workers need to be imported, and more income stays within the local economy. This supports families, builds long-term career pathways, and sustains a skilled local workforce that is essential to maintaining Hawai‘i as a competitive production destination.

By reducing financial barriers to hiring local talent, HB 2590 makes Hawai‘i-based workers a more financially viable and attractive choice for productions. This bill complements existing film incentives by ensuring that their economic benefits are more directly felt by Hawai‘i residents.

For these reasons, I strongly urge the Legislature to pass HB 2590. This measure supports local workers, strengthens the creative economy, and reinforces Hawai‘i’s commitment to fair and sustainable industry growth.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Respectfully submitted,
Diana Seppelfrick, SAG/AFTRA Member

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 10:56:31 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 meine Aussage zur Unterstützung der Filmindustrie auf Hawaii

abgeben, es hängen viele Arbeitsplätze davon ab und viele Menschen

Leben davon,

Danke

claudia kühn

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 12:00:06 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-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 12:02:28 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 strongly support HB 2590.

Film production functions as manufacturing and should be taxed accordingly. Adjusting the GET rate helps reduce costs that directly impact local jobs.

HB 2590 supports Hawaii's film workforce and strengthens the local economy.

I strongly support HB 2590.

Film production functions as manufacturing and should be taxed accordingly. Adjusting the GET rate helps reduce costs that directly impact local jobs.

HB 2590 supports Hawaii's film workforce and strengthens the local economy.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 12:08:25 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 Faamausili-Siliato, and I am in strong support of HB 2590. I have worked on productions here in Hawai'i and have seen firsthand how film and television projects support local workers and small businesses. The current tax structure creates unnecessary barriers that make it harder for productions to stay and reinvest in our communities.

HB 2590 helps level the playing field, encourages local hiring, and keeps more of these jobs in Hawai'i. Supporting this bill means supporting local families who rely on this industry to make a living.

Mahalo for your consideration.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 12:20:05 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 HB2590.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 12:51:29 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 2590 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-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 1:17:35 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:

In conjunction with the other bills, our hope is that the Hawaii Film industry will be a sustainable platform for those living in the beautiful islands of Hawai'i. Not having to choose between living at home and moving to the mainland.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 2:14:09 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 strongly support HB 2590.

Film production functions as manufacturing and should be taxed accordingly. Adjusting the GET rate helps reduce costs that directly impact local jobs.

HB 2590 supports Hawai'i's film workforce and strengthens the local economy. I strongly support HB 2590.

Mahalo,

Noelle Yoza, Honolulu, Hawaii

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 2:18:41 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,

I strongly support HB 2590. I am a local Hawai'i resident, a SAG-AFTRA member, and a high school senior who hopes to build a career in the film and television industry. Reducing the General Excise Tax for local productions makes it easier for studios to hire Hawai'i actors, crew, and other local workers. This helps keep jobs in Hawai'i and provides opportunities for young people like me to gain experience in the industry. I respectfully urge the committee to pass this bill.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 2:32:07 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 tremendously support HB 2590. This is extremely crucial to Hawai'i's economic future, far more than just the local film industry.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 2:45:11 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 strongly support HB 2590

Film production functions as manufacturing and should be taxed accordingly. Adjusting the GET rate helps reduce costs that directly impact local jobs.

HB 2590 supports Hawai'i's film workforce and strengthens the local economy.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 3:35:27 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 in applying the lower manufacturing GET rate to film production.

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-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 3:57:34 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 2590. 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 2590 matters to me because it helps strengthen opportunities for local creatives and supports the long-term growth of Hawai‘i’s creative economy. I respectfully urge you to pass this measure.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 4:08:46 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Julia Brotman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Testimony of Julia Brotman

before the House Committee on Economic Development and Technology

in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 2590

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

Dear Chair Ilagan, Vice Chair Hussey, and Members of the House Committee on Economic Development and Technology:

My name is Julia Brotman, and I hereby express my strong support of HB 2590.

I have worked as an intellectual property and entertainment attorney at Honolulu-based law firm Settle Meyer Law for the last eight years. In that time, I have seen first-hand the struggles between the local film industry and the Hawai'i Department of Taxation.

Film production is, at its core, a manufacturing process, and should be classified as such for general excise tax purposes. The Department of Taxation recognized this and published guidance to this effect almost two decades ago. This contributed to a significant increase in production in Hawai'i – not just the major studio productions like Lost, Hawai'i Five-0, Magnum PI, and many others, but also supported meaningful growth among the indie filmmakers and producers who are so important in preserving local culture and sharing the stories of Hawai'i with the world.

In 2021, the Department of Taxation abruptly reversed course and issued TIR No. 2021-01, which re-classified all motion picture production work at the 4.5% general excise tax rate, without any legal analysis or reasoning to support this change under applicable excise tax law. The industry recoiled in response and budgets that were already tight grew even tighter, shrinking profit margins for local filmmakers who already struggle to make ends meet.

From a legal perspective, it's unclear whether and to what extent the Department of Taxation's changed policy in 2021 is enforceable, and in any event it has caused a great deal of confusion and distrust in the local film industry.

HB 2590 is an opportunity for the legislature to rectify the situation and make it clear that film production is a manufacturing process under applicable general excise tax law, and that motion picture production companies and the companies that provide services to them are subject to the 0.5% general excise tax rate.

Although sometimes framed as a tax benefit, this is not actually a handout or cutting the industry a break. Rather, it is confirming what is already a proper analysis of motion picture production work under existing general excise tax law – but now, there will be no confusion about the Department of Taxation’s changing policies and no doubt as to whether motion picture production work is considered a manufacturing process under the law.

Mahalo for your time and attention to this important matter for the local film industry.

Signed,

Julia Brotman

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 4:11:14 PM

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

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

Comments:

Testimony of Adam Palya

before the House Committee on Economic Development and Technology

in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 2590

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

Dear Chair Ilagan, Vice Chair Hussey, and Members of the House Committee on Economic Development and Technology:

My name is Adam Palya, and I hereby express my strong support of HB 2590.

I have been working as an independent filmmaker in Hawai'i for five years. Most of my work involves storytelling through documentaries and short form video pieces for local nonprofits and community groups. My "day jobs" are working at Kahilu Theatre in Waimea as a video producer and teaching a video production class at Parker School. I also created and produce the show Haole Do It, featuring Brother Noland, which was broadcast on KFVE and can now be seen on Kahilu.TV (season 4 coming soon!)

HB 2590 is important to myself and the entire local film community because it will help allow us to continue the important work we do. We are the storytellers of our communities - we are preserving culture, documenting the legacy of our 'aina, and educating our peers and generations to come. We are sharing the stories of Hawai'i with each other and the world. In the age of social media, all our local small businesses and organizations are looking for producers to create content so they can share their message and gain support.

But, the work is not always consistent, and it's hard to make ends meet as a video producer. Many of us, like myself, are freelancers who work on tight budgets and juggle other day jobs to make it all work. All too often, financial pressures push indie filmmakers to seek out work in other industries because the numbers just don't work, even though the work we do is so important for our communities.

Returning the applicable GET rate to 0.5%, where it was for almost two decades, makes a big difference in our bottom line and helps to make this work sustainable for us. We're not asking for a windfall, we're asking the legislature to help support an important industry that is struggling but has so much potential.

Mahalo for your time and attention to this important matter for the local film industry.

Signed,

Adam Palya

Lucky Tree Productions

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 4:11:28 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
George Y. Russell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I strongly support HB 2590.

Film and TV as well as internet streaming production does function as manufacturing and should be taxed accordingly. Adjusting the GET rate helps reduce costs that directly impact local jobs.

HB2590 supports Hawai'i's film and commercial production workforce and thus strengthens the local economy.

Mahalo for your consideration for HB 2590

Sincerely,

George Y. Russell

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 4:17:58 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 2590. I was born and raised in Hawai‘i and care about the long-term health of our local creative economy.

HB 2590 matters to me because it helps strengthen opportunities for local creatives and supports sustainable growth for Hawai‘i-based talent. I respectfully urge you to pass this measure.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 4:41:52 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 strongly support HB 2590

Film production functions as manufacturing and should be taxed accordingly. Adjusting the GET rate helps reduce costs that directly impact local jobs.

HB 2590 supports Hawai'i's film workforce and strengthens the local economy. I strongly support HB 2590.

Film production functions as manufacturing and should be taxed accordingly. Adjusting the GET rate helps reduce costs that directly impact local jobs.

HB 2590 supports Hawai'i's film workforce and strengthens the local economy.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 6:52:37 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 HB2590. 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 in the film and television industry, which has all come to a concerning halt in the past going on 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 captures lowering manufacturing GET rate to film productions and exempts amounts disbursed for local employee wages, salaries, taxes and benefits from the GET. Both energies would make it more feasible and attractive for productions to film here, hire local talent. With the outcome of 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-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 8:10:46 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joseph Barrett	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Joseph Barrett . 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 2590, Relating to taxation.

The changes proposed in HB 2590 will protect local jobs for local working families. By exempting amounts disbursed for local employee wages, salaries, taxes, and benefits from the GET, as well as applying the lower manufacturing GET rate to film production, this bill makes hiring Hawai'i talent a more financially viable choice for productions.

Hawai'i's film industry supports thousands of working families in the state of Hawai'i. These thriving wage jobs are irreplaceable by other industries. When the film tax incentive is empowered, this industry generates significantly to state GDP, earnings, and even visitor spending. When the film tax incentive is restrained, we not only lose the economic benefits of the industry, but we also lose the ability to tell our own stories. To remain competitive in the global market, it is imperative that Hawai'i strengthens and stabilizes the film tax incentive program. SB 2796 will support thousands of working families in Hawai'i.

I strongly support HB 2590. I urge your committee to do the same. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,

Joseph Barrett

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 8:21:07 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Montgomery Meyer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB2590

The industry has given me the opportunity to provide for my Ohana.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 8:28:21 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Vickie Kennedy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha!

I fully support thos bill!

Film and TV as well as internet streaming production does function as "manufacturing" and should be taxed accordingly. Adjusting the GET rate helps reduce costs that directly impact local jobs!!!

This bill supports Hawai/i's film and commercial production workforce, and strengthens the local economy!

Mahalo nui loa for your support for HB 2590!

Vickie Kennedy

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 9:35:02 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:

I write in full support of HB2590. Thank you for addressing a specific issue that hinders Hawai'i film production.

I am a member of the Directors Guild of America and was the unit production manager on Doogie Kamealoha, MD and Red One, and production supervisor on Moana. Currently, I am the unit production manager on Protecting Jared, a Netflix film that will begin shooting later this month.

GET on payroll is a huge concern for any production considering shooting in Hawai'i. For the past few years, the state has been double taxing the income of local film workers. When a production sends workers' wages to a payroll company for disbursement, the state charges 4.7% GET on that payment. The payroll company then deducts income taxes on that same money before sending out paychecks. It's not fair, and it's a red flag to any producers or studios considering shooting in Hawai'i.

The affect of double taxation is felt by local workers because it discourages productions from coming here. Those that do shoot here will have to trim total shooting days to cover the double taxation on payroll. This bill will help bring mainland production money to the islands and distribute it to local vendors and workers. This bill is not about lowering taxes for corporate studio; it is about stopping the practice of overtaxing local workers' wages. That's why I strongly support this bill. If enacted in conjunction with the other bills focused on improving the terms of our film tax incentives, it will send a strong message that Hawai'i is a film-friendly state.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 9:46:20 PM

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

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

Comments:

Aloha 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 Hawaii Film Alliance with over 25 years of experience in Hawai'i's film and television industry. I am writing to express my strong support for HB 2590.

Film production in Hawai'i is, in every practical sense, a manufacturing industry. We take raw materials—lumber for sets, technology for digital capture, and specialized labor—and transform them into a high-value product for global export.

Treating film production as manufacturing by adjusting the GET rate is a common-sense move that directly protects local jobs.

HB 2590 takes a necessary step to support a 21st-century industry. It strengthens our local workforce and ensures that Hawai'i's economy remains resilient and diverse.

I strongly support HB 2590 and respectfully urge your committee to pass this bill.

Mahalo for your time and for your commitment to Hawai'i's working families.

Sincerely,

Lisa Lee Mitchell

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 9:47:55 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

(SAG-AFTRA name: Hannah-Grace McDermott) I am a professional stuntwoman and intimacy coordinator in the TV & Film Industry.

I strongly support HB 2590!

The film production functions as manufacturing AND should be taxed accordingly. By adjusting the GET rate, it helps reduce costs that directly impact local jobs.

This bill supports Hawai'i's film workforce, strengthens local economy and everyone wins! Wouldn't that be amazing?

Please support the Hawai'i film industry!

Mahalo,

Hannah-Grace Rodriguez (McDermott)

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 10:12:36 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 2590, this bill will help reduce structural cost disadvantages and again, will make Hawaii a more competitive place.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 10:42:08 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 2590.

Film production functions as manufacturing and should be taxed accordingly. Adjusting the GET rate helps reduce costs that directly impact local jobs.

HB 2590 supports Hawai'i's film workforce and strengthens the local economy.

Mahalo nui loa

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 10:49:10 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dominic Acain	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Written Testimony in Support of HB2590

House Committee on Economic Development (ECD)

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

I am submitting testimony in support of HB2590.

The film, motion picture, and digital media industry is a mobile, competitive, global industry. Productions routinely evaluate jurisdictions based on cost predictability, tax treatment, and long-term economic stability. When Hawai‘i becomes uncompetitive in these areas, productions do not scale back. They relocate.

This is not a theoretical concern. Friends and family members of mine who work in the industry have experienced this directly. Hawai‘i-based productions such as Chief of War and The Wrecking Crew have had to film only partially in Hawai‘i because costs have become prohibitive. Even projects rooted in Hawai‘i’s history, culture, and landscape are being forced to complete significant portions of production elsewhere.

The high cost of living in Hawai‘i already creates challenges for both workers and productions. When layered with an uncompetitive tax structure, it becomes increasingly unfeasible to keep full productions here, despite strong local talent and world-class locations.

HB2590 directly addresses this reality by clarifying the general excise tax treatment of production activities and applying the one-half of one percent (0.5%) manufacturing rate to production as defined in section 235-17. This change helps align Hawai‘i’s tax structure with the economic nature of production activity and reduces a key cost disadvantage.

Other jurisdictions have made deliberate policy decisions to remain competitive. New Zealand is one example where stable incentives and predictable tax policy have supported a robust and sustained screen industry. Those policies have helped build local workforces, infrastructure, and repeat production activity. Hawai‘i already has the locations, talent, and experience. Cost competitiveness remains one of the primary barriers.

A healthy film and digital media industry supports economic diversification and provides employment across multiple sectors, including local crews, technical trades, equipment rental, transportation, catering, and hospitality. These are real jobs that help local residents remain in Hawai'i rather than being forced to seek work elsewhere.

HB2590 does not create a special privilege. It removes structural friction that currently places Hawai'i at a disadvantage in a global marketplace. From an economic development perspective, this bill supports workforce retention, industry sustainability, and long-term competitiveness.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to support HB2590.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

Dominic Acain

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 10:59:50 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tiffany Tavares	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Tiffany Tavares. 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 2590, Relating to taxation.**

The changes proposed in HB 2590 will protect local jobs for local working families. By exempting amounts disbursed for local employee wages, salaries, taxes, and benefits from the GET, as well as applying the lower manufacturing GET rate to film production, this bill makes hiring Hawai'i talent a more financially viable choice for productions.

Hawai'i's film industry supports thousands of working families in the state of Hawai'i. These thriving wage jobs are irreplaceable by other industries. When the film tax incentive is empowered, this industry generates significantly to state GDP, earnings, and even visitor spending. When the film tax incentive is restrained, we not only lose the economic benefits of the industry, but we also lose the ability to tell our own stories. To remain competitive in the global market, it is imperative that Hawai'i strengthens and stabilizes the film tax incentive program. SB 2796 will support thousands of working families in Hawai'i.

I strongly support HB 2590. I urge your committee to do the same. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,

Tiffany T Tavares

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 11:06:07 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:

Aloha, I write in support of HB2590. It will greatly help productions in Hawai'i and make us an even more desirable place for studios to bring their projects. Mahalo!

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 11:09:22 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 2590

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 2590.

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.

This measure returns the characterization of the motion picture and television industry back to “manufacturing” for GET purposes which characterization held sway for over 13 years (see Section 18-237-23-01.01) until the then Director of Dotax unilaterally changed the rule without justification in 2021 simply declaring that the prior characterization was “inappropriate.” This abrupt change in policy significantly impacted the cost of the film industry doing business in the State of Hawaii and sent an unfavorable message to Hollywood that the administration of Hawaii’s film tax incentive law is erratic and unpredictable. This sudden change also cannibalized the efficacy and value of the refundable production credit under HRS 235-17.

This measure will enhance the overall attractiveness of Hawaii’s film industry tax incentive program and will align with the structure that previously brought significant film work to Hawaii.

My thanks to the House for taking this matter up and correcting a grave mistake that has had a negative effect on this important industry.

Respectfully submitted

William G. Meyer III

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 11:37:42 PM

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:

Film production functions as manufacturing and should be taxed as such. I strongly support HB2590 because it supports Hawaii's film workforce and strengthens the local economy. Please support for HB2590.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 12:15:36 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-2590

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 1:24:42 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, based on the principles outlined in A Smarter Blueprint for Hawai‘i’s Film Industry .

This bill reflects a clear understanding that Hawai‘i’s film incentive must evolve to remain competitive. Updating streaming definitions, extending the sunset date, and adjusting headline credit percentages are all reasonable responses to current market conditions.

However, raising percentages alone will not fix Hawai‘i’s film economy. Without structural reforms, the State risks increasing its financial exposure without improving return on investment, workforce outcomes, or long-term infrastructure.

1. Incentives Must Be Performance-Based

The bill increases the base credit to 27% on O‘ahu and 32% on neighbor islands based primarily on geography.

Amendment recommended:

Treat these percentages as maximums, not automatic entitlements, and tie incremental credit levels to measurable outcomes such as:

- Minimum local crew hiring thresholds
- Verified in-state spending levels
- Use of Hawai‘i-based post-production, sound stages, and certified vendors

Public incentives should reward real investment in Hawai‘i, not just larger budgets.

2. The Neighbor Island Incentive Is Outdated

The current flat 5% neighbor island bonus is ineffective and no longer reflects the true cost of filming outside O‘ahu.

Productions filming on neighbor islands face:

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

These factors often increase budgets by 10–20% or more. A symbolic 5% bonus does not change production behavior.

Amendment recommended:

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

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

If the goal is real neighbor island production, the incentive must be material enough to matter.

3. Removing the Per-Production Cap Creates Risk

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

As written, this:

- Concentrates risk in a single project
- Crowds out multiple mid-sized productions
- Prioritizes scale over sustained local economic impact

Amendment recommended:

- Restore a graduated per-production cap, or
- Create a separate mega-production allocation with its own ceiling and safeguards

Fiscal discipline is essential to long-term program stability.

4. Annual Cap Increases Must Be Conditioned

Raising the annual cap from \$50 million to \$60 million should not be unconditional.

Amendment recommended:

Condition the higher cap on:

- Verified local hiring ratios
- In-state spending thresholds
- Timely reporting and certification

Incentives should scale with impact, not just volume.

5. Certification Should Be Proportionate

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

Amendment recommended:

Tier certification requirements by production size and allow streamlined options for smaller projects.

6. Address GE Tax Pyramiding for Local Vendors

The bill does not address General Excise Tax pyramiding, which disadvantages Hawai'i-based rental and service vendors and encourages imported equipment.

Amendment recommended:

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 are not reform.

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

- Improve competitiveness
- Protect taxpayers
- Build a durable, Hawai'i-owned film industry

I respectfully urge the Committee to advance this bill with amendments that reward real jobs, real investment, and real infrastructure.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 6:55:38 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-2590

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 6:58:49 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kevin Kersting	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Kevin Kersting. 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 2590**, Relating to taxation.

The changes proposed in HB 2590 will protect local jobs for local working families. By exempting amounts disbursed for local employee wages, salaries, taxes, and benefits from the GET, as well as applying the lower manufacturing GET rate to film production, this bill makes hiring Hawai'i talent a more financially viable choice for productions.

Hawai'i's film industry supports thousands of working families in the state of Hawai'i. These thriving wage jobs are irreplaceable by other industries. When the film tax incentive is empowered, this industry generates significantly to state GDP, earnings, and even visitor spending. When the film tax incentive is restrained, we not only lose the economic benefits of the industry, but we also lose the ability to tell our own stories. To remain competitive in the global market, it is imperative that Hawai'i strengthens and stabilizes the film tax incentive program. SB 2796 will support thousands of working families in Hawai'i.

I strongly support HB 2590. I urge your committee to do the same. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,

Kevin Kersting

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 7:08:57 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 HB2590.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 7:27:44 AM

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

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

Comments:

I am a member of the Director's Guild of America and a resident of Oahu. I strongly support HB2590 with the intention of bringing TV/Film projects back to the islands.

In support bill HB2590

I am writing to express my support for Bill HB2590. My name is Bryan Spicer, and I have had the privilege of serving as a producer and director on iconic shows such as *Hawaii Five-0* and *Magnum PI* for the past decade. Over the course of producing more than 250 episodes, I have witnessed firsthand the evolution of the film industry in Hawaii, including both its remarkable successes and the challenges it currently faces.

Hawaii has always been a unique and vibrant backdrop for storytelling, attracting filmmakers and audiences alike. However, in recent years, we have seen a decline in production activity, which has not only impacted our local economy but also the creative community that thrives here. Bill HB2590 represents a crucial step towards revitalizing our film industry by addressing the rising costs of production.

This bill is vital for several reasons:

- GET rate for filming - returns the GET tax status back to the original Manufacturing rate
- Economic Growth: By reducing production costs, we can encourage more filmmakers to choose Hawaii as their destination for filming. This will lead to job creation and increased revenue for local businesses, from hotels to restaurants.
- Cultural Representation: Supporting local productions ensures that the stories and culture of Hawaii are authentically represented in the media. This is essential not only for the local community but also for audiences around the world.
- Sustainability of the Industry: Establishing a supportive environment for filmmakers will help stabilize the film industry here, allowing it to flourish and adapt to changing market conditions.

In conclusion, I wholeheartedly support Bill HB2590 and urge you to consider its potential impact on the future of our film industry. Together, we can work towards a brighter and more sustainable future for Hawaii's creative community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Bryan Spicer
DGA Director

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 7:52:32 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: Economic Development & Technology

RE: HB 2590 – GET Manufacturing Rate & Labor Exemptions

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am **Lukas Seno**, Business Representative of **IATSE Local 665**. I support **HB 2590**, which updates the General Excise Tax treatment for film, digital media, and motion picture productions. By aligning productions with the manufacturing GET rate and exempting **wages, salaries, payroll taxes, and employment benefits** from the GET, this bill eases cost burdens tied directly to **labor compensation**. Reducing tax barriers on worker wages helps encourage productions to hire and retain **Hawai'i-based crew at industry standards**, resulting in **more hours and better conditions for residents**.

Mahalo.

Lukas Seno

IATSE Local 665

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 7:56:00 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 HB2590, which increases the General Excise Tax (GET) credit for film and television productions. Raising the GET credit helps offset Hawai‘i’s uniquely high cost of doing business and ensures that local productions remain financially viable. This measure directly benefits Hawai‘i-based crew members, vendors, and small businesses by keeping productions in-state and sustaining steady employment. HB2590 strengthens a proven economic driver that supports local jobs, develops homegrown talent, and keeps film industry dollars circulating within Hawai‘i’s economy.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 8:00:06 AM

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

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

Comments:

I agree with this bill to move forward.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 8:04:31 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, 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-2590

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 8:16:14 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 HB2590. We need to bring more work to Hawaii and support the communities and families of Hawaii. This will allow more opportunities and more growth BEYOND the tourism industry. Supporting cultural education and expansion.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 8:24:23 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**, and I live in **Honolulu**. I went to film school here and worked in local production for years, until I left the industry because of lack of work. I've seen what instability in this industry really does to families. Friends who once had a comfortable living have been forced to leave Hawai'i for months at a time to find work, sometimes leaving their kids behind so they can stay in school. I've watched people sell their homes, move away, or split up under the pressure.

HB2590 is a practical step that helps keep production jobs here by reducing GET barriers for film and digital media work, including targeted treatment tied to payroll-related costs. When Hawai'i is competitive, productions hire local, and families can stay together here at home.

Please pass HB2590.

Mahalo,
Alana Eagle
Honolulu, Hawai'i

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 8:24:32 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:

please support the local film industry . this bill helps the professionals who need these jobs to remain on island .

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 8:32:10 AM

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

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

Comments:

this bill supports hawaiiis film workforce and stregthens local economy.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 8:34:33 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nohealani Nihipali	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am wahine, kanaka maoli, native hawaiian film maker since age 15. I support this bill because I have created educational content that brings awareness to people worldwide regarding our Hawaiian value system, reasons to protecting Hawai'i's unique eco system hence environment, use of our language, and promoting political awareness. I am a manufacturer of films, stories from my personal native perspective. This work has given me the funds needed to provide private education for both my native Hawaiian sons. mahalo for continuing to understand the importance of keeping native Hawaiians like me employed here in my island home by passing bills in relation to this one.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 8:45:28 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:

We need to support HB2590 to move film back under manufacturing for GET - where it belongs. When productions leave, jobs leave with them. This bill supports a sustainable film industry that employs local people and ultimately supports our economy for years to come.

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB290
KIMEE BALMILERO**

February 5th 2026

Aloha,

My name is Kimee Balmilero. I am a professional actor born and raised in Hawai'i. I am also a homeowner and small business owner here, and I support HB 2590.

From a financial perspective, film and television production is not a cost to the state. It is a source of outside revenue. Productions bring money into Hawai'i and spend it locally on wages, housing, transportation, food, and services. That spending supports workers, small businesses, and tax revenues across multiple sectors.

When Hawai'i is not competitive, productions do not come here. We are already seeing Hawai'i-based projects filmed elsewhere because it is more financially viable to do so. When that happens, the state does not save money. The economic activity simply moves to another state or country, and Hawai'i loses the associated jobs, spending, and downstream tax revenue.

HB 2590 helps address this by lowering barriers that make Hawai'i more expensive and complicated than competing jurisdictions. By aligning the tax structure with how film and digital media production actually operates, this bill improves Hawai'i's ability to attract and retain projects that inject significant funds into the local economy.

For workers like me, consistent production work makes it possible to remain home in Hawai'i and continue contributing to the state's economy as residents, homeowners, and business owners. For the state, it means keeping outside dollars circulating locally rather than letting them leave.

HB 2590 is a fiscally responsible step toward keeping Hawai'i competitive in a global industry and protecting an important source of economic activity.

I respectfully urge your support of HB 2590.

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 name.

Kimee J. Balmilero

HB-2590

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

There is so much more to film production than what you see on the screen wich is simply a final product and it doesnt even end there. Then it moves on to promotion, distribution, etc. Film making is very much a combinations of multilple departments that each emply multiple people (JOBS) coming together to manufacture a complex and long lasting product. Therefore it is very much a multi layered manufacturing industry of creating a complex product from nothing to something amazing. Therefore it should be taxed accordingly to incentivese and allow for the growth and expansion of this impresive industry and support thousands of local jobs and continue to grow. Therefore I ask that you strongly support this bill and get the Hawai'i Film Industry back stronger, bigger, and better than ever. Mahalol

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 12:35:19 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-2590

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 1:33:44 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 strongly support HB 2590.

Film production functions as manufacturing and should be taxed accordingly. Adjusting the GET rate helps reduce costs that directly impact local jobs.

HB 2590 supports Hawaii's film workforce and strengthens the local economy.

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 2:20:05 PM

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

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

Comments:

My name is Susan Zaguirre. 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 2590, Relating to taxation.**

The changes proposed in HB 2590 will protect local jobs for local working families. By exempting amounts disbursed for local employee wages, salaries, taxes, and benefits from the GET, as well as applying the lower manufacturing GET rate to film production, this bill makes hiring Hawai'i talent a more financially viable choice for productions.

Hawai'i's film industry supports thousands of working families in the state of Hawai'i. These thriving wage jobs are irreplaceable by other industries. When the film tax incentive is empowered, this industry generates significantly to state GDP, earnings, and even visitor spending. When the film tax incentive is restrained, we not only lose the economic benefits of the industry, but we also lose the ability to tell our own stories. To remain competitive in the global market, it is imperative that Hawai'i strengthens and stabilizes the film tax incentive program. SB 2796 will support thousands of working families in Hawai'i.

I strongly support HB 2590. I urge your committee to do the same. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,

Susan Zaguirre

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 4:45:39 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-2590

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 4:52:07 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:

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my strong support for HB 2590, Relating to Taxation.

This bill, which addresses the GET manufacturing rate for film, is a vital step in supporting the local film industry. By aligning film production with other manufacturing sectors, this legislation will help ensure Hawai‘i remains a competitive and sustainable environment for creative professionals. I urge the committee to pass this measure to further strengthen our local economy.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this important matter.

Best regards,

Jeff Juett

HB-2590

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 8:15:01 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leianaikaroselaniomaui SingKeliikoa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB2590!