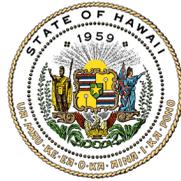


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & BIOSECURITY
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI A KIA'I MEAOLA
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9560 FAX: (808) 973-9613

SHARON HURD
Chairperson
Board of Agriculture & Biosecurity

DEAN M. MATSUKAWA
Deputy to the Chairperson

**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

**BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND
TOURISM AND WATER, LAND, CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 2026
1:02 PM
CONFERENCE ROOM 229**

**SENATE BILL NO. 2156
RELATING TO LAND USE**

Chairs DeCoite and Lee, Vice Chairs Wakai and Inouye and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill No. 2156 that adds a new subpart to Part IX of Chapter 201 (Hawaii Film and Creative Industries Development) to permit, facilitate, and regulate film production on certain agricultural zoned lands on Kauai, Maui, and Hawaii counties under certain conditions; and establishes the Agricultural Film Production Land Use Oversight Committee to establish film permit application requirements and processes, facilitate the issuance of special and use permits for film production within agricultural districts, and advise and make recommendations relating to the regulation of film productions on agricultural zoned lands. The Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (Department) offers comments.

The bill amends Section 205-4.5 by adding "temporary filming activity as a conditional accessory use" on agricultural land provided the relevant county "approves the activity" and the Department finds that the activity is "compatible with existing agricultural use" and the filming activity further complies with three requirements. (page 22, line 15 to page 24, line 3) It also appears that filming activity exceeding thirty days cumulatively or consecutively per year requires a special use permit (page 23, lines 4-6). This appears to imply that filming activity less than thirty days cumulatively or consecutively per year does not require a special use permit. As such, this appears inconsistent with an earlier provision in the bill that "The film production company shall obtain all necessary film permits including special permits pursuant to section 205-6, from the relevant government entities, outlining the scope of film production and adherence to guidelines." (underlined emphasis added) (page 5, lines 16-20)

The Department is concerned about its role on the Agricultural Film Production Land Use Oversight Committee, one function of which is to “facilitate the issuance and approval of a special permits for film productions within agricultural districts pursuant to section 205-6, in coordination with the appropriate county planning commission or department, land use commission, office of planning and sustainable development, and department of agriculture and biosecurity;” (page 8, line 18 to page 9, line 3). The Department’s proposed role appears to conflict with the Department’s established role in reviewing and commenting on special permit petitions. (Section 205-6(a))

With respect to the Department’s proposed responsibility to determine whether the temporary filming activity “is compatible with existing agricultural use” (page 22, lines 18-20), the Department would recommend that role be given to the member on the Oversight Committee with “expertise in agriculture and conservation.” (page 8, lines 3-4)

The proposed “agricultural impact statement” (page 23, lines 10-19) makes no reference regarding direct impacts of film production on agricultural operations on the agricultural lands upon which the filming activity is to take place as well as surrounding agricultural lands and agricultural activities. A “temporary” film production area in an active agricultural setting may be exposed to nuisances (dust, odors, noise from machinery and vehicles, vibration, etc.), during all stages of agricultural activity. Film producers need to work around the harvesting of row crops that cannot be put on hold for days or longer.

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



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

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR

JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA
DIRECTOR

DANE K. WICKER
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

No. 1 Capitol District Building, 250 South Hotel Street, 5th Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawaii 96804
Web site: dbedt.hawaii.gov

Telephone: (808) 586-2355
Fax: (808) 586-2377

Statement of
GEORJA SKINNER
Administrator, Creative Industries Division
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the
**SENATE COMMITTEES ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM
AND COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

Thursday, February 19, 2026
1:02 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

In consideration of
SB2156
RELATING TO LAND USE

Chair DeCoite, Chair Lee, Vice Chairs Wakai and Inouye, and members of the Committees. The Creative Industries Division (CID) of the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) supports and offers comments for **SB2156**, which seeks to facilitate improved processes for film production permitting, with a focus on the state's neighbor island lands zoned for agricultural use under certain conditions, including obtaining land use special permits, and establishment of an Agricultural Film Production Land Use Oversight Committee within DBEDT's Creative Industries Division to establish application requirements and processes.

CID understands the importance of the measure to provide a coordinated permitting process specific to temporary film production activities on ag lands. This provides another incentive for production to choose Hawai'i as their filming location and can be an added source of revenue for farmers, ranchers and other landowners, supporting both sector's economic development on our neighbor islands.

CID wants to point out there are multiple layers of state and county approvals, as well as the role of the agriculture film production land use oversight committee which require further discussion. The concern is the length of time for each agency, as identified in SB2156, may unintentionally further complicate and delay the overall processing timeframes of the proposed film permitting process. Productions work on a very condensed time period, requiring permitting to be responsive with condensed turnaround times.

For example, when a recent major motion picture required access to agriculture lands for temporary use, the state film office reached out to the Agribusiness Development Corporation (ADC) which facilitated an approval process through their board in a relatively short timeframe. This administratively attached agency to DBEDT provided a way to successfully secure permission for filming on agriculturally zoned land.

We believe this measure can be of benefit to both film and ag sectors. CID and HFO pledge to work closely with the introducers, industry and state agencies to refine procedures and parameters outlined in SB 2156 to support the growth of both Hawai'i's Agriculture and Film Industries without compromising one or the other.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

SB-2156

Submitted on: 2/18/2026 8:30:18 AM

Testimony for EDT on 2/19/2026 1:02:00 PM

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

Comments:

Testimony for the Department of Land and Natural Resources was submitted on primary DLNR Testimony account. Request for a zoom link for additional staff to attend remotely as backup.

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

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



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

P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

DAWN N.S. CHANG
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT

RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE
FIRST DEPUTY

CIARA W.K. KAHAHANE
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

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

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

Before the Senate Committees on
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM
and
WATER, LAND, CULTURE AND THE ARTS

Thursday, February 19, 2026
1:02 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

In consideration of
SENATE BILL 2156
RELATING TO LAND USE

Senate Bill 2156 proposes to permit film production on certain lands zoned for agricultural use under certain conditions, including obtaining land use special permits and establish the Agricultural Film Production Land Use Oversight Committee within the Creative Industries Division of the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) to establish film permit application requirements and processes, facilitate the issuance of special permits for film production on agricultural zoned parcels, and advise and make recommendations relating to the regulation of film productions on agricultural zoned lands. This measure would also require DBEDT to adopt rules and Includes temporary filming and production activities as a permissible conditional accessory use of lands within the agricultural district in some situations. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) offers the following comments.**

While the Department acknowledges the intent of the bill, the Department notes that this measure does not distinguish between private and public lands as defined in Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), section 171-2. Under the proposed measure, if a State-owned property was currently encumbered by a lease for agricultural purposes, including but not limited to pasture, any subleasing would be subject to approval from the Board of Land and Natural Resources (Board).

The Department also notes that if a sublease for film production were to be allowed, pursuant to HRS section 171-36(a)(6) a sandwich rent payment would likely be assessed. Depending on the popularity of the program, this measure could also significantly increase the Department's Land Division workload. Furthermore, any change in use on State-owned lands would require

compliance with HRS chapter 343 and Hawaii Administrative Rules chapter 11-200.1. Therefore, the Department respectfully requests that the measure be amended to exclude public lands, as defined in Section 171-2, HRS, as follows:

Page 5, line 10:

(1) The parcel is not:

(A) Designated as important agricultural land;

(B) Land with soil classified by the land study bureau's detailed land classification as overall (master) productivity rating class A or B; and

(C) Used for active agricultural crop production; or

(D) Designated as public lands as defined in section 171-2.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



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

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR

JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA
DIRECTOR

DANE K. WICKER
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

No. 1 Capitol District Building, 250 South Hotel Street, 5th Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawaii 96804
Web site: dbedt.hawaii.gov

Telephone: (808) 586-2355
Fax: (808) 586-2377

Statement of
JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA
Director
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM
AND
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

February 19, 2026
1:02 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

In consideration of
SB 2156
RELATING TO LAND USE

Chairs DeCoite and Lee, Vice Chairs Wakai and Inouye, and members of the Committees:

The Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism (DBEDT) supports SB2156 and respectfully offers amendments to ensure alignment with the State's economic diversification and resilience objectives, while preserving agricultural primacy and county authority.

The State of Hawai'i has consistently identified the film and creative industries as priority sectors for economic diversification. Film production:

- Generates high-wage technical and creative jobs;
- Supports small and local businesses (transportation, catering, trades, equipment, lodging);
- Drives film-induced tourism; and
- Expands neighbor island economic activity beyond traditional visitor markets.

Hawai'i's natural landscape is globally recognized and serves as a competitive advantage. While the State continues to evaluate long-term studio infrastructure needs, our geography and natural environments currently function as our most valuable staging venues. In the absence of sufficient studio capacity, responsible use of appropriate

lands, subject to safeguards, remains critical to sustaining production activity in the State.

SB2156 recognizes this reality while attempting to balance agricultural protection with economic opportunity.

Neighbor island counties, Hawai'i, Maui, and Kaua'i, possess agricultural lands that may be suitable for temporary and carefully managed film production. However, the existing regulatory landscape can be unclear or inconsistent when applied to short-term filming activity.

SB2156 provides:

- A structured framework for permitting;
- Clear conditions protecting Important Agricultural Lands and high-productivity soils;
- Coordination across counties, LUC, DOA, DLNR, OPSD, and OHA; and
- A defined oversight and advisory structure within DBEDT's Creative Industries Division.
- This bill offers clarity and predictability for industry while preserving statutory land use protections.

While DBEDT supports the intent of SB2156, we believe targeted amendments are necessary to:

- Explicitly align the bill with the State's Economy for Resilience framework;
- Reinforce that agriculture remains the primary and dominant land use;
- Clarify that county permitting authority is preserved; and
- Ensure accountability through data-driven reporting.

Without these clarifications, the bill could be misconstrued as expanding non-agricultural land use rather than strengthening rural economic resilience.

DBEDT offers the following amendments:

1. Add Explicit Economic Resilience Language (Findings & Purpose)

To clearly establish that this measure advances diversification, rural economic resilience, workforce development, and reinvestment into agricultural operations.

Proposed Amendment (SECTION 1 – Findings):

Add language stating that responsible temporary film production on appropriate agricultural lands may contribute to rural economic resilience by creating employment, supporting local businesses, encouraging technical skill development, and generating supplemental revenue that may be reinvested into agricultural operations.

Proposed Amendment (§201-B Purpose):

Add that the Act advances the State's economic resilience by supporting economic diversification, rural economic activity, workforce skill development, and complementary use of agricultural lands without diminishing their primary agricultural purpose.

These additions align SB2156 with the State's broader diversification strategy and DBEDT's Economy for Resilience framework.

2. Codify Agricultural Primacy & Non-Impairment

To prevent any interpretation that film production may override agricultural viability or soil productivity.

Proposed Amendment (§201-E):

Add a new subsection stating:

- a) Film production shall be accessory and secondary to agricultural use.
- b) Nothing in the subpart authorizes activities that impair long-term agricultural productivity, soil health, water access, or operational viability.

This amendment protects food security, supports agricultural stakeholders, and reinforces Chapter 205 principles.

3. Clarify Oversight Committee Is Coordinating, Not Supplanting Counties

To address concerns regarding state preemption of county land use authority.

Proposed Amendment (§201-F):

Add language clarifying that the oversight committee serves in a coordinating and advisory capacity and does not supplant county planning commissions or the Land Use Commission.

This ensures local land use authority remains intact and reduces institutional friction.

With these amendments, SB2156 will:

- Preserve Important Agricultural Lands and Class A/B soils;
- Reinforce agriculture as the dominant land use;
- Support neighbor island economic resilience;
- Advance film production as a diversification strategy;
- Maintain county permitting authority; and
- Ensure transparent oversight and measurable outcomes.

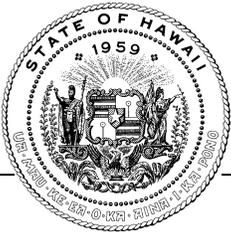
Hawai'i's film industry has long been recognized as a strategic economic sector. Our natural landscapes provide a competitive advantage, particularly in the absence of large-scale studio infrastructure. SB2156 acknowledges that reality while attempting to establish responsible guardrails.

DBEDT Testimony
SB 2156
February 19, 2026
Page 4 of 4

With the proposed amendments, this measure will better align with the State's economic resilience goals and ensure that agricultural productivity and cultural stewardship remain paramount.

DBEDT respectfully supports SB2156 with amendments and stands ready to work with the Committee to refine the measure.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



**STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF PLANNING
& SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR

MARY ALICE EVANS
DIRECTOR

235 South Beretania Street, 6th Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii'i 96813
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawaii'i 96804

Telephone: (808) 587-2846
Fax: (808) 587-2824
Web: <https://planning.hawaii.gov/>

Statement of
MARY ALICE EVANS, Director

LATE

before the
**SENATE COMMITTEES ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM AND
WATER, LAND, CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

Thursday, February 19, 2026
1:02 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

in consideration of
SB 2156
RELATING TO LAND USE.

Chairs DeCoite and Lee, Vice Chairs Wakai and Inouye, and Members of the Senate Committees on Economic Development and Tourism and Water, Land, Culture and the Arts.

The Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) defers to DBEDT's position in **support of SB 2156** and adds **comments** which would allow film production in the State Agricultural District under certain conditions, including by special permits, and establish an oversight committee to develop film permit requirements and review processes in coordination with other State agencies and facilitate the issuance and approval of film production special permits.

The film industry is an important component of the State's efforts to diversify its economy, and responsible film production in agricultural areas can showcase the cultural and historical significance of agricultural zoned lands. Furthermore, allowing film production can augment bona fide farmers' income to enhance the agricultural use of the land.

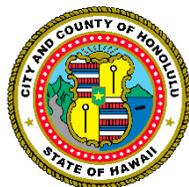
OPSD suggests that there is a solution that supports DBEDT's position in supporting agriculture, county permitting and expedited film permitting in the State Agricultural District. HRS, Ch. 201-14, Consolidated film permit processing, already provides a film permit process. An amendment to Section 201-14 adding a new subsection to establish a State Film Commission, overseen by the State Film Commissioner, that could issue special use permits for temporary filming in the State Agricultural District would provide for the DBEDT recommended protections for agriculture. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

HONOLULU FILM OFFICE
KE KE'ENA LĪPINE O HONOLULU
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

530 SOUTH KING ST, ROOM 306 • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
PHONE: (808) 768-6100 • FAX: (808) 768-6102 • INTERNET: www.honolulu.gov/film-office

LATE

RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR
MEIA



WALEA L. CONSTANTINAU
FILM COMMISSIONER
Komikina Līpine

Testimony of Walea Constantinau,
Film Commissioner, Honolulu Film Office
City and County of Honolulu

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND
and
SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

February 19, 2026 1:02 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 229 and via Videoconference

RE: SB 2156 RELATING TO LAND USE **COMMENTS**

Dear Chairs DeCoite and Lee, Vice-chairs Wakai and Inouye, and members of the committees:

We thank the legislature for its strong support of the film industry and **agree with the intent of the bill**, which is to allow filming on agriculture lands and to make it easier to film on those lands, **but it would fall short as written.**

We offer the following as an example of a potential way forward. The City and County of Honolulu Revised Ordinances allows for Temporary Uses under section ROH 21-1.60.
<https://codelibrary.amlegal.com/codes/honolulu/latest/honolulu/0-0-0-18826>

§ 21-1.60 Temporary uses.

Uses and structures of a temporary nature shall not be governed by this chapter, unless the director determines that significant impacts upon the surrounding area warrant review and, when necessary, the imposition of conditions on the use or structure. Conditions shall be based on impacts upon the surrounding area, and may cover hours of operation, duration of the activity, and general manner of operation.

We humbly suggest the following which would create a consistent statewide approach -- to clarify in HRS 205 that filming is an allowable use, which would pave the way for the proper permitting to be done. The film permitting process at the State and County levels is robust, often engaging multiple agencies. Each request is reviewed on an individual basis with bespoke requirements, allowances and conditions. This would mirror the current practice used in other State and County lands such as parks and beaches, on roadways, and at various facilities. It would represent a consistent and expeditious approach.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.

HONOLULU. PRODUCTION CENTER OF THE TROPICS

Testimony of the
COALITION of COUNTY FILM OFFICES in HAWAII

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT and
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, CULTURE AND THE ARTS

February 19, 2026, 1:02PM

Conference Room 229 and Video Conference

RE: SB2156 Relating to Land Use

Providing: COMMENTS



*Sherri Nakagawa,
Film Commissioner,
Hawaii Island Film
Office*



*Brian Kohne,
Film Commissioner,
Maui Film Office*



*Sandy Ka'auwai
Film Commissioner,
Kauai Film Commission*



*Walea Constantinou
Film Commissioner,
Honolulu Film Office*

Dear Chairs DeCoite and Lee, Vice Chairs Wakai and Inouye and members of the committee,

This measure, which seeks to allow film production on agricultural lands, is well intended but as written does not account for the temporary nature of film production as well as the fast pace of the industry.

It also does not take into account the structure proposed in SB 2578 which would create a Hawaii Film Commission which has listed under its proposed tasks, reviewing and streamlining the permitting processes currently employed and making recommendations for necessary changes.

In the interim, the county film offices collectively and respectfully recommend a more streamlined approach than is proposed in the measure, one that is more in line with other state statutes that exempt the film industry and require that a permit from the appropriate state and/or county film office be done.

The permitting process would review what is being requested on a case-by-case basis, and would be able to address the appropriate outreach and any required conditions based on the nature of the property, the scope and scale of a project, and do so in a timely manner.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.

State of Hawai'i
The Thirty-Third Legislature
Ka'aha Kenekoa
Committee on Economic Development and Tourism
Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts

Thursday, February 19, 2026
1:02 PM – Room 229, HI State Capitol

TESTIMONY WITH COMMENTS FOR SB 2156
RELATING TO LAND USE

Aloha Chairs DeCoite and Lee, Vice Chairs Wakai and Inouye, and Members of the Committee,
The Hawai'i Film Alliance (HFA) submits **COMMENTS FOR SB 2156**.

HFA is a member-based organization comprised of Hawai'i film and television professionals, entertainment union members, creative workers, production companies, small businesses, and allied industry partners who live and work in the State of Hawai'i. Our members span the full spectrum of the production ecosystem which includes crew, talent, producers, and businesses.

While we see the advantage to standardizing temporary land use language on the neighbor islands, agricultural land is already being used successfully as film locations. We suggest DBEDT, the prospective Film Commission or each county's film office find a streamlined solution with a one-week approval timeline to keep up with the fast pace of filming.

1. Filming Occurs on State Agricultural District Lands

Multiple working ranches located within the **State Agricultural District pursuant to HRS §205-2** have successfully hosted temporary film productions without conversion out of agricultural use. Examples include:

Kualoa Ranch (O'ahu)

- Active cattle ranch that has hosted numerous productions. Not only has agricultural use continued uninterrupted, but they also provide movie tours.





Kipu Ranch Adventures (Kaua'i)

- 3,000-acre working ranch used for film locations while remaining in active agricultural production.

Parker Ranch (Hawai'i Island)

- A cattle ranch with historical use for filming without loss of agricultural character.



Pe'ahi Farms (Maui)

- An agricultural-zoned estate community perched above the coast with expansive fields and ocean views, inland from the cliffs facing the famous Maui surf break called "Jaws".

These examples demonstrate that filming on Agricultural District lands is not unprecedented. The concern appears to be inconsistent interpretation at the county level regarding whether temporary filming is allowed under HRS §205-6. Rather than amend HRS Chapter 205, we respectfully suggest the Legislature find an alternative solution to adding red tape.

We recognize that agricultural lands are a limited and irreplaceable resource under State policy, however, temporary filming, when carefully conditioned, has been compatible with agricultural operations and profitable for the land owner or lessee.

Filming is a green, self-regulated industry leaving no trace when the project is completed. We encourage the county film commissioners, DBEDT and/or the prospective Film Commission find policy solutions that work for each jurisdiction that does not add layers of bureaucratic oversight. The film industry is fast-paced and needs timely approvals of one week or less.

Mahalo for your consideration and for your commitment to both agricultural preservation and responsible economic development. Please **DEFER OR AMEND SB 2156**.

LATE

SB-2156

Submitted on: 2/18/2026 11:21:47 PM

Testimony for EDT on 2/19/2026 1:02:00 PM

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

Comments:

Support.



February 17, 2026

To: Chairs Lynn DeCoite and Chris Lee; Vice Chairs Glenn Wakai and Lorraine Inouye; and the Senate Committees on Economic Development and Tourism and Water, Land, Culture and the Arts

Subject: **SB2156** Relating to Land Use

Aloha,

I am writing today **with comments regarding SB2156**, which permits film production on agricultural lands under certain conditions, including obtaining land use special permits and establishes an oversight committee within the Creative Industries Division of the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism and requires the department to adopt rules.

The diversification of Hawai'i's economic base is an important goal for the state, and allowing the creative industry to grow more here would be beneficial. For any bill that allows for non-agricultural activities to occur on agricultural lands though, we are somewhat concerned about its food system impact and whether or not the bill would be antithetical to the goal of achieving a sustainable local food system. What the bill defines as permissible temporary filming activities does reassure us, however.

Given that these concerns are addressed within the bill, we **support the intention of SB2156** so long as the oversight and enforcement of the bill remains sufficiently strict in order to preserve the integrity of our precious agricultural land. **We suggest defining a minimum frequency of compliance checks to ensure proper care is being taken**, as it is not explicitly stated how often these would occur in the section mandating them. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony for this bill.

Mahalo,
Sydney Haas & The Food+ Policy Team
#fixourfoodsystem

The Food+ Policy internship develops student advocates who learn work skills while increasing civic engagement to become emerging leaders. We focus on good food systems policy because we see the importance and potential of the food system in combating climate change and increasing the health, equity, and resiliency of Hawai'i communities.

In 2026, the cohort of interns are undergraduate and graduate students and young professionals working in the food system. They are a mix of traditional and nontraditional students, including parents and veterans, who have backgrounds in education, farming, public health, nutrition, and Hawaiian culture.

Testimony to the Senate Committee on Economic Development and Tourism

**Senator Lynn DeCoite, Chair
Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair**

Testimony to the Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts

**Senator Chris Lee, Chair
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair**

**Thursday, February 19, 2026, at 1:02PM
Conference Room 229 & Videoconference**

LATE

RE: SB2156 Relating to Land Use

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

My name is Sherry Menor, President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber"). The Chamber supports Senate Bill 2156 (SB2156), which permits film production on certain lands zoned for agricultural use and establishes the Agricultural Film Production Land Use Oversight Committee to establish film permit application requirements and processes, facilitate the issuance of special permits for film production on agricultural zoned parcels, and advise and make recommendations relating to the regulation of film productions on agricultural zoned lands..

SB2156 aligns with our 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii: An Economic Action Plan, specifically under the policy pillar for Economic Action. This bill promotes increasing location availability for film projects within the state. By increasing opportunities for film production, the state supports increasing economic development opportunity for all the industries that enable the viability of the film industry, such as travel, hotel, and restaurant.

The Chamber appreciates that consideration for both cultural significance and agricultural viability are written as mechanisms of this bill. With this intent, the necessary protections have been expressed which would allow for these important lands to host the film industry in a productive and considerate manner.

We respectfully ask to pass Senate Bill 2156. Thank you for the opportunity to testify

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

SB-2156

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 8:55:25 PM

Testimony for EDT on 2/19/2026 1:02:00 PM

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

Comments:

I believe SB2156 is well intentioned, but I ask the committee to consider amending this bill to make room for better solutions. While allowing film production in more agricultural areas can help bring much needed revenue to struggling businesses, this bill creates too many barriers for film production to actually take place. There are effective systems already established to vet productions and permit filming locations. This bill creates systems and committees that will cause the permitting process to be too lengthy and cumbersome to be practical.

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 begins shooting Feb 17th on Oahu.

Every production I have ever represented has wanted to shoot in a responsible manner and with respect to nature, history and culture. Rather than create more red tape to control and limit filming, I ask you to work with industry to find ways in which everyone wins. Productions are willing to contribute and strengthen groups that oversee responsible use of resources. I fully believe we will have better results using existing permitting processes and including industry to foster stewardship.

SB-2156

Submitted on: 2/17/2026 5:04:28 AM

Testimony for EDT on 2/19/2026 1:02:00 PM

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

Comments:

In support of bill SB2156.

SB-2156

Submitted on: 2/18/2026 6:10:00 AM

Testimony for EDT on 2/19/2026 1:02:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bryan Spicer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Senators,

I appreciate the opportunity to speak on Bill SB 2156. While I support and recognize the well-intentioned goals behind this legislation, I am concerned that it introduces systems and committees that could ultimately complicate the permitting process, making it lengthy and impractical for film productions.

Instead of imposing additional layers of bureaucracy, I urge us to collaborate with the film industry in ways that benefit everyone involved. Productions are committed to being responsible stewards of our environment and culture, and I believe we can achieve better outcomes by enhancing the existing permitting process. This would allow us to include industry input and foster a more cooperative relationship that promotes better stewardship of our resources.

Let's work together to find solutions that support the film industry while preserving the integrity of our natural and cultural heritage.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Bryan Spicer

Director DGA

SB-2156

Submitted on: 2/18/2026 9:28:18 AM

Testimony for EDT on 2/19/2026 1:02:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristin Sifton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill for many reasons. In my personal experience in the film industry for the last 16 years we have shot all over the islands, including parks, agricultural land and ranches. I believe we all respect the land that we are so graciously able to shoot on.

LATE

SB-2156

Submitted on: 2/19/2026 10:24:40 AM
Testimony for EDT on 2/19/2026 1:02:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristina ZaZueta	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Kakou,

As much as I Support this Bill, I think it needs to be amended to say Film Production on agricultural zone parcels as a permitted use of land within the agricultural district under special permits **must come in front of Neighborhood Boards**. The reasoning behind it is because currently North Shore Community and NSNB where majority of Ag land would be filmed on is currently battling a Gondola Project on Ag land. It is proposed by one of the current film productions to shoot on the Gondola guys Ag land, the gondola guy is trying to make his Ag land the next Kualoa tourist attention draw and filming on this land will only fuel his fire to do atv tours, biking, hiking especailly if filming areas happens on that land it would be a tourist draw even more so. Currently DPP is reviewing Gondola project 2019 permits and is in the process of revoking them due to community concerns, desecration of sacred lands, failure to maintain minimal requirements and so much more. Please Consider adding Neighborhood Boards into the approval process because the commmunity knows whats best for their home, not permitting offices because they are not directly affected post approval, only residents of the area will be affected. I am part of the Film community and i am a North Shore resident, and we must do right by the residential community if this Film Producton get approval to film on Gondola ag land without community approval it would affect all the hard work the community has down to get to the process where the permits may be revoked. The community would be directly affected when film comes to their town which is why i urge you to add the verbage for Film Productuions to come in front of Neighborhood Boards when shooting on Ag lands.

Mahalo Kristina ZaZueta