



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

KA 'OIHANA HO'OMOHALA PĀ'OIHANA, 'IMI WAIWAI  
A HO'OMĀKA'IKAI

**BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND SUPPORT DIVISION**

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
GOVERNOR

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
LT. GOVERNOR

**JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA**  
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Statement of  
**Dennis T. Ling**  
Administrator

Business Development and Support Division  
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism  
before the

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TECHNOLOGY**

Wednesday, March 18, 2026  
8:30 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 423

In consideration of  
**SB2354, SD1**  
**RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS.**

Chair Ilagan, Vice Chair Hussey and members of the Committee. The Business Development and Support Division (BDSD) of the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) supports **SB2354, SD1** and offers the following comments on this bill that requires the Director of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs to make certain contact information for newly registered entities available online. This bill also requires the department director to transmit certain specified contact information to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) Business Development and Support Division.

BDSD agrees that this measure may assist in the promotion and increased public awareness of services that it offers Hawaii's businesses, including technical assistance, finance opportunities, and training. DBEDT notes that there is an ongoing initiative currently in place to accomplish these goals.

In partnership with the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA), Business Registration Division (BREG), DBEDT has been able to share its services

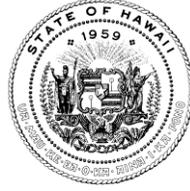
relating to technical assistance, financing opportunities and economic information, with Hawaii businesses who register online with Hawaii Business Express since July of 2024. When a new business registers or an existing business renews files its report online, the registrant receives a confirmation email from DCCA. This email includes language directing recipients to a dedicated DBEDT landing page (<https://invest.hawaii.gov/dcca/>) that highlights business support programs and services offer by DBEDT's Divisions and attached agencies. This link is also accessible on DCCA's Business Action Center webpage in the "Training Opportunities and Resources" and "Starting a Business" sections. This initiative allows businesses to effectively "opt-in", guides interested parties to the relevant program or service and assists DBEDT in managing inquiries.

While BDSB does not receive contact information up-front, for those who sign up on the DBEDT landing page to receive DBEDT information and our newsletter, DBEDT will then follow up and place on our mailing list.

BDSB emphasizes that information security, privacy interests, and minimizing the risk of data exposure and unwanted solicitation should be considered along with small business support efforts.

BDSB defers to the State Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs for matters related to legal authority, operational implementation and overall feasibility associated with this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I  
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NADINE Y. ANDO  
DIRECTOR | KA LUNA HO'OKELE

DEAN I HAZAMA  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR | KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

**Testimony of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs**

**Before the  
House Committee on Economic Development and Technology  
Wednesday, March 18, 2026  
8:30 a.m.  
Via Videoconference**

**On the following measure:  
S.B. 2354 S.D. 1, RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND  
CONSUMER AFFAIRS**

Chair Ilagan and Members of the Committee:

My name is Ty Nohara, and I am the Commissioner of Securities and head of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs' (Department) Business Registration Division (BREG). The Department offers comments on this bill.

The purpose of this bill is to require the Department to (1) make available online certain contact information of newly registered corporations, professional corporations, and limited liability companies, and (2) transmit this contact information to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism - Business Development and Support Division (DBEDT). Thus, this bill seeks to amend chapters 414 and 428 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) to add new sections<sup>1</sup> that require

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<sup>1</sup> Additionally, this bill seeks to amend HRS § 415A-14.7 to provide that the required filings for a professional corporation will also be governed by the new section to be added to HRS chapter 414.

such newly registered entities to provide the following information that will be available online and accessible to the public, as part of BREG's database of public information:

- Name and contact information, including phone number;
- Electronic mail address; and
- Mailing address.

This bill also requires the Department to transmit the above information to DBEDT, unless the newly registered entity affirmatively opts out of the transmission of its information.

BREG appreciates the intent of this bill to promote and to increase public awareness of DBEDT's services to businesses, by creating another avenue for DBEDT to expand its outreach efforts. BREG offers the following comments.

1. The HRS sets forth the specific information that each type of business entity is required to provide when it registers with BREG. Currently, every entity must provide its principal address and mailing address, its agent's name, and the agent's mailing address. That information is already available to the public, as well as to DBEDT, on BREG's online database, through a portal known as "Hawaii Business Express."<sup>2</sup>
2. However, the HRS currently does not require any business entity, whether newly registered or existing, to provide its telephone number or electronic mail address to BREG.
3. Since July 2024, BREG has been working in partnership with DBEDT to assist newly registered entities to learn about, and to access, the programs that DBEDT offers to businesses. This collaboration arose out of DBEDT's request that BREG include information about DBEDT in the confirming email that a new entity receives from BREG after it has been registered. The confirming email includes a message from DBEDT that (a) informs the entity that DBEDT provides technical assistance, financing opportunities, and economic information to support businesses, and (b) invites the entity to learn

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<sup>2</sup> Hawaii Business Express is a search portal that provides online users (1) the ability to search for an entity by name to determine whether the entity exists, and (2) basic information regarding that entity.

more and to participate in DBEDT's business development and support programs. Entities that are interested in these programs and services can choose to connect with DBEDT via a provided link to a DBEDT-designed web page.<sup>3</sup> The DBEDT link is also included in the Department's Business Action Center home page, under its "Training Opportunities and Resources" page<sup>4</sup> and its "Starting a Business" page.<sup>5</sup>

4. While this bill's intent is to expand DBEDT's outreach to small businesses by requiring new entities to provide their telephone number and electronic mail address when registering with BREG, and then requiring such information to be made publicly available, it may lead to unintended consequences. Some entities may not wish, for various reasons, to have their telephone numbers and/or electronic mail addresses made publicly available online. However, under this bill, not only may newly registered entities receive contact from DBEDT by telephone and electronic mail, but they will also be subject to robocalls, spam communications, phishing and scam attempts, and other unsolicited, and potentially abusive, contact from other parties unrelated to DBEDT. Consequently, the Department cannot ensure that a newly registered entity's telephone number and electronic mail address, once made public and "available online," will only be used in a manner consistent with the conditions or reasonable expectations of use and disclosure under which the entity provided the information to BREG.
5. The Department may violate personal privacy interests by making "available online" certain contact information that would otherwise be protected from

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<sup>3</sup> DBEDT's message and its link are also provided in BREG's confirming email to existing entities after certain filings submitted to BREG have been completed and/or approved.

<sup>4</sup> In February 2026, the DCCA streamlined and redesigned its website, and the Business Action Center's (BAC) home page is currently being updated. A new URL for the BAC's "Training Opportunities and Resources" page (previously at <https://cca.hawaii.gov/bac/training-opportunities-from-other-organizations/>) will be provided once it is available.

<sup>5</sup> See footnote 4 above. A new URL for the BAC's "Starting a Business" page (previously at <https://cca.hawaii.gov/bac/steps-to-starting-a-business/research-the-market/>) will be provided once it is available.

disclosure to the public under HRS chapter 92H (chapter 92H). Chapter 92H, entitled “Restrictions on publication of certain public servants’ personal information,” recognizes that certain personal information, such as telephone numbers and personal electronic mail addresses, of “covered public servants” should be protected from disclosure.<sup>6</sup> Under this bill, the telephone numbers and electronic mail addresses of newly registered entities, whether such entities are formed by covered public servants or members of the general public, will be made available online, with no option to request that such information not be publicly disclosed. A newly registered entity can only request that its information not be transmitted to DBEDT, but it must affirmatively “opt out” of such transmission.

6. Given the above concerns, BREG notes that the companion to this bill, House Bill 2349, H.D.1, provides a better option by allowing newly registered entities to opt-in in order for their contact information and electronic mail addresses to be made available online to the public. As noted in Item No. 1 above, the principal address, mailing address, agent’s name, and agent’s mailing address for all entities are already available online to the public. Therefore, consistent with the intent of the amendments in House Bill 2349 H.D.1, BREG suggests that this bill be amended to require newly registered entities to opt-in in order for their telephone numbers and electronic mail addresses to be made available online to the public. Doing so will empower newly registered entities to make a conscious choice whether or not to have such sensitive information publicly available.
7. In addition to amending the HRS, this bill will require the adoption of new rules and revision of the forms that a new entity must file to be registered in the State’s business registry. Further, the myriad documents and transactions that BREG processes are supported by a highly complex “back end” management and documents processing system. The collection and

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<sup>6</sup> “Covered public servants” include members of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches, such as department heads, legislators, judges, and various administrators. See HRS § 92H-1.

transmission of the additional data contemplated by this bill, and the required revisions to BREG's forms, will necessitate system adjustments. Therefore, BREG respectfully requests a ceiling increase of \$75,000.00 to contract for the services required to perform such work.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



TESTIMONY OF DAVE ERDMAN  
INTERIM PRESIDENT & CEO  
RETAIL MERCHANTS OF HAWAI'I

COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TECHNOLOGY  
Rep. Greggor Ilagan, Chair  
Rep. Ikaika Hussey, Vice Chair

Friday, March 13, 2026  
10:00 a.m.  
Conference Room 423 & Videoconference

**IN SUPPORT OF SB 2354 SD1 – RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF  
COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS**

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

My name is Dave Erdman, and I serve as Interim President and CEO of Retail Merchants of Hawai'i (RMH), a statewide nonprofit trade association representing retailers, shopping centers, restaurants, and allied businesses across the State.

**Retail Merchants of Hawai'i supports SB 2354 SD1.**

This measure takes a practical step to improve communication between state agencies and newly registered businesses. Under the bill, the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs would make publicly available basic contact information already collected at registration and, unless a business affirmatively opts out, transmit that information to the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism's Business Development and Support Division.

Hawai'i has over 200,000 registered businesses, yet state agencies responsible for economic development have historically had limited ability to directly reach them. That gap affects small businesses. Many retailers are unaware of grants, workforce programs, technical assistance, disaster guidance, and other economic support resources simply because the State does not have a reliable communication channel.

Each year, many new small businesses are launched across Hawai'i. These entrepreneurs often face challenges navigating available state programs, technical assistance, financing opportunities, and export or business development resources. While valuable support programs exist through DBEDT and its affiliated agencies, many new business owners are simply unaware of them.

Allowing DBEDT to receive contact information for newly registered businesses would help ensure that new entrepreneurs are informed about the tools, programs, and guidance available to help them grow and succeed. Early connection to these resources can make a meaningful difference for startups and small businesses during their critical first years of operation.

SB 2354 SD1 establishes a reasonable and balanced framework:

- It uses information businesses already provide at registration.
- It includes an affirmative opt-out for those who prefer not to participate.
- It limits transmission to legitimate governmental economic development purposes.

From the retail community's perspective, improved communication strengthens economic resilience, supports small business growth, and helps ensure that neighbor island and locally owned enterprises are not left out of state programs.

This measure modernizes how state business registration connects with economic development outreach in a transparent and structured way.

**Retail Merchants of Hawai'i respectfully urges your support of SB 2354 SD1.** Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Dave Erdman  
Interim President & CEO  
Retail Merchants of Hawai'i



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**Executive Officers**

**Kit Okimoto**, Okimoto Corp., *Chair*  
**Jayson Watts**, Mahi Pono, *Vice Chair*  
**Jill Tamura**, Tamura Super Market, *Secretary/Treas.*  
**Lauren Zirbel**, HFIA, *President and Executive Director*  
**Paul Kosasa**, ABC Stores, *Advisor*  
**Toby Taniguchi**, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*  
**Joe Carter**, Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii, Odom, *Advisor*  
**Eddie Asato**, Pint Size Hawaii, *Advisor*  
**Gary Okimoto**, Safeway, *Advisor*  
**Maile Miyashiro**, C&S Wholesale, *Immediate Past Chair*

TO: Committee on Economic Development and Technology

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: March 18, 2026

TIME: 8:30am

RE: SB2354 SD1 Relating to the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs

Position: Support

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

HFIA has proudly produced the Made in Hawaii Festival for over 30 years. One of the things that makes the Made in Hawaii Festival so unique and important to our state is that it serves as a small business incubator. In recent years we have worked with the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation (HTDC) and the Department of Business Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) as Sponsors of the Festival. The support and partnership from HTDC and DBEDT has enabled the hundreds of local businesses that are part of the Made in Hawaii Festival to connect with the vital resources available through these agencies. We have seen the benefits of these connections. Many Made in Hawaii Festival have utilized programs available through HTDC and DBEDT to grow and thrive.

We believe that this measure will help make the valuable resources and opportunities available through DBEDT available to even more local businesses. Supporting local businesses with State resources makes our economy more diverse and stronger for us all. We encourage the Committee to pass this measure, and we thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**SB-2354-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/15/2026 9:01:14 PM

Testimony for ECD on 3/18/2026 8:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Tina Cheng	Trained by Tina LLC	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair and Committee Members,

Thank you for your time. I am writing to express my concerns regarding SB 2354 SD1. I am a very small business owner in our community focusing on Health and Wellness in the fitness industry. I am seriously concerned about the exposure of my personal contact information, specifically my personal phone number and email address, within public records.

As a small business owner, I don't have a large team or any separate corporate infrastructure. My personal phone is the number my customers call. Requiring my contact information to be publicly accessible exposes me to potentially dangerous risks.

- Loss of privacy and personal safety including identity theft and harassment, moreover potentially sexual harassment as I am a female.
- Overwhelming spam and unsolicited marketing calls interfere with serving my customers.
- Additional spam and unsolicited mailers to my home.

I strongly support the privacy "opt-out" language currently found in HB 2349 HD1. This gives small business owners a reasonable way to protect our personal contract information without undermining transparency.

The opt-out provision is a practical, balanced solution that allows us to continue growing our businesses without sacrificing our personal security. I respectfully ask that these protections be preserved in the final legislation.

Thank you for your time and for standing with Hawai'i's small businesses.

Tina Cheng

**Testimony to the House Committee on Economic Development & Technology (ECD)  
Representative Greggor Ilagan, Chair  
Representative Ikaika Hussey, Vice Chair**

**Wednesday, March 18, 2026, at 8:30AM  
Conference Room 423 & Videoconference**

**RE: SB2354 SD1 Relating to the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs**

Aloha e Chair Ilagan, Vice Chair Hussey, 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 2354 Senate Draft 1 (SB2354 SD1), which requires the Director of Commerce and Consumer Affairs to make certain contact information for newly registered entities available online and transmit the contact information to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) Business Development and Support Division.

SB 2354 SD1 aligns with our 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii: An Economic Action Plan, specifically under the policy pillar for Small Business. For the state to maximize the value of its investments in small business development and programming through DBEDT, the department must be able to engage in communication with these new small businesses. With information on new business registration existing within the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs, DBEDT is deprived of the ability to recognize these new businesses and reach out. Each one of these businesses exist as an opportunity to deploy state funded support.

The Chamber appreciates the diverse small business resources that DBEDT offers. Although, dedicating time to researching resources can be challenging, confusing, and time intensive. Time that a business owner might rather use tending to their operations. If newly registered businesses were identifiable and contactable by DBEDT on an opt-in basis, significant relief can be brought to the small business resource diligence process. With this information, DBEDT can be prescriptive with its resources, rather than rely on small businesses to conduct diligence and initiate outreach. Implementing SB 2354 SD1 would allow DBEDT to magnify its impact and increase access to its support resources, resources that a new business may have never pursued otherwise.

It is for these reasons the Chamber supports SB2354 Senate Draft 1 and respectfully request its passage. 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.



# MAUI

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

VOICE OF BUSINESS

**HEARING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TECHNOLOGY  
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM 423  
FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2026 AT 10:00 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 FOR SB2354 SD1 RELATING TO THE  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS**

The Maui Chamber of Commerce **supports SB2354**, which requires the Director of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs (DCCA) to make certain contact information for newly registered business entities available online and to share that information with the Business Development and Support Division of the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT).

Small businesses are the backbone of Maui's economy and play a vital role in job creation, innovation, and community resilience. As noted in the bill, although the State continues to invest in small business development, publicly accessible information about newly registered businesses is currently limited, making it more difficult for new enterprises to connect with available resources and support networks. It would also enhance coordination between DCCA and DBEDT, ensuring that new business registrants are better connected with state programs designed to support entrepreneurship and economic diversification.

For neighbor island communities like Maui, these connections are particularly important. New businesses often face additional barriers such as geographic isolation, workforce challenges, and higher operating costs.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share our support of SB2354.

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.

**SB-2354-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/12/2026 3:37:09 PM

Testimony for ECD on 3/18/2026 8:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
RA	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on SB 2354 SD 1. I am a small business owner in Hawai'i, and I submit comments expressing concern about the bill's requirements regarding the disclosure of personal contact information.

As drafted, this measure would make a small business owner's personal phone number and email address part of the public record associated with business registration. Many small business owners, including myself, often use personal phone numbers and email accounts when registering or maintaining our business filings. Public posting of this information raises privacy and safety concerns, including increased exposure to unwanted solicitations, scams, identity theft risks, and potential harassment.

This committee previously reviewed the companion bill, HB 2349, and amended it to include an opt-out provision for personal contact information—a balanced approach that respected both transparency and privacy. I respectfully request that the Committee amend SB 2354 SD 1 to include a similar opt-out provision that would allow small business owners to withhold their personal phone numbers and email addresses from public disclosure while still satisfying necessary registration and regulatory requirements. This approach would preserve the State's ability to reach businesses for legitimate economic development and outreach purposes, while giving owners a reasonable measure of control over how much personal contact information is exposed in a publicly searchable database.

Mahalo for your consideration and commitment to protecting Hawai'i's small businesses.

**SB-2354-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/13/2026 7:17:12 AM

Testimony for ECD on 3/18/2026 8:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Alex Kagawa	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please consider eliminating the requirements that force small business owners to provide personal information such as address and phone number. This should be optional only if business owner wishes to participate in DBEDT's assistance program.

Thank you for your consideration.