



TESTIMONY OF  
**CAROLINE ANDERSON**  
Interim President & CEO  
Hawai'i Tourism Authority  
before the  
**HOUSE COMMITTEES ON TOURISM AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TECHNOLOGY**  
Tuesday, March 17, 2026  
10:00 a.m.  
State Capitol, Room 423

In consideration of  
**SB 2577 SD2**  
**RELATING TO SPORTS TOURISM**

Aloha Chairs Tam and Ilagan, Vice Chairs Templo and Hussey, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawai'i Tourism Authority (HTA) supports SB 2577 SD2, which directs the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) to conduct a study on the potential benefits and costs of sports tourism in Hawai'i.

Sports tourism can bring visitors during shoulder seasons, support local jobs, and strengthen our visitor economy. To guide future decisions, the State benefits from clear, consistent information about outcomes, costs, and community impacts.

HTA supports this measure because the study can provide timely data that strengthens planning and helps maximize return on investment (ROI) for sports tourism-related efforts. HTA would use the findings on event types, infrastructure impacts, and visitor spending to guide future prioritization and performance measurement. Specifically, HTA would use the data to do the following:

- Target the right opportunities. Identify sports events and markets that are more likely to attract higher-spending visitors, longer stays, and strong alignment with Hawai'i's capacity and community priorities.
- Measure net benefit. Compare the full costs of hosting events—such as infrastructure, public safety, staffing, and operations—alongside visitor spending and other measurable benefits.
- Strengthen coordination. Support alignment with DBEDT, counties, venues, and partners to focus resources on shared goals and reduce duplication.
- Enhance accountability. Apply consistent performance measures—such as visitor spending, occupancy impacts, and related outcomes—to track results from sports-related efforts.
- Support balanced decision-making. Pair economic findings with community impact considerations so that future actions support quality of life and visitor experience.

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HTA believes that having this complete picture will help the State prioritize opportunities that are strategic, measurable, and responsible.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 2577 SD2.



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

**IN SUPPORT OF SB 2577 SD2 with comments – RELATING TO SPORTS TOURISM**

COMMITTEE ON TOURISM  
Rep. Adrian K. Tam, Chair  
Rep. Shirley Ann Templo, Vice Chair

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

Tuesday, March 17, 2026, 10:00 a.m. Conference Room 423

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

My name is Dave Erdman, and I am the Interim President and CEO of Retail Merchants of Hawai'i, a statewide nonprofit trade association representing retailers, shopping centers, restaurants in shopping centers, and allied businesses across the islands.

**Retail Merchants of Hawai'i supports SB 2577 SD2.**

For Retail Merchants of Hawai'i, sports tourism is not just about events — it is about purpose-driven visitors. When people travel to Hawai'i to participate in or attend a marathon, tournament, exhibition, or cultural sporting event, they arrive with intent. They stay longer, travel in groups, and spend throughout our retail communities.

A resilient tourism industry depends on visitors who engage beyond the hotel room. Sports-related travel supports retailers, restaurants, and shopping centers, while also benefiting our allied members and partners — logistics companies, marketing firms, payment processors, financial institutions, and the broader business ecosystem that supports commerce across the islands.

The opportunity for Hawai'i is not simply to host more events, but to align the right events with our facilities, and international relationships, particularly across the Asia-Pacific region.

Participant-based events such as marathons, volleyball tournaments, softball invitationals, and pickleball exchanges often create first-time visitors who return later in life because Hawai'i becomes tied to a meaningful experience.

Sports tourism can also support exchanges and relationships with sister cities and international partners. Youth competitions, amateur tournaments, and cultural sporting events can serve as a bridge for long-term tourism connections and economic engagement.

From the perspective of Hawai'i retailers, sporting events also create opportunities beyond the events themselves. Many events include expos, vendor showcases, and related festivals where local merchandise and Hawai'i-made products are featured. Understanding how sports tourism contributes to these retail opportunities, including the promotion and sale of Made in Hawai'i products, is an important element that should be explored as part of the study.

SB 2577 SD2 appropriately directs the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism to evaluate the economic benefits and impacts of sports tourism, including the role of facilities such as the new Aloha Stadium and the University of Hawai'i athletics program. A thoughtful study will help ensure that future sports tourism initiatives are strategic, balanced, and beneficial to the broader community.

For these reasons, Retail Merchants of Hawai'i respectfully supports SB 2577 SD2.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Respectfully submitted,  
Dave Erdman  
Interim President and CEO  
Retail Merchants of Hawai'i



# MAUI

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

VOICE OF BUSINESS

**HEARING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TOURISM &  
THE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TECHNOLOGY  
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM 423  
TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 2026 AT 10:00 A.M.**

To The Honorable Representative Adrian K. Tam, Chair  
The Honorable Representative Shirley Ann Templo, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee on Tourism

To The Honorable Representative Greggor Ilagan, Chair  
The Honorable Representative Ikaika Hussey, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee on Economic Development & Technology

## **SUPPORT SB2577 SD2 RELATING TO SPORTS TOURISM**

As an organization dedicated to advancing Hawai'i's economic growth and diversification, we recognize the importance of exploring new opportunities that can strengthen our state's economy and provide long-term benefits for residents. SB2577 SD2, which directs the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) to study the potential economic benefits and costs of sports tourism, directly aligns with our priority to support sustainable economic development and resilience.

Sports tourism represents a promising avenue for economic diversification, offering the potential to attract new visitor segments, stimulate local business activity, and create jobs across a range of sectors. By rigorously assessing both the benefits and costs, the proposed study can help ensure that any future investments in sports tourism are grounded in sound economic analysis and tailored to maximize positive outcomes for local residents and businesses.

We respectfully recommend that the scope of the study explicitly address the viability and capacity of sports tourism across the state, including neighbor islands.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share our support of SB2577 SD2.

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.



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JOINT SENATE COMMITTEES  
TOURISM - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TECHNOLOGY  
Tuesday, March 17, 2026 - 10:00 AM

**Hawai'i Bicycling League SUPPORTS SB 2577, SD2, Relating to Sports Tourism  
With Comments**

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

My name is Eduardo Hernandez, and I am the Advocacy Director for the Hawai'i Bicycling League (HBL). We are a non-profit organization founded in 1975 with the mission of enabling more people to ride bicycles for health, recreation, and transportation. We strive to create communities across our islands that have safe, accessible, and inclusive environments for people to bike, walk, and roll.

HBL supports SB2577, SD2, which directs the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism to conduct a study on the potential benefits and costs of sports tourism in Hawai'i.

For decades, HBL has worked to present the largest bicycling events in Hawai'i. We also work with national and international partners, including producers of prestigious annual events like the Five Boro Bike Tour in New York City, and the Shimanami Kaido, which connects the prefectures of Ehime and Hiroshima in Japan. The infrastructure for these events are the existing highways and bridges, which are re-purposed for a few hours on the event days to be exclusively for bicycle participants.

In New York, 32,000 riders cycle a forty-mile route around the City, including along the East River, past the United Nations and across the entrance to New York Harbor, high atop the Verrazano Bridge. The Shimanami Kaido is one of Japan's most famous and visually stunning bike routes through the islands of the Seto Inland Sea, with a 70K distance that riders can do in one or more days.

We bring these details to your attention as you consider funding a sports tourism study for Hawai'i, because it is vital that DBEDT work collaboratively with other state agencies like HDOT, HTA, HCDA, DOH, DOE and community organizations like HBL to illuminate the role of the bicycle and bicycle networks in a sports tourism study. This will improve global competitiveness for visitors, and also improve the quality of life for residents.

We urge you to pass this bill and ensure that the planned sports tourism study considers the natural and existing infrastructure Hawai'i has to be a world-class bicycling destination.

Eduardo Hernandez, Advocacy Director  
Hawai'i Bicycling League

**SB-2577-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/14/2026 6:09:37 PM

Testimony for TOU on 3/17/2026 10:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Jonathan Huynh      | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I support SB2577 SD2, which establishes an important framework for evaluating sports tourism's potential in Hawaii. While sports tourism could generate significant economic benefits, it's crucial that this development supports rather than undermines Hawaii's affordable housing and transportation goals.

The bill's requirement for comprehensive economic analysis and infrastructure impact assessment provides a solid foundation. However, I recommend several amendments to ensure the study addresses critical housing and transportation concerns:

1. Add housing impact analysis to evaluate how sports tourism affects housing affordability and identify strategies to prevent exacerbation of Hawaii's housing crisis. Require evaluation of:
  - o Potential impact of sports tourism on housing costs and availability.
  - o Strategies to ensure sports tourism development doesn't exacerbate housing shortages.
  - o Opportunities to use sports tourism revenue to fund affordable housing initiatives.
2. Enhance transportation requirements to assess public transit capacity, multimodal access to sports venues, and opportunities to promote sustainable transportation. Include:
  - o Assessment of public transit capacity to serve sports venues and events.
  - o Requirements for multimodal transportation access to sports facilities.
  - o Evaluation of how sports events can promote sustainable transportation options.
  - o Analysis of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure needs around sports venues
3. Include community benefits evaluation to determine how sports tourism revenue can support affordable housing and transportation equity initiatives. Evaluate:
  - o Analysis of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure needs around sports venues.
  - o Strategies for ensuring local residents benefit from sports tourism development.
  - o Impact on transportation equity and access for underserved communities.
4. Add sustainability assessment to ensure sports tourism aligns with Hawaii's climate goals and long-term development objectives. Examine:
  - o Alignment with state climate goals and sustainable transportation objectives.
  - o Long-term infrastructure maintenance costs and funding mechanisms.

Sports tourism development must be integrated with Hawaii's broader housing and transportation strategies. Without careful planning, increased tourism activity could drive up housing costs and strain transportation systems, particularly in areas already facing affordability challenges.

By incorporating these amendments, the study will provide legislators with comprehensive information to make informed decisions that balance economic development with housing affordability and sustainable transportation goals.

I respectfully urge your support of SB2577 SD2 with these amendments.

Mahalo for your consideration.

**SB-2577-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/16/2026 6:01:12 AM

Testimony for TOU on 3/17/2026 10:00:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Glen Kagamida       | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

STRONG SUPPORT!!! Should have been done a long time ago. Mahalo!