

**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 Division**  
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism  
before the  
**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TECHNOLOGY**

Friday, March 20, 2026  
9:30 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 423

In consideration of  
**SB2578 SD1**  
**RELATING TO THE FILM INDUSTRY**

Chair Ilagan, Vice Chair Hussey, and members of the Committee. The Creative Industries Division (CID) of the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) supports SB2578 SD1, which creates a Hawai'i Film Commission attached to the department. As proposed, the measure establishes a film fund, adds leadership positions exempt from Chapter 76, transfers Hawai'i film office functions and its civil service positions to the commission and maintains the film permitting functions as noted in chapter 201-14 HRS, separates film sector oversight and development from the creative industries framework, restructures funding flows, strengthens governance and reporting, establishes a new source of funding to attract productions, and adds responsibilities for workforce development, and development of production industry infrastructure.

As the global production industry evolves, an encompassing commission structure as proposed in SB2578 SD1 is timely and necessary. Massive consolidation of media corporations in film, television, streaming and other media industries are going through a seismic shift, with new business models evolving at an unprecedented pace.

We support the intent of many aspects of SB2578 HD1, which seeks to evolve Hawai'i's film industry governance as part of the maturity of this industry cluster. Through establishing a Hawai'i Film Commission comprised of industry and government leaders, the scope and duties of this body will look at a broader ecosystem development approach to include workforce initiatives, facilities development and management, business attraction, grants for film projects and industry development.

CID welcomes the opportunity to work with our lawmakers to refine language to ensure the vision is aligned, properly resourced, and operational clarity to include ethical safeguards when granting the commission its authority.

### **Funding & Grant Viability**

The newly proposed Film Industry Development Special Fund appears primarily reliant on the 0.2% tax credit processing fee, which generated \$68,519 (2023) and \$75,916 (2024). Given the scope and general areas of responsibility for the commission and staff, clarification is needed on whether additional appropriations are planned, and whether projected revenues are sufficient to support meaningful grant and workforce programs. Statutory language regarding where these funds are deposited must be reconciled.

### **HRS 201-113 Hawai'i Creative and Media Industries Development Fund**

We support the need for separating out the term "film" from the existing statute to focus on all film industry solely under the new fund as proposed in this measure. As a core strategic pillar of the division strategic framework to build a viable export industry for the state, the media cluster we request remains as a core purpose of the original fund as intended. While the funding resources derived from the 0.2% are slated to be removed as a resource for HRS 201-113, we will continue to provide seed capital for media, music, design and other emerging clusters in creative sectors, advancing our global export capacity of intellectual property through regional entrepreneurial development.

## **Grant Program Design & Fiscal Safeguards**

We recommend that the film grants focus on mid-to-large productions with clear eligibility thresholds, award caps, transparent scoring, and milestone-based payments are essential, along with claw back and audit protections. We recommend that the management of the grants is separated from management of the tax compliance and incentives program, which would remain in DBEDT as proposed this session.

## **Tax Credit & Grant Overlap**

Clarification is needed on whether productions may receive both tax credits and grants. If allowed, stacking limits and priority rules must be established.

## **Tax Credit Cap Authority**

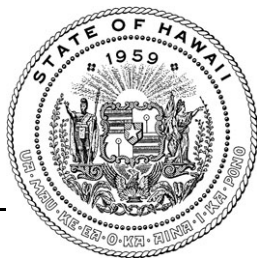
Authority to waive or modify per-production caps should be limited strictly to cap waivers, not base rate changes.

## **Implementation & Oversight**

With staffing delayed until December 31, 2027, strong transparency and reporting safeguards are needed to prevent operational disruption.

CID sees SB 2578 SD1 as a catalyst which has the potential to advance our film industry, accelerate strategic business development, expand our workforce and facilities development through a structure which is properly resourced and staffed and meets the needs of a rapidly changing industry - for today and tomorrow.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS,  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**  
KA 'OIHANA HO'OMOHALA PĀ'OIHANA, 'IMI WAIWAI  
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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, March 20, 2026  
9:30 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 423

In consideration of  
**SB2578, SD1**  
**RELATING TO THE FILM INDUSTRY.**

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

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **support** of SB2578, SD1, which establishes a Hawai'i Film Commission and modernizes the State's governance structure for film, television, and digital media production. This measure is a critical step in aligning Hawai'i with global best practices in media industry development and ensuring that the State can compete in a rapidly evolving production economy.

Around the world, leading production jurisdictions have moved beyond traditional "film offices" and now operate through film commissions or media authorities that integrate:

- Incentive administration
- Studio and infrastructure development
- Workforce pipelines
- Public-private partnerships
- International marketing and co-production strategy

This structure exists because film is no longer simply an arts activity, it is a capital-intensive economic sector that requires coordinated governance. Examples include:

- California Film Commission – Administers incentives and coordinates large-scale production strategy statewide.

- Georgia Film Office – A key driver behind Georgia’s emergence as a global production hub through centralized incentive administration and industry coordination.
- New York State Governor’s Office of Motion Picture & Television Development – Integrates incentives, studio growth, and workforce policy.
- New Zealand Film Commission – National body coordinating incentives, workforce, and global production attraction alongside infrastructure growth.
- British Film Commission (under the UK’s BFI) – Centralized authority supporting inward investment, studio expansion, and international productions.
- Screen Australia – National commission integrating grants, development funding, industry growth, and export.

These jurisdictions have demonstrated that institutional structure matters. Production follows not just incentives, but certainty, speed, infrastructure, and governance capacity.

SB2578, SD1 brings Hawai’i into alignment with this global model.

Film and digital media production now involves:

- Multi-million to multi-billion-dollar infrastructure investments
- Studio campuses and soundstage development
- Virtual production and post-production facilities
- AI-enabled production workflows
- Long-term workforce pipelines tied to education and credentialing

These are asset-driven economic development activities. They require an entity with authority to:

- Enter into public-private partnerships
- Manage and activate state-owned production facilities
- Administer grants and development funds
- Coordinate statewide permitting and industry engagement

SB2578, SD1 explicitly grants these authorities to the Hawai’i Film Commission, including P3 agreements for studios, sound stages, post-production, and creative technology infrastructure.

A traditional program housed within a broader division is not structured to execute at this scale or speed. A commission provides:

- Dedicated governance
- Industry expertise on the board

- Operational flexibility
- Clear accountability through annual reporting

The Legislature has already recognized that high-impact industries require dedicated authorities or corporations, not general program administration. Examples include:

- Agriculture sector entities
- Housing finance and development corporations
- Technology and innovation development corporations
- Tourism and destination management authorities

These structures exist because those industries require:

- Asset development
- Financing and partnerships
- Market-driven responsiveness
- Industry-specific governance

Film and digital media now sit at that same level of economic significance. SB2578, SD1 provides the same structural maturity for this sector.

As outlined in the State's media strategy blueprint, Hawai'i has:

- World-class locations
- Strong brand value
- Emerging workforce pipelines

But faces structural gaps:

- Limited soundstage and post-production capacity
- Shallow senior crew base
- Competition from jurisdictions with stronger governance and infrastructure models
- A production incentive system constrained by administrative capacity rather than strategy

Without modernization, productions will continue to migrate to jurisdictions where institutional readiness matches industry needs. The proposed Commission directly addresses these structural gaps.

SB2578, SD1 also embeds workforce strategy into the Commission's duties, including:

- K-12 pathways
- Postsecondary and credential-based training

- Upskilling in AI, virtual production, and digital workflows

This aligns with the statewide curriculum-to-career approach needed to convert production activity into long-term resident employment and industry growth.

The bill maintains strong public accountability through:

- Annual reporting to the Legislature
- Incentive reporting
- Grant reporting
- Public-private partnership disclosure
- Workforce outcome reporting

This ensures the Commission operates as an economic development authority with legislative oversight, not an isolated entity.

SB2578, SD1 is not simply an organizational change. It is a structural modernization that:

- Aligns Hawai'i with global film industry governance best practices
- Enables infrastructure and asset development
- Strengthens workforce pipelines
- Provides the institutional capacity required to compete internationally
- Treats the film and digital media sector with the same seriousness as other legislatively prioritized industries

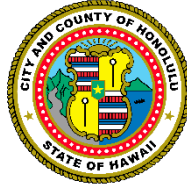
For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Committee to pass SB2578, SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

**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: WEBSITE: honolulu.gov/film-office

RICK BLANGIARDI  
MAYOR  
*MEIA*



WALEA L. CONSTANTINAU  
FILM COMMISSIONER  
*Kominina Līpine*

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

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

March 20, 2026 9:30 am  
State Capitol, Conference Room 423 and via Videoconference

**RE: SB 2578 SD1 RELATING TO FILM INDUSTRY – COMMENTS**

Dear Chair Ilagan, Vice-chair Hussey and members of the committees:

The Honolulu Film Office would like to thank the Legislators for being so supportive over the years, investing your time and mana'o to gain insights and an understanding of the needs of the industry and the significant economic benefits that the film industry brings to Hawai'i.

**We request a technical amendment to address inadvertent conflicts** on page 6 line 2 that limits members (3) through (8) to not serve consecutive four-year terms and recommend one of the following two suggested revisions:

The four county film office workers, listed as item (3), are appointed by their Mayors or are civil servants. They are largely one-person offices and serve as the chief industry liaison for the county, usually serve more than four years in their respective positions. As such we respectfully request that similar to other government employees on the commission, the county film commissioners be deemed ex officio voting members. Alternatively, starting the four-year term limitation language at item (4) listed on Page 5, Line 11 would address the conflict.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/16/2026 4:23:04 PM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b>  | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b> |
|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| Christopher Wiecking | IATSE Local 665     | Support                   | In Person      |

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice-Chair and members of the Committee. My name is Christopher Wiecking and I represent IATSE Local 665 Hawaii.

I am submitting my testimony in SUPPORT of SB2578 SD1.

Thank you for your time and support.

Mahalo

# TAX FOUNDATION OF HAWAII

735 Bishop Street, Suite 417

Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 Tel. 536-4587

SUBJECT: NET INCOME, Establish Hawaii Film Commission to Administer Production Tax Credit and Modify Ceilings

BILL NUMBER: SB 2578 SD1

INTRODUCED BY: EDT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Establishes the Hawai'i Film Commission. As related to taxation, allows the Commission to administer the media production tax credits and to waive or modify the credit cap per qualified production.

SYNOPSIS: Adds a new part to Chapter 201, HRS, to establish the Hawaii Film Commission and amends various provisions in Chapter 201 to transfer many of the functions of the existing Hawaii Film Office to it.

In particular, new section 201-E states that the Commission is to, among other things, (1) administer the motion picture, digital media, and film production tax credits pursuant to section 235-17, including application intake, review, registration, certification, compliance monitoring, and reporting; and (2) review and determine whether to waive or modify the maximum total motion picture, digital media, and film production tax credits per qualified production pursuant to criteria and procedures adopted by the commission by rule or formal action.

Makes a conforming amendment to section 235-17, HRS.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2050.

STAFF COMMENTS: The production credit in HRS section 235-17 was enacted as Act 107, SLH 1997, as a percentage of the costs incurred in the State in the production of motion picture or television films. As enacted, the credit was 4% of regular production costs plus 6% of transient accommodations, mirroring the GET and TAT rates at the time. Act 156, SLH 1988, raised the TAT credit to 7.25% while also raising the TAT rate to 7.25%.

After a period where this credit took a back seat to the qualified high tech business program enacted by Act 221, SLH 2001, this credit was next amended by Act 88, SLH 2006, which added credits for digital media and replaced the GET and TAT bifurcation with a unified credit of 15% of qualified production costs incurred in the C&C of Honolulu and 20% in any other county. The act added a per-production cap of \$8 million and sunset the credit on Jan. 1, 2016.

Act 89, SLH 2013, changed the credit percentages to 20% in Honolulu and 25% in any other county; raised the per-production limit to \$15 million; and extended the sunset date to Jan. 1, 2019.

Act 143, SLH 2017, extended the sunset date for the credit to Jan. 1, 2026, and first imposed an aggregate cap of \$35 million. Act 275, SLH 2019, raised the aggregate cap to \$50 million.

Act 217, SLH 2022, increased the credit percentages to 22% in Honolulu and 27% in any other county and extended the sunset date to January 1, 2033.

We in Hawaii have had our production credit since 1997, so it's been more than twenty years. Have there been any studies about what the program has done for Hawaii's economy or Hawaii's tax revenue? Certainly, the film industry promises increased opportunities. Some of them certainly have materialized. The Motion Picture Association, for example, claims 4 films and 13 TV series were filmed in Hawaii in 2021, and 3 films and 9 TV series in 2022, resulting in 4,130+ jobs and \$262.6+ million in wages in the state. See <https://www.-motionpictures.org/advocacy/driving-local-economies/#map>.

This bill takes one of the guardrails the Legislature enacted, the (current) per-production cap of \$17 million, and effectively tosses it out the window. Yes, the cap is still there, but this new agency called the Commission is given the power to raise or lower the cap, or waive it altogether, pursuant to standards that *it* is going to set. To keep any semblance of normalcy, the bill should be amended to include standards and criteria for raising, lowering, or waiving the cap to be sure that our elected policymakers are running the show and that our executive agencies are working off that script.

Digested: 3/10/2026

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/16/2026 9:13:49 PM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

My name is Joshua J. Meredith. I'm a Maui resident and member of IATSE Local 665, the union representing technicians and artisans in the entertainment industry in Hawai'i. I strongly support SB 2578.

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 3:37:04 PM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b>    | <b>Organization</b>           | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Genaro Hale Gualdarama | Hawaii Teamsters Local<br>996 | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair and members of the committee.

We stand in support of bill SB2578 with comments.

There should be (4) Unions on the film commission not just (2) two. reason being is TEAMSTERS, IATSE, SAG-AFTRA and MUSICIANS are the labor work force in the film industry and the professionals in there craft.

Let the truth be told, not everyone can drive a 10 ton truck, not everyone is a film technician, not everyone can act and not everyone can play music. Together as a whole we represent the labor professionals in this industry.

Mahalo and Thank You for your time.



Statement of  
Todd J. Robertson  
President/CEO  
Hyperspective  
before the House Committee on Economic Development & Technology

Friday, March 20, 2026, 09:30 am  
Conference Room 423  
State Capitol

Representative Adrian K. Tam, Kyle T. Yamashita, Shirley Ann Templo, Joe Gedeon

**In Support of SB2578 SD1**  
RELATING TO THE HAWAII FILM COMMISSION

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

My name is Todd J. Robertson, President and CEO of Hyperspective Studios, Inc. On behalf of Hyperspective, I **strongly support SB2578 SD1**.

This bill takes an important step toward strengthening Hawai'i's film industry by establishing a dedicated Hawai'i Film Commission within DBEDT and creating a Film Industry Development Special Fund.

A focused body and dedicated funding mechanism will help support long-term planning, better coordination, workforce development, and the infrastructure needed to grow this industry in a more strategic and sustained way.

SB2578 SD1 is a smart investment in the long-term success of Hawai'i's film sector. It will help create stronger industry coordination and a more solid foundation for future growth. I respectfully urge your support.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Todd J. Robertson  
President/CEO  
Hyperspective Studios, Inc.

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# Directors Guild of America, Inc.



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March 18, 2026

Hawai'i House of Representatives

Hearing of the Committee on Economic Development & Technology

Rep. Greggor Ilagan, Chair  
Rep. Ikaika Hussey, Vice Chair

Dear Chair Ilagan, Chair Hussey, and Committee Members:

On behalf of Directors Guild of America, I write in **support** of SB 2580 THE MOTION PICTURE, DIGITAL MEDIA, AND FILM PRODUCTION INCOME TAX CREDIT. This investment in our industry and its many working families who make their home in Hawai'i will provide a foundation for sustainable careers and economic opportunity.

The local Film & TV industry of Hawai'i has struggled to compete as other states and foreign countries lure production away with larger and more effective incentive programs. The updates included in SB 2580 will help us remain competitive and will protect the middle-class jobs that are so vital to the local economy. By increasing the allocation percentage, raising the aggregate cap, expanding the definition of "qualified productions" and extending the bill to 2038, you have made a commitment to bringing this work back.

Directors and their teams have been through an incredibly challenging period in recent years as local production has declined and they have struggled to maintain their livelihood as well as their health benefits— these important reforms will help ensure they can continue to find work locally and not be forced to choose between staying in Hawai'i or going elsewhere in order to stay in the entertainment industry.

I am also aware that you will be considering SB 2578 RELATING TO THE FILM INDUSTRY. As a general rule, the DGA believes that having a formal Film Commission, as well as representatives from across all interested parties, including Labor, Production, and Indigenous Communities, ensures that the state can collaborate with key stakeholders to support this important driver of local employment and economic stability.

We are extremely proud of our members contributions to the Hawai'i film industry and are grateful for the support from the legislature and our local leaders. We look forward to the passage of SB 2580 and the positive impact it will have.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Rhine  
Associate Executive Director

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 6:23:19 AM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| 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 both IATSE Local 665 and the Hawai‘i Film Alliance. I strongly support SF2578 SD1.

While I support the concept of establishing a formal Film Commission to advocate for our industry, this support is contingent upon two critical factors: 1. It is important that the commission is comprised of individuals with significant, hands-on experience in the film and television industry. Representation should include active workers and technicians who understand the day-to-day realities of production in the islands. 2. The implementation of this commission must be streamlined. We must ensure that a new administrative layer does not create delays in permitting or incentive processing, as such delays directly threaten local jobs and industry stability.

Ensuring workforce inclusion and administrative efficiency will protect Hawai‘i workers and ensure that our industry remains competitive in a global market.

I respectfully ask the committee to consider these points as the measure moves forward to ensure the commission serves as an accelerator for the industry, not a hurdle.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lisa Lee Mitchell

State of Hawai'i  
The Thirty-Third Legislature  
House of Representatives  
Committee on Department of Economic Development & Technology (ECD)

Friday, March 20, 2026  
9:30 AM – Room 423, HI State Capitol

**COMMENTS REGARDING SB 2578 SD 1**  
**RELATING TO THE FILM INDUSTRY**

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

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony for **SB 2578 SD 1 with COMMENTS**.

The Hawai'i Film Alliance (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 that enables films to operate locally.

HFA supports the intent behind this measure which creates a statutory Hawai'i Film Commission, transferring existing film office duties into a dedicated governance structure, and establishing a Film Industry Development Special Fund to support incentives, workforce development, industry promotion and infrastructure.

Film production is no longer “just arts.” It is a capital-intensive sector tied to infrastructure, permitting speed, workforce pipelines and public-private partnerships. Other jurisdictions use commissions or media authorities to integrate these functions, and that governance capacity and certainty determine where production goes.

In an increasingly competitive global environment, jurisdictions are modernizing their film support systems by creating integrated authorities that can respond efficiently to industry needs, invest in next generation technologies and align workforce development with emerging modes of content creation. SB 2578 SD 1 presents an opportunity for Hawai'i to strengthen its economic development strategy by improving coordination, accountability, and operational efficiency within this sector.

At the same time, SB 2578 SD 1 needs targeted amendments to become a workable, accountable modernization rather than a symbolic vehicle.



To minimize disruption during active production and ongoing operations, HFA respectfully offers the following considerations as this measure advances:

1. That consideration be taken regarding the existing film office staff and preserving institutional knowledge and operational continuity be a priority.
2. That clarification on who does what in administering the film tax credit under HRS 235.17 is provided so roles and responsibilities of staff and commissioners are clear.
3. That the permitting system be streamlined across all government properties in a consistent and equitable manner to reduce delays and improve cost predictability for productions.
4. That the ability to waive or modify the \$17M per production cap comes with parameters, guardrails and transparency. We urge the Legislature to require criteria such as local hire targets, workforce investments, minimum in-state spend thresholds and public reporting on waiver decisions and their impact on the annual cap distribution.
5. That representation for labor unions be increased to ensure workplace perspectives are represented and transparent. Those labor union film commission members shall be the heads of their locals as ex officio members with voting rights. They should be Hawai'i residents and members in good standing of the following entertainment industry unions: IATSE Local 665, SAG-AFTRA Hawai'i, Hawai'i Teamsters Local 996, American Federation of Musicians Local 677, Directors Guild of America, Writers Guild of America (East and West), and the Producers Guild of America, some of which maintain offices in Hawai'i.
6. That the county film office commissioners be ex officio members with voting rights.
7. That should the role of the Hawai'i Film Commission extend beyond an advisory capacity, commission members and/or staff be compensated fairly in recognition of their responsibilities and contributions.

With these considerations, SB 2578 SD 1 can enhance Hawai'i's economic development goals by strengthening a high-value, export-oriented industry that supports local jobs, small businesses, and workforce development statewide.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this measure. Please consider implementing the above **AMENDMENTS BEFORE PASSING SB 2578 SD 1.**

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 9:36:32 AM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 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 Hawai'i Media Inc., which is the largest provider of Production, Camera, Lighting and Grip equipment in the state of Hawai'i since 1992. Also, I have been a member of IATSE Local 665, the union representing technicians and artisans in the entertainment industry in Hawai'i since 1981.

I **STRONGLY SUPPORT SB2578** relating to the film industry.

I want to thank the entire legislature for their efforts during this session to enhance the production income tax credit. As the owner and president of the largest vendor in this sector in Hawai'i, I can testify without reservation that the measures suggested in this bill will be exceptionally effective in revitalizing the movie production industry in general, and my company specifically. I would expect to be hiring additional workforce shortly after the bill's passage.

I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony on this important matter.

Mahalo,

Danny Rosner

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 11:26:31 AM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b>     | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Tyler Young         | Tyler Young Films, LLC. | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

**IN SUPPORT of SB2578 SD1 – Hawaii Film Commission**

My name is Tyler Young. I am a Film & Television Producer based here in Honolulu, and I am submitting testimony in strong support of SB 2578 SD1. In the last 25 years I have produced over 450 different productions for the film & television industry. As a Creative Producer, Line Producer, and Unit Production Manager, I have worked with many different film commissions in the US and around the world. A strong film commission is indispensable to supporting film and television production, and a great asset to producers like me looking to bring new productions to our state.

Establishing a Hawai‘i Film Commission helps provide long-term structure and focus for growing the state’s film and television industry. A dedicated commission can support workforce development, strategic planning, and industry coordination that benefits local workers and businesses. I respectfully urge your support.

Sincerely,

Tyler Young

Creative Producer

Tyler Young Films, LLC.

Honolulu, Hawai‘i

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/16/2026 1:54:15 PM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

I am testifying in support of SB2578.

I agree with the findings of the previous committee in that instead of having an office that interacts with film projects, Hawai'i needs a commission to be building the film industry in Hawai'i, focusing on workforce development, infrastructure development, and industry development. We need to be building the industry so that we are telling our stories, not just other people's stories being told in Hawai'i.

The film industry is another economic driver that can help us move away from tourism, and we need to support that. It can build our own people up to have sustainable and meaningful employment, if we support it the right way, and I believe a commission will be able to do that.

Mahalo for your consideration,  
Keoni Shizuma



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March 20, 2026

Committee on Economic Development and Technology  
Chair Ilagan  
Vice Chair Hussey

The House of Representatives  
The Thirty-Third Legislature  
Regular Session of 2026

[RE: SB 2578 SD1 RELATING TO THE FILM INDUSTRY.](#)

DATE: Friday, March 20, 2026

TIME: 9:30 am

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 offer **comments** on [SB 2578 SD1 RELATING TO THE FILM INDUSTRY.](#)

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.

The film and television/digital media industry is too economically important, logistically complex, and globally far reaching to not have a film commission. This is an idea that is long overdue. Creating a film commission will go a long way to ensuring transparency, fair play, and effectiveness.

A dedicated film commission provides the necessary industry expertise the state needs to provide stability in our film industry. The proposed board structure, which includes representatives from labor, global production, and indigenous storytelling, ensures that the state's strategy is informed by actual practitioners and cultural stewards.

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Mericia Palma Elmore, JD/MLSc  
Executive Director  
SAG-AFTRA Hawaii Local  
mericia.palmaelmore@sagaftra.org  
201 Merchant St. Suite 2301  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
Ph: 808-596-0388 Fax: 808-593-2636

SCREEN ACTORS GUILD - AMERICAN FEDERATION OF  
TELEVISION AND RADIO ARTISTS  
SAGAFTRA.org  
Associated Actors & Artistes of America / AFL-CIO



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While we recognize the vital importance of establishing the Commission, we respectfully defer to the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) regarding the specific administrative and fiscal restructuring proposed in the measure.

We believe DBEDT is best positioned to comment on the operational feasibility of these transfers, the fiscal impact of diverting fees between special funds, and the internal logistical requirements of transitioning the Hawaii Film Office's duties to the new Commission.

We are grateful for the legislature's continued support of our industry. Please don't hesitate to reach out to our offices for more information on how this measure impacts our members, your constituents.

*Mericia Palma Elmore*

Respectfully,

Mericia Palma Elmore, Executive Director SAG-AFTRA Hawaii Local

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Mericia Palma Elmore, JD/MLSc  
Executive Director  
SAG-AFTRA Hawaii Local  
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SCREEN ACTORS GUILD - AMERICAN FEDERATION OF  
TELEVISION AND RADIO ARTISTS  
SAGAFTRA.org  
Associated Actors & Artistes of America / AFL-CIO

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/16/2026 3:04:58 PM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Eric Uyeda          | Individual          | Oppose                    | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Chair and Members of the Committee:

I am submitting this testimony in strong opposition to HB2578. While I support strengthening Hawai‘i’s film industry, this bill does not achieve meaningful reform. It rebrands an underperforming office, consolidates power, and creates new financial mechanisms with insufficient transparency.

This Is a Rebrand, Not a Reform. Section 9 transfers every officer, employee, contract, and file from the Hawai‘i Film Office directly to the new commission — no performance review, no leadership change, no accountability for past failures. This does not create a new institution. It creates a legal container for the one that already exists and hands it more authority.

The Special Fund Lacks Basic Safeguards. The new Film Industry Development Special Fund has no spending caps by category, no independent auditor, no public disclosure of grants before disbursement, and no clawback provisions. The only accountability is a self-reported annual report written by the same commission spending the money. Before creating a new, larger fund under this same structure, the Legislature should demand a full accounting of the 2021 local filmmaker fund — where that money went and what it produced.

The Tax Credit Waiver Is an Unchecked Power Grab. The amendment to §235-17(1) lets the commission waive the \$17 million per-production tax credit cap under criteria it writes itself, with no legislative approval and no advance public notice. This transfers significant fiscal authority away from the Legislature with no safeguards.

I urge the committee to require a public accounting of existing fund expenditures, mandate independent oversight, establish a transparent grant process with published criteria, and appoint new executive leadership through an open process rather than transferring the existing Film Office staff wholesale.

Hawai‘i’s filmmakers and taxpayers deserve a commission built for transparency from the ground up. HB2578 does not deliver that.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/16/2026 9:54:25 PM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members,

My name is Fabienne Lequertier, and I am a member of the *Magnum P.I.* fandom.

I respectfully offer comments on SB2578. I support the concept of establishing a Film Commission, provided that labor has meaningful representation and that implementation is streamlined to avoid delays that could affect local jobs.

Ensuring workforce inclusion and administrative efficiency will help protect Hawai'i's workers and maintain stability within the industry.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,  
Fabienne Lequertier

Member of Fandom of MagnumPI

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 9:39:23 AM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Please support this bill.

Mahalo!

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 9:41:21 AM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b>                | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Vincent Laurent Loïc<br>LEQUERTIER | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members,

My name is Vincent Lequertier, and I am a member of the Magnum P.I. fandom with a strong interest in Hawai‘i’s film and television industry.

I respectfully offer comments on SB2578. I support the concept of establishing a Film Commission, provided that labor has meaningful and effective representation and that its implementation is carefully streamlined to avoid delays that could negatively affect local jobs and ongoing productions.

Ensuring workforce inclusion alongside administrative efficiency will help protect Hawai‘i’s workers, support fair opportunities, and maintain long-term stability within the industry.

Mahalo for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Respectfully,  
Vincent Lequertier  
Fandom of Magnum PI

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 12:08:44 PM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

I SUPPORT SB 2578, establishing a Hawaii Film Commission.

This Film Commission would, hopefully, help bring in more work for locals who work in the film industry, help pass legislation that will have a positive effect on the Hawaii Film Industry, and give us all more work.

Please pass SB 2578.

Mahalo,

Jean Simon

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 10:30:51 PM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

I am in support of this bill, and hope that if it is passed it will create more opportunities for local jobs to be created, which will create positive ripple effects across the entire local economy. Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration.

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 10:37:55 PM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

I support SB 2578 SD1 and the establishment of a Hawai'i Film Commission within DBEDT. As Hawai'i's film and television industry continues to grow, having a dedicated body focused specifically on industry development will help ensure that growth is organized, sustainable and beneficial to local communities.

Creating a Film Industry Development Special Fund may also provide important resources to support workforce development, infrastructure improvements, and initiatives that can help strengthen Hawai'i's position as a filming destination. With better coordination and long-term planning, Hawai'i can continue to attract productions while also building opportunities for local workers, businesses, and advertisement opportunities.

This proposal helps lay the groundwork for a stronger, more stable film industry in Hawai'i by helping to improve coordination, supporting workforce development, and investing in the infrastructure needed to support future productions.

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 7:34:41 AM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Testimony in Support of Bill SB 2578

Dear Members of the Committee,

My name is Bryan Spicer, and I have had the privilege of serving as the Executive Producer and Director on series such as Hawaii Five-0 and Magnum P.I. Over the past decade, I have witnessed firsthand the growth of the film industry in this beautiful state.

I am writing to express my strong support for Bill SB 2578, which seeks to establish a film commission. This initiative is crucial for several reasons:

1. **Support for Industry Growth-** A dedicated film commission will provide the necessary resources and guidance for filmmakers, ensuring that our industry continues to thrive and attract diverse projects.
2. **Long-Term Planning:** Establishing a film commission will enable strategic planning for the future of our industry, fostering an environment where both new and established local filmmakers can succeed.
3. **Strengthening Workforce and Infrastructure:** A film commission will not only enhance our workforce development through training and educational programs but also prioritize infrastructure improvements essential for supporting film production.

The establishment of a film commission will be a significant step forward in solidifying Hawaii's position as a premier filming destination. We also feel the Local DGA, Directors Guild of America, should be represented in the new film Commission. This would take advantage of the practical skill set and critical mainland knowledge the DGA brings to filming in Hawaii. I urge you to support Bill SB 2578 for the benefit of our local economy, workforce, and the creative arts.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Bryan Spicer  
Director - DGA



**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 8:28:12 AM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chairs & Members,

My name is Tara F.Laulu. I'm a member of Fandoms of MagnumPI 2018,

I OFFER COMMENTS ON SB2578

I SUPPORT THE CONCEPT OF A FILM COMMISSION PROVIDED THAT LABOR HAS MEANINGFUL REPRESENTATION AND THAT IMPLEMENTATION IS STREAMLINED TO AVOID DELAYS AFFECTING LOCAL JOBS.

ENSURING WORKFORCE INCLUSIONS AND ADMINISTRATIVE EFFICIENCY WILL PROTECT HAWAII WORKERS AND FILM INDUSTRY STABILITY.

MAHALO NUI LOA FOR CONSIDERATION,

TARA F. LAULU

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 8:53:41 AM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha, my name is Malik Haynes. I strongly support SB2578. This bill will allow Hawaii to have some support when it comes to the Hawaii movie industry. When it comes to the industry we need as much support as we can.

The film industry has done so much for me and my family. Having support is something that we lack here. Everyone is split up & doing their own thing. This bill helps oversee film and productions activities for the state. Having something like this would be a positive impact for the people.

Mahalo for your time and consideration 🍷

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:42:34 AM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

I strongly support SB 2578 SD1.

Establishing a Hawai‘i Film Commission is an important step toward creating long-term structure and vision for the growth of Hawai‘i’s film and television industry. A dedicated commission focused on industry development can help strengthen coordination, support strategic planning, and create sustainable pathways for workforce and infrastructure growth that benefit local workers, creatives, and small businesses across the state.

As a local writer and creative professional, I believe strongly in the potential for Hawai‘i to build a thriving and self-sustaining film industry. Many local creatives, including myself, carry stories that reflect the uniqueness of our islands and our people. However, turning those ideas into real opportunities requires support systems, industry guidance, and long-term planning. Establishing a Film Commission would help provide that foundation by creating clearer direction, stronger partnerships, and more consistent support for those working to build careers in film and television here at home.

Beyond the creative community, a stronger film industry benefits the broader local economy. Productions bring work not only to cast and crew, but also to local vendors, transportation services, hospitality businesses, and many other small enterprises that rely on industry activity. A dedicated commission can help ensure these opportunities are developed thoughtfully and sustainably for the long term.

I respectfully urge your support for SB 2578 SD1 so that Hawai‘i can continue building a coordinated, forward-thinking film industry that supports local talent, strengthens our economy, and allows our stories to be shared with the world

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:51:36 AM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the committee.

I stand in support of bill SB2578 with comments.

There should be (4) Unions on the film commission not just (2) two. reason being is TEAMSTERS, IATSE, SAG-AFTRA and MUSICIANS are the labor work force in the film industry and the professionals in their craft.

Having a seat at the table with those who perform the work on a daily basis is the most effective and safest way to do it.

Mahalo and Thank You for your time.

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 12:03:29 PM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| 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 appreciate the intent behind SB 2578 SD1, which seeks to strengthen the long-term development of Hawai‘i’s film industry by establishing a Film Commission and restructuring how film-related programs are administered.

The goal of creating a more focused structure for film policy is understandable. Hawai‘i’s film industry has grown significantly over the past several decades, and it now supports thousands of local workers and small businesses. As the industry continues to evolve, thoughtful governance and coordination will be important to ensure the state can remain competitive and responsive to industry needs.

However, structural changes to how the industry is administered should be approached carefully. Hawai‘i’s film ecosystem already relies on coordination between multiple stakeholders, including the Hawai‘i Film Office, DBEDT, county permitting agencies, unions, vendors, and production companies. Any restructuring should ensure that existing operational functions—such as permitting coordination, tax credit administration, and workforce development—remain efficient and clearly defined.

It is also important that any new structure maintains strong alignment with the practical realities of film production. Productions ultimately choose locations based on predictable incentives, experienced crews, reliable permitting processes, and available infrastructure. Administrative restructuring alone will not address those fundamental factors unless it is paired with policies that strengthen Hawai‘i’s competitiveness.

For these reasons, while I appreciate the intent of SB 2578 SD1, I encourage careful consideration of how this proposed structure would interact with existing agencies and programs that currently support the film industry.

The success of Hawai'i's film industry depends on stability, coordination, and policies that support local workers and businesses. Any changes to the current framework should prioritize those outcomes.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 12:44:13 PM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b>  | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Zenues-Jay Vaimanino | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

I support! In full solidarity with all of Hawai'i Film Alliance and those who dream of a Hawai'i filled with superstars.

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 2:28:06 PM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b>         | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Moana Coloma<br>Quintanilla | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

I support SB 2578 because a dedicated film commission will help strengthen long-term planning and support the growth of Hawai'i's film industry.

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 8:32:35 PM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

I strongly support this bill.

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:11:49 PM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

I strongly support SB2578 SD1 as it will strengthen Hawai'i's film and television industry. The industry provides critical jobs for local workers and supports many small businesses throughout our communities. Continued investment and coordination will help ensure Hawai'i remains competitive and able to sustain long-term production.

I believe that strengthening the TV / film industry workforce is crucial to our economy. I was fortunate to be in the Television Production Program at Leeward Community College. I changed careers at 37 years old and was glad to learn technical and soft skills in the TV Production Program. I graduated in 2019 and worked on Magnum P.I., NCIS: Hawai'i, and am currently the producer's assistant on Untamed.

I would love to stay in Hawai'i as long as possible to grow my career. I'd like to be a producer. I love working in studio productions because I get paid to learn and expand my network. I apply what I've learned in studio productions to independent short film projects. My dream is to create a TV show that takes place in Hawai'i and to employ as many locals as possible.

It's great to have studio productions here because not only does that provide jobs to locals, but people like me can get hands-on experience and move up in the ranks. It can get to a point where we won't need so many department heads from the continent and we can have local department heads. Since I started in the local TV / film industry, I've seen my peers and other locals move up within their departments, and it's exciting to grow with them.

Please continue to support the local TV / film industry. It diversifies the economy and keeps local families here rather than having them relocate and find jobs outside of the industry.

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 3:28:35 AM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

I wholeheartedly support the creation of a film commission on the island. There are many high net worth individuals who live on the island who would love to be cultivated to invest in this vision. The more resources and support the film commission has, the stronger the local film industry becomes, insuring economic stability for the individuals who work in the industry as well as the local businesses that depend on this ecosystem to thrive.

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 8:21:55 AM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

SUPPORT. MAHALO!

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 9:05:20 AM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Hitomi Imai Rosner  | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

My name is Hitomi Rosner.

I STRONGLY SUPPORT SB2578 relating to the film production income tax credit.

I want to thank the entire legislature for their efforts during this session to enhance the production income tax credit.

I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony on this important matter.

Mahalo,

Hitomi Rosner

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 10:50:50 AM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

As a local actor, I support this bill and how it will positively impact our economy, our community, and my community's ability to maintain a sustainable life. Mahalo

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 11:05:18 AM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha! I am writing in support of SB2578 SD1. We need a dedicated film commission so when major projects want to come to the islands and film, we are organized and ready to receive them. Preparedness and timeliness enforced with a film commission will ensure we don't lose projects. Mahalo again for your help!

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 11:51:31 AM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

I support SB 2578 because a dedicated film commission will help strengthen long-term planning, leading to job stability, and support the growth of Hawai'i's film industry, which can lead to a healthier economy for Hawaiis film industry, and more jobs for locals.

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 12:43:33 PM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

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

My name is Grace Hall, and I respectfully submit testimony in strong support of SB2578 SD1.

I have worked in Hawai‘i’s film and television industry for over five years as a stand-in, stunt performer, and as a script supervisor. For many of us in this industry, film work is not just occasional employment—it is our livelihood.

Behind every production filmed in Hawai‘i are hundreds of local crew members who rely on this industry to support themselves and their families. From camera teams and grips to costume, makeup, transportation, and production departments, this industry provides real jobs for local residents.

Establishing a Hawai‘i Film Commission would provide the leadership and coordination needed to support the long-term growth of this industry. A dedicated commission can help strengthen workforce development, support local talent, and ensure Hawai‘i continues to remain competitive as a filming destination.

Creating a Film Industry Development Special Fund is also an important step toward investing in the future of this industry and the local workforce that powers it.

The film industry has provided meaningful opportunities for me and many others who want to continue living and working in Hawai'i. I respectfully urge you to support SB2578 SD1 to help ensure that this industry continues to grow and provide opportunities for local workers.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Grace Hall

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 12:46:52 PM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify           |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Tristy       | Individual   | Support            | Remotely Via Zoom |

Comments:

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

I strongly support SB 2578, which establishes a Hawai‘i Film Commission and a Film Industry Development Special Fund to strengthen the long-term growth and sustainability of Hawai‘i’s film and media industry.

This legislation impacts thousands of local residents, including many friends, colleagues, neighbors, and family members working in the industry. Film and television production supports a wide network of jobs and small businesses across hospitality, transportation, construction, equipment rentals, and more. I have personally seen crew members struggle or turn to other work during slow periods when productions are not here.

As someone working in the industry as talent and an emerging producer, I have had to expand into other markets to maintain consistent opportunities while striving to bring that work back home. I have also had to personally invest in my own training, classes, and resources, and having stronger infrastructure to support these efforts would be greatly beneficial for many in our local workforce.

Hawai‘i has the talent, infrastructure, and potential to sustain far more opportunities locally, retain our workforce, and further diversify and stimulate our economy beyond tourism.

Those of us in the industry also serve as ambassadors for Hawai‘i by helping connect projects, producers, and creative talent to the islands. Establishing a dedicated Film Commission and development fund will help ensure our local cast and crews are prepared for future productions while building a lasting industry that benefits both current and future generations.

Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Tristy Chun

Honolulu, Hawai‘i

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 1:41:15 PM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Richard Aiwohi-Kim  | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I strongly support SB 2578.

This bill will help to develop long-term planning for the local film industry which will help local jobs. This will help the industry to develop plans and for the industry here in Hawai‘i.

Again, I strongly urge your support for SB 2578.

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 2:35:09 PM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha,

my name is Nicholas Paul Myers. I am an actor and film maker based on the island of Oahu. I strongly support SB2578 as it will keep the future of Hawai'i's film industry secure for a long time to come.

Thank you,

Nicholas Paul Myers

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 4:09:30 PM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

| Submitted By   | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| sue chipperton | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2578**

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

My name is **Sue Chipperton**, and I strongly support **SB 2578**.

This bill is important because Hawai‘i’s film industry needs strong infrastructure and leadership, not just incentives. SB 2578 establishes the **Hawai‘i Film Commission** within DBEDT, transfers the duties of the Hawai‘i Film Office to that commission, and creates a **Film Industry Development Special Fund**. The bill is based on the recognition that Hawai‘i must compete not only through tax credits, but also through stronger infrastructure, workforce readiness, technological capacity, and speed of execution.

Since 2014, through my company **Check The Gate**, I have hired local pet owners, livestock owners, ranch owners, and others in Hawai‘i, paying out **hundreds of thousands of dollars** locally in connection with production work. I have seen firsthand how production supports a much wider network of local workers and small businesses than many people realize.

SB 2578 would help Hawai‘i build a stronger long-term framework for film and television production, improve coordination, and support local workforce and industry growth.

I respectfully urge you to pass **SB 2578**.

Mahalo,  
**Sue Chipperton**  
**Check The Gate**

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 4:33:01 PM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2578

Relating to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Industry

Position: STRONGLY SUPPORT

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kristen Davis. I am a self-employed small business owner, a wife, and a mother of four here in Hawai‘i. I run my own animal training business and also work in film production as an animal trainer. I am writing in strong support of SB 2578.

Film production plays a significant role in my ability to support my family while continuing to grow my small business here in Hawai‘i. The income I earn from working on productions helps create stability in an otherwise unpredictable self-employed income, especially while raising four young children.

Recently, the slowdown in production has been impossible to ignore. Work opportunities have become inconsistent, and many experienced local crew members are leaving the industry or relocating because they cannot rely on steady employment. When that happens, Hawai‘i loses not only jobs but also the skilled workforce that makes it possible to safely and efficiently support future productions.

SB 2578 is important because it helps strengthen Hawai‘i’s ability to remain competitive in an industry where productions have many options. Other locations are actively making it easier and

more attractive for productions to film there. Without thoughtful policies that support this industry, Hawai'i will continue to be passed over.

Film production supports a wide network of local workers and small businesses—not just those directly on set. It creates opportunities across multiple sectors and brings meaningful economic activity into our communities.

For me personally, this work allows me to stay rooted here while continuing to provide for my children and invest in my business. It is not just about one job—it is about maintaining a way of life and the ability to remain in Hawai'i long-term.

I respectfully urge the Committee to PASS SB 2578 and continue supporting policies that keep Hawai'i competitive, retain local talent, and provide real opportunities for working families.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 4:53:27 PM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

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

Comments:

WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2578

Relating to the Motion Picture, Digital Media, and Film Production Industry

Position: STRONGLY SUPPORT

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Katie jurgensen. I am a self-employed small business owner, a wife, and a mother of four here in Hawai‘i. I run my own animal training business and also work in film production as an animal trainer. I am writing in strong support of SB 2578.

Film production plays a significant role in my ability to support my family while continuing to grow my small business here in Hawai‘i. The income I earn from working on productions helps create stability in an otherwise unpredictable self-employed income, especially while raising four young children.

Recently, the slowdown in production has been impossible to ignore. Work opportunities have become inconsistent, and many experienced local crew members are leaving the industry or relocating because they cannot rely on steady employment. When that happens, Hawai‘i loses not only jobs but also the skilled workforce that makes it possible to safely and efficiently support future productions.

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For me personally, this work allows me to stay rooted here while continuing to provide for my children and invest in my business. It is not just about one job—it is about maintaining a way of life and the ability to remain in Hawai'i long-term.

I respectfully urge the Committee to PASS SB 2578 and continue supporting policies that keep Hawai'i competitive, retain local talent, and provide real opportunities for working families.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 5:31:03 PM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

| Submitted By   | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify                |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| NICOLE ROMBAOA | Individual   | Support            | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha, Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Nicole Rombaoa, and I am a professional actor and creator who has lived and worked in Hawai‘i for 37 years. I am writing in strong support of SB 2578, which would establish the Hawai‘i Film Commission within the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, create a dedicated Film Industry Development Special Fund, and build a formal framework for workforce development and long-term industry growth. This bill is about more than organizational structure — it is about giving Hawai‘i’s film industry the institutional foundation it needs to compete, grow, and sustain careers for the people who have chosen to make their lives here.

**The Hawai‘i Film Office Has Been Asked to Do Too Much With Too Little**

The Hawai‘i Film Office has served our industry for over four decades, and I have deep respect for the dedicated staff who have worked hard within its constraints. But the reality is that the Film Office operates as a small division within a much larger state bureaucracy, without the independent authority, dedicated funding, or staffing levels needed to aggressively recruit productions, develop workforce pipelines, and strategically grow our industry. We have watched as states and countries with better-resourced film agencies have steadily pulled productions away from Hawai‘i. Last year, for the first time in twenty years, the islands began the year without a single active production filming here. That is not a coincidence — it is the predictable result of trying to compete in a global industry with an underpowered office. SB 2578 changes that by elevating the Film Office into a Commission with the structure, leadership, and funding to do what the moment requires.

**A Formal Commission Sends a Signal That Hawai‘i Is Serious**

In the entertainment industry, institutional structure matters. When a studio or streaming platform is evaluating where to film, they are not just looking at tax credits — they are looking at who they will be working with, how responsive and capable the state’s film agency is, and whether that agency has the authority and credibility to make things happen. A Film Commission with a dedicated board, an executive director, and a clear mandate to develop a five-year strategic plan for the industry communicates something that a Film Office tucked inside a division cannot: that Hawai‘i views film and production as a strategic economic priority, not an afterthought. Commissioners from education, the University of Hawai‘i, the Office of Hawaiian

Affairs, and the private sector sitting at the same table — as SB 2578 envisions — sends a powerful message to the industry that this state is organized, committed, and ready to be a genuine partner.

#### A Dedicated Fund Means Dedicated Investment — Not Dependence on the Annual Budget Cycle

One of the most consequential provisions of SB 2578 is the establishment of the Film Industry Development Special Fund, which would be fed by revenues, fees, and charges generated through the film production tax credit process itself. This is a smart and sustainable funding model. Rather than competing year after year for general fund appropriations — a process that leaves film industry support vulnerable to budget pressures and shifting legislative priorities — the industry would have a dedicated, self-reinforcing source of investment. Those funds could be used for exactly the things our industry needs most: financial support and seed capital for local productions, infrastructure improvements, industry promotion and marketing, and workforce development programs. For a working actor and creator, knowing that there is a stable, dedicated fund behind these efforts provides the kind of long-term confidence that makes it worth committing to a career here rather than leaving for the mainland.

#### Workforce Development Is the Foundation of a Sustainable Industry

The most urgent problem facing Hawai‘i’s film industry right now is not a lack of beautiful locations — it is a workforce that has been hollowed out by years of inconsistent production activity. When productions dry up, crew members leave the industry or leave the islands. When they come back, there is no one to hire. I have watched this cycle play out firsthand. [You may add a specific personal example here, e.g.: "I have seen colleagues with years of experience in our industry take warehouse jobs or move to the mainland because there simply was not enough work to sustain them here."] SB 2578 directly addresses this by requiring the Commission to develop and implement a five-year strategic workforce plan, report annually to the Legislature on workforce initiatives, and use the Film Industry Development Special Fund to build skills and capacity in film production, digital media, and related technical fields. This is not just about training — it is about building the kind of deep, reliable talent base that makes Hawai‘i a place productions can depend on, year after year.

#### Conclusion

SB 2578 is the structural foundation that all of our other film industry legislation depends on. Tax credits and local hire incentives are powerful tools, but they need a capable, well-resourced institution to implement them effectively, to market Hawai‘i to the world, and to build the workforce that makes good on our state’s promise to productions. The Hawai‘i Film Commission, the Film Industry Development Special Fund, and the workforce development mandate in SB 2578 provide exactly that foundation. As a working actor and creator who has dedicated my career to this industry in these islands, I urge this committee to pass SB 2578 and give Hawai‘i the film industry infrastructure our talent and our community deserve. Mahalo nui loa for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Nicole Rombaoa

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2026 1:05:22 AM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| O. Carr             | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

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

My name is 'O'oe Carr, and I am a Native Hawaiian SAG Union actor here in Hawai'i. I am writing in strong support of SB 2578.

As someone working in the film and television industry, I've seen firsthand how vital consistent productions are for local talent. When major productions come to Hawai'i, they create real opportunities for actors like me to book larger roles to compete with actors from other markets. As well as more work opportunity for crews, small businesses, and the broader community. When those productions leave, those opportunities disappear just as quickly.

Establishing a Hawai'i Film Commission will help create a more stable and competitive environment, so productions continue choosing to film in Hawai'i for years to come. It also means better coordination, stronger support for local talent, and more long-term career pathways for those of us trying to build a life in this industry without leaving home.

This bill is about keeping creative jobs in Hawai'i and giving local artists a fair chance to succeed.

I respectfully urge you to pass SB 2578.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

**SB-2578-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/20/2026 1:52:01 AM

Testimony for ECD on 3/20/2026 9:30:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b>   | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b> |
|---------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| Asher Morgado       | Hawai'i Film Alliance | Support                   | In Person      |

Comments:

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

My name is Asher Morgado. I am 19 years old, born and raised in Hawai'i, and I am pursuing my dream of becoming a professional actor and film director. I respectfully submit this testimony in strong support of SB2578.

For many young people in Hawai'i who dream of working in film, television, and media, the path forward often feels like it only exists somewhere else. Too many local artists, actors, and filmmakers are forced to leave the islands to chase opportunities in places like Los Angeles, Vancouver, or Atlanta. That shouldn't have to be the story for Hawai'i's next generation of storytellers.

Hawai'i is one of the most visually stunning and culturally rich places in the world. But what truly makes our islands special is our people and our stories. We have talented actors, writers, filmmakers, musicians, dancers, and technicians right here at home who are ready to contribute to a thriving film industry. What we need is the infrastructure and support that will allow that talent to grow here.

When the film industry grows in Hawai'i, it creates real opportunities for local families. It means jobs for camera crews, electricians, set builders, drivers, makeup artists, editors, and many others. It supports local businesses, restaurants, hotels, and small vendors. And for young creatives like myself, it means the chance to learn, work, and build a career without having to leave the place we love most.

I believe Hawai'i can become a powerful hub for storytelling that reflects our unique culture, values, and perspective. But that will only happen if we intentionally invest in the future of the industry and support policies that strengthen it. SB2578 is an important step toward ensuring that Hawai'i remains competitive and continues to attract productions that create jobs, develop local talent, and inspire the next generation.

As someone who hopes to one day direct films and tell meaningful stories from Hawai'i to the world, I ask you to please support SB2578. Passing this bill sends a message that Hawai'i believes in its creative community and in the young people who are working hard to build a future here.

Mahalo for your time and for supporting the future of Hawai'i's film industry.

With respect and gratitude,

Asher Morgado

Local Actor & Aspiring Film Director

Hawai'i