



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

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
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Statement of
GEORJA SKINNER
Administrator, Creative Industries Division
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the
SENATE COMMITTEES ON WAYS AND MEANS

Tuesday, March 3, 2026
10:17 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

In consideration of
SB3085 SD1
RELATING TO THE HAWAII FILM STUDIO

Chair Dela Cruz, Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee. The Creative Industries Division (CID) of the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) strongly supports **SB3085, SD1**, relating to the Hawai'i Film Studio on 18th Avenue, to amend section 171-11 Hawai'i Revised Statutes to streamline the ability to meet production timelines by providing the Director of DBEDT the ability to authorize and approve production tenancy at the site through an amendment to this section.

This administrative bill optimizes the process for this purpose-built facility, in which the state has invested more than \$25 million in capital improvements over the time the department has held the executive order for oversight. Through this proposed administration amendment, DBEDT is able to ensure productions an efficient and effective process which aligns with the specific needs of the industry, particularly series productions who are core to the growth of our production workforce.

We appreciate this opportunity to testify.

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

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA
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COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
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CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES
ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

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

Before the Senate Committee on
WAYS AND MEANS

Tuesday, March 3, 2026
10:17 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

In consideration of
SENATE BILL 3085, SENATE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO THE HAWAII FILM STUDIO

Senate Bill 3085, Senate Draft 1 proposes to provide an exemption to dispositions of lands set aside for film studio and film studio operation from prior approval of the Board of Land and Natural Resources (BLNR) pursuant to section 171-11, Hawaii Revised Statutes, thus streamlining the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism's (DBEDT) use of the Hawaii Film Studio for filming activity and other film-related business in order to more efficiently develop Hawai'i's film, media, and creative industries. The studio falls under DBEDT through its Hawaii Film Office (HFO). **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports the measure and offers the following comments.**

Senate Bill 3085, Senate Draft 1 proposes to eliminate the need for HFO to get approval of new tenants from the BLNR. The Department has no objections to this as historically, once every few years, HFO would enter into a revocable permit agreement with a production company, the most recent production being "NCIS Hawaii" until it was recently replaced by "Untamed". The proposed change would reduce workload for the BLNR and the Department, while streamlining HFO's use of the film studio.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



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Statement of
JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA
Director
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Tuesday, March 3, 2026
10:17 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

In consideration of
SB 3085, SD1
RELATING TO THE HAWAII FILM STUDIO

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee:

The Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) strongly supports SB 3085, SD1 relating to the Hawai'i Film Studio, to amend section 171-11 Hawai'i Revised Statutes to streamline the ability to meet production timelines by providing the Director of DBEDT the ability to authorize and approve production tenancy at the site through an amendment to this section. Productions frequently need to confirm stage tenancy on short notice as financing, shipping, and episodic schedules change. When studio tenancy approvals must wait for an external meeting cycle, the result can be avoidable production delays or a reduction in the number of shoot days completed in Hawai'i. In today's competitive environment, productions can and do relocate portions of work elsewhere when timelines cannot be met.

Hawai'i's film and television activity represents substantial in-state spending and local hiring. DBEDT's cost-benefit reporting shows qualified expenditures in recent years ranging from approximately \$169 million to over \$333 million statewide, supporting thousands of hires and significant payments to Hawai'i-based businesses. Ensuring Hawai'i can execute quickly on facility access is a practical competitiveness issue.

This measure is intended to remove scheduling friction, not to reduce accountability. DBEDT will continue to require appropriate insurance, enforce facility terms and conditions, and maintain written policies and documentation for tenancy approvals.

DBEDT Testimony
SB 3085, SD1
March 3, 2026
Page 2 of 2

This administrative bill optimizes the process for this purpose-built facility which the state has invested more than \$25 million in capital improvements over the time the department has held the executive order for oversight. Through this administration proposed amendment, DBEDT is able to ensure productions an efficient and effective process which aligns with the specific needs of the industry, particularly series productions who are core to the growth of our production workforce.

We appreciate this opportunity to testify.

**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair**

**Tuesday, March 3, 2026, at 10:17AM
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference**

RE: SB3085 SD1 Relating to the Hawaii Film Studio

Aloha e Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Sherry Menor, President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber"). The Chamber supports Senate Bill 3085 Senate Draft 1 (SB3085 SD1), which provides an exemption to dispositions of lands set aside for film studio and film studio operation from prior approval of the Board of Land and Natural Resources pursuant, streamlining the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism's use of the Hawai'i film studio for filming activity and other film-related business in order to more efficiently develop Hawai'i's film, media, and creative industries.

SB3085 SD1 aligns with our 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii: An Economic Action Plan, specifically under the policy pillar for Economic Action. This bill helps to streamline the processes that enable film activity within the state. By providing this exemption, land used for film production becomes more accessible and the processes granting access become nimbler. By improving the accessibility to land and infrastructure, like the Hawaii Film Studio, the state can create reduction regulatory friction and encourage film industry interest in Hawaii. By encouraging these projects, the state supports the economic development opportunities available to all the industries that enable the viability of the film industry, such a travel, hotel, and restaurant. The film industry contributes diverse economic vitality to the state in the way of jobs, investment, and visitor industry demand.

For these reasons, we respectfully ask to pass Senate Bill 3085 Senate Draft 1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify

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

State of Hawai'i
The Thirty-Third Legislature
Ka'aha Kenekoa
Committee on Ways and Means (WAM)

Tuesday, March 3, 2026
10:17 AM – Room 211, HI State Capitol

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT SB 3085 SD 1
RELATING TO THE HAWAI'I FILM STUDIO

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Committee,

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **strong support of SB 3085 SD 1**.

The Hawai'i Film Alliance (HFA) represents a broad coalition of local film and television professionals, union members, creative workers, production companies, small businesses, and allied industry partners who live and work here at home. Our membership spans the full production ecosystem and depends on reliable infrastructure to sustain their livelihoods.

Film and television production is an important economic driver that supports jobs, small businesses, and economic diversification. For more than two decades, the Hawai'i Film Studio at Diamond Head served as a cornerstone of this ecosystem, providing a base for long-running television series and numerous productions which in turn provided stable employment and consistent economic activity across the islands.

Since major series concluded in 2023, the studio has not had a long-standing tenant. During this period, many film industry workers have exhausted unemployment benefits, relocated elsewhere for work, or left the industry entirely. At the same time, Hawai'i faces increasing competition from other regions that offer efficient access to production facilities and predictable administrative processes.

SB 3085 SD1 removes an unnecessary barrier from the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism's (DBEDT) authority to manage and lease film studio facilities efficiently. DBEDT is best positioned to ensure these publicly funded facilities remain active and productive. Streamlining administrative processes will help protect the State's existing investments and allow the studio to function as intended.

Reliable access to soundstage infrastructure is often a decisive factor when productions choose filming locations. Enabling timely and efficient leasing of the Hawai'i Film Studio will increase



Hawai'i's competitiveness, attract new productions, and generate economic activity that benefits residents, local vendors and surrounding communities.

Beyond economic benefits, an active studio strengthens Hawai'i's creative workforce and ensures that local storytellers have access to professional production resources.

SB 3085 SD 1 will help restore full use of the Hawai'i Film Studio, protect public investment, and support long-term economic opportunities for Hawai'i residents.

Alongside other measures supporting the film industry, SB 3085 SD1 signals that Hawai'i values its workforce, respects its investments, and intends to remain a viable production hub. At this moment, action is necessary to prevent further erosion of capacity and to position the state for renewed growth.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the Committees to **pass SB 3085 SD 1**. Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

LATE

SB-3085-SD-1

Submitted on: 3/2/2026 8:06:57 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Genaro Hale Gualdarama	Testifying for Hawaii Teamsters Local 996	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support of bill SB3085.