



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

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

In consideration of
SB3085
RELATING TO THE HAWAII FILM STUDIO

Chair DeCoite, Chair Lee, Vice Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Inouye, and members of the Committees. The Creative Industries Division (CID) of the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) strongly supports **SB3085**, 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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DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
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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
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM
AND
WATER, LAND, CULTURE AND THE ARTS

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

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

Senate Bill 3085 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 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 Hawai'i" 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.



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

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

In consideration of
SB 3085
RELATING TO THE HAWAII FILM STUDIO

Chairs DeCoite and Lee, Vice Chairs Wakai and Inouye, and members of the Committees. The Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) strongly supports SB 3085 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.

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.

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

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

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

Aloha Chairs DeCoite and Lee, Vice Chairs Wakai and Inouye, and Members of the Committee, Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support of SB 3085. 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 which includes crew, talent, producers, and supporting business owners.

For more than two decades, from 2001 to 2023, the Hawai'i Film Studio at Diamond Head served as a cornerstone of our local industry. Long-running television series such as "Lost", "Hawai'i Five-O" and "NCIS- Hawai'i" provided consistent, high-quality employment for hundreds of residents. These productions allowed local workers to build careers without leaving Hawai'i, to raise families, purchase homes and contribute steadily to our economy.

In 2023, those series concluded, and the studio fell vacant. Since then, many skilled workers have exhausted unemployment benefits, relocated to other states or countries for work, or left the industry entirely. We are now at a critical inflection point. Without decisive action, Hawai'i risks losing the infrastructure and workforce it has spent decades building.

The State has made significant investments in the film sector: a \$50 million film tax credit, film degree programs at UH-Mānoa and UH-West Oahu, collaboration with the U.S. Department of Defense to utilize the Kalaeloa Film Stage. These investments demonstrate Hawai'i's commitment to creative industries. However, in today's competitive global market, productions are choosing jurisdictions such as Aotearoa, the United Kingdom, Thailand, and other regions that combine strong incentives with streamlined operations.

SB 3085 addresses a practical barrier: the complexity and uncertainty surrounding use of the Hawai'i Film Studio. Currently, multiple procedural steps and layered approvals must align precisely before a tenant can access the facility. These additional hurdles are unique compared



to other state lands and create delays and uncertainty that can deter productions operating on tight timelines and budgets.

The measure sensibly exempts studio-related land use approvals from review by the Board of Land and Natural Resources review and enables the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) to more efficiently activate and manage film-related facilities. This is not about reducing oversight. It is about aligning process with purpose so that a dedicated production facility can function as intended.

Streamlining Operations for a Range of Productions

By reducing administrative friction, Hawai'i becomes more competitive for feature films, television series, commercials, documentaries, animation, and emerging digital media. Reliable access to soundstages and production space is often a deciding factor when productions choose where to locate. DB 3085 strengthens our ability to compete nationally and internationally.

Expanding Local Economic Opportunity

More production days translate directly into local spending on labor, equipment rentals, catering, lodging, transportation, construction, and small businesses across the state. Stable studio operations create consistent work for Hawai'i residents at every level of the industry and support long-term workforce development rather than short-term project spikes.

Strengthening Hawai'i's Creative and Cultural Presence

Film and television production does more than generate revenue. It elevates Hawai'i's cultural visibility, provides platforms for local storytellers and allows our communities to see themselves reflected on screen. A functioning, accessible public studio is foundational to sustaining that creative ecosystem

SB 3085, alongside other measures supporting the film industry, signals that Hawai'i values its workforce, respects its prior 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 and help ensure that Hawai'i's film infrastructure remains active, competitive, and accessible to the people it was built to serve.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony. **Please pass SB 3085.**

SB-3085

Submitted on: 2/18/2026 11:22:37 PM

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



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

Comments:

Support.

Testimony to the Senate Committee on Economic Development and Tourism
Senator Lynn DeCoite, Chair
Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

Testimony to the Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts
Senator Chris Lee, Chair
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair

LATE

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

RE: SB3085 Relating to the Hawaii Film Studio

Aloha e Chair DeCoite, Vice Chair Wakai, Chair Lee, Vice Chair Inouye, 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 (SB3085), 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 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 processing 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. 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. .

February 19, 2026

Senate Committee on Economic Development and Tourism
Senator Lynn DeCoite, Chair
Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Water, Land and Culture and the Arts
Senator Chris Lee, Chair
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair



Thursday, February 19, 2026, 1:02 p.m.
Conference Room #229 and via video conference



RE: SB 3085 – Relating to the Hawaii Film Studio

Dear Chairs DeCoite and Lee, Vice Chairs Wakai and Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Kiran Polk, and I am the Executive Director & CEO of the Kapolei Chamber of Commerce. The Kapolei Chamber of Commerce is an advocate for businesses in the Kapolei region including Waipahu, Kapolei, 'Ewa Beach, Nānakūli, Wai'anae, and Mākaha. We work on behalf of our members and the broader business community to improve the regional and State economic climate and to help West O'ahu businesses thrive.

The Kapolei Chamber of Commerce **supports SB 3085**, which streamlines the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism's use of the Hawai'i Film Studio by exempting film studio and film studio operations from prior approval by the Board of Land and Natural Resources.

A **strong and competitive film industry** is an important component of **Hawai'i's diversified economy**. Film and television productions **generate direct spending, support local small businesses, and create high-quality jobs** across a wide range of sectors including construction, transportation, catering, hospitality, equipment rental, and professional services.

Productions often must secure studio space on short notice due to financing, shipping, and episodic scheduling requirements. **Delays in facility approvals** can result in **lost production days** or the relocation of work to other states or countries. **SB 3085 improves efficiency and predictability** in the use of an existing state asset while maintaining its public purpose.

From a **West O'ahu perspective**, a **stable and growing film industry** supports **local employment opportunities** and strengthens the **broader small business ecosystem**. West O'ahu is experiencing **significant population growth and ongoing economic development**, and the creative industries including film, media, and digital production represent an important pathway for **workforce development and career opportunities for local residents**.

Importantly, **SB 3085 is an administrative, streamlining measure** that improves **operational efficiency** without expanding the footprint of public lands or altering the underlying public purpose of the Hawai'i Film Studio. Ensuring Hawai'i can operate its film infrastructure in a timely and predictable manner is essential to **supporting local businesses, workers, and long-term economic resilience**.

For these reasons, the Kapolei Chamber of Commerce **supports SB 3085** and respectfully urges the Committee to pass this measure.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

Respectfully,

Kiran Polk
Executive Director & CEO

SB-3085

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 8:53:33 PM

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

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

Comments:

Senators, thank you for considering SB3085.

I am a member of the Directors Guild of America and was the unit production manager on Doogie Kamealoha, MD and Red One, and production supervisor on Moana. Currently, I am the unit production manager on Protecting Jared, a Netflix film that begins shooting Feb 17th on O'ahu.

I have gone through the process of finding office space and stage space in the state several times, including negotiating leases on three separate occasions for properties controlled by the state. I attest it is a challenge, and the process needs streamlining.

I recently attempted to lease the Diamondhead studios for Sony. The current process is: (1) have a short term right of entry while waiting for land board approval, then (2) sign a second long-term document after approval. Studios must commit to payments and a plan before having full permission. This process does not play well to networks and studios or to the legal departments that represent them. It's a seemingly small complication that makes shooting in Hawai'i more difficult and complicated than it needs to be.

SB 3085 is a small step in making a stronger, more efficient film office and making film production easier in Hawai'i.

SB-3085

Submitted on: 2/17/2026 11:14:15 AM

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

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

Comments:

SB3085

As a member of the production industry and a founding member of the Hawai'i Film Alliance, I am writing in support of SB3085.

Often for productions, the process of finding office space is a challenge, and the process needs streamlining.

The current process is: (1) have a short term right of entry while waiting for land board approval, then (2) sign a second long-term document after approval. Studios must commit to payments and a plan before having full permission.

This process does not play well to networks and studios or to the legal departments that represent them. It's a seemingly small complication that makes shooting in Hawai'i more difficult and complicated than it needs to be.

SB 3085 is a small step in making a stronger, more efficient film office and making film production easier in Hawai'i.

SB-3085

Submitted on: 2/18/2026 5:53:37 AM

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

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

Comments:

Dear Senators,

Thank you for considering Bill SB3085. As a proud member of the Directors Guild and having served as the Producer and Director on "Hawaii Five-0" and "Magnum P.I." for the past decade, I have witnessed first-hand the unique challenges and opportunities that film production in Hawaii presents.

SB3085 is a significant step toward establishing a stronger and more efficient Film commission and office for film production in our state. By streamlining processes and providing necessary resources, this bill will not only facilitate smoother operations but will also enhance Hawaii's appeal as a prime location for filming and making it less complicated to lease production facilities.

A more efficient office means less red tape and more opportunities for local talent and businesses to thrive. This bill has the potential to foster a vibrant film industry that not only showcases our beautiful islands but also boosts our economy through job creation and tourism.

We strongly support SB3085 and urge you to pass this legislation to help make Hawaii a more attractive and effective place for film production.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Bryan Spicer

Director. DGA

SB-3085

Submitted on: 2/18/2026 9:25:08 AM

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

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

Comments:

I support this bill. I believe it will make filming in Hawaii easier and strengthen our industry.

SB-3085

Submitted on: 2/18/2026 11:41:30 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joshua Meredith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Joshua J. Meredith. I'm a member of IATSE Local 665, the union representing technicians and artisans in the entertainment industry in Hawai'i. I strongly support SB 3085.