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Friday, March 27, 2026  
10:30 am  
State Capitol, 430

**SB3152, SD2  
RELATING TO COMMERCIAL PORT ADMINISTRATION**

House Committee on Transportation

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The Department of Transportation (DOT) is in strong support of SB3152, SD2 that renames the Harbors Division to the Commercial Ports Division and distinguishes between the terms "harbor" and "commercial port" throughout Hawaii Revised Statutes. This bill was included in the Governor's Package at DOT's request.

This bill proposes a significant update to the nomenclature used in statute regarding the state's commercial maritime facilities. This change more accurately reflects the nature and scope of operations under the DOT's purview, aligns with maritime industry terminology, and better represents the economic importance of these facilities to the state. Moreover, this change in nomenclature will clearly distinguish the port facilities controlled by DOT from the boating and recreational facilities controlled by the Department of Land and Natural Resources.

By clearly differentiating between harbors and commercial ports in the statutes, this bill will provide greater clarity in the application of laws and regulations specific to each type of facility.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Furthermore, the distinction drawn between 'harbor' and 'commercial port' throughout the Hawaii Revised Statutes is a necessary and overdue clarification. Conflating these two terms has created ambiguity in the application of regulatory provisions, operational responsibilities, and jurisdictional authorities. By clearly defining and consistently applying these terms across the statutes, SB3152 SD2 will reduce potential legal uncertainty and improve administrative efficiency in the management and oversight of Hawaii's maritime assets.

The Department of Transportation notes that this terminology modernization is consistent with broader national and international maritime industry standards, where 'commercial port' is the recognized designation for facilities engaged in the handling of

cargo, vessels, and commercial waterfront operations. Aligning Hawaii's statutory language with these standards will also benefit the State's relationships with federal agencies, private operators, and other stakeholders involved in port commerce and development.

Additionally, the reaffirmation of the Department of Transportation as the governing body for commercial ports, harbors, and waterfront improvements provides a clear and unified chain of authority that is essential for effective port management, emergency response, and long-term infrastructure planning. This is particularly important given the critical role that Hawaii's ports play in the State's supply chain resilience and disaster preparedness, as evidenced by the provisions in related legislation such as H.B. 1159, which addresses harbor emergency evacuation protocols and firefighting liability within the commercial harbor system.

The Department of Transportation is committed to working with the Legislature and all relevant stakeholders to ensure a smooth and effective implementation of the renaming and terminology changes proposed in this bill, including updating all necessary administrative rules, forms, signage, and internal designations in a timely manner.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.



**WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY**

March 27, 2026

Representative Darius K. Kila, Chair  
Representative Tyson K. Miyake, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Transportation

**RE: SB 3152, S.D. 2 – RELATING TO COMMERCIAL PORT ADMINISTRATION**  
**Hearing date: March 27, 2026, 10:30 a.m.**

Aloha Chair Kila, Vice Chair Miyake, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of Young Brothers, LLC (“YB”) offering **STRONG SUPPORT** of **SB 3152, S.D. 2**, which would rename the Harbors Division of the Department of Transportation to the “Commercial Ports Division”, and create a distinction between the terms “harbor” and “commercial port” throughout Hawaii Revised Statutes (“HRS”).

YB is a water carrier that transports cargo by tug and barge between the islands of O‘ahu, Hawai‘i, Kaua‘i, Maui, Moloka‘i, and Lāna‘i. Since 1900, customers across the state have relied on YB’s frequent, regular, and universal sailings to serve as the bridge that connects all communities in this island-state. YB’s operations span seven commercial ports across the state, all of which are primarily administered by the Harbors Division of the Department of Transportation.

While the term “harbor” can include small boat harbors (which fall under the jurisdiction of the Department of Land Natural Resources pursuant to Chapter 200 HRS), the term “commercial port” is clearly understood to refer specifically to those ports that can accommodate larger vessels to handle most goods coming into the various islands of our state. As an island-state, the infrastructure and administration of these commercial ports is critical to our supply chain and way of life. Codifying the Department of Transportation’s significant administrative role over such “commercial ports” rather than “harbors” clarifies their authority and supports a legal framework that can better address supply chain specific issues going forward.

Thank you for your service to the State of Hawaii, and for the opportunity to testify offering comments on this measure.

Sincerely,

Kris Nakagawa  
Vice President, External and Legal Affairs



March 27, 2026

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION**

Rep. Darius Kila, Chair; Rep. Tyson Miyake, Vice Chair; and Committee Members  
Public Hearing, March 27, 2026, 10:30 a.m. – Conference Room 430, State Capitol

**Testimony of William F. Anonsen, Managing Partner/Principal of The Maritime Group**  
**In Support of S.B 3152 SD2, Relating to Commercial Port Administration**

My name is William F. Anonsen, a maritime industry professional and Managing Partner/Principal of The Maritime Group. We respectfully submit testimony in strong support of S.B. 3152, SD2. This measure is a practical and important step in strengthening Hawai'i's maritime governance framework.

As noted in the Senate Judiciary Committee Report, the bill renames the Harbors Division to the Commercial Ports Division and clarifies the distinction between “*harbors*” and “*commercial ports*” throughout the Hawai'i Revised Statutes. While technical in nature, these changes provide meaningful clarity and consistency in how our port system is defined and administered.

From an operational perspective, this distinction matters. A “*harbor*” refers to a protected body of water, while a “*commercial port*” reflects the developed infrastructure that supports cargo movement, passenger activity, and essential supply chain functions. Aligning statutory language with this functional reality enhances governance, reduces ambiguity, and improves coordination across agencies.

For Hawai'i, where more than 90 percent of goods arrive by sea, commercial ports are critical economic infrastructure. Clear and consistent terminology supports better planning, more effective capital investment, and stronger accountability in managing these vital assets. This measure also aligns with modern maritime industry practices and more accurately reflects the scope and responsibilities of the Department of Transportation's port system. Importantly, it achieves these improvements without creating new regulatory burdens, instead strengthening the effectiveness of existing law. The technical amendments incorporated in SD2 further enhance clarity and consistency across the statutes, reinforcing the bill's intent and practical application.

In summary, S.B. 3152, SD2 is a common-sense measure that improves clarity, strengthens governance, and supports the long-term effectiveness of Hawai'i's commercial port system. For these reasons, we respectfully urge your favorable consideration and appreciate your continued support of Hawai'i's maritime sector.

Respectfully submitted,

*William F. Anonsen*

William F. Anonsen  
Managing Partner/Principal  
THE MARITIME GROUP



Testimony in **SUPPORT** for SB 3152 SD2, Relating to Commercial Port Administration

House Committee on Transportation  
March 27, 2026

Aloha Chair Kila, Vice Chair Miyake, and members of the committee,

The Hawaii Harbors Users Group is writing in **support** of SB 3152 SD2, which updates the statutory language to rename the Harbors Division of the Department of Transportation as the Commercial Ports Division and clearly distinguishes between the terms “harbor” and “commercial port.” This distinction is more than semantic. It reflects the functional and economic realities of Hawai‘i’s maritime transportation system. While small boat harbors serve recreational, fishing, and community purposes, commercial ports are the backbone of our state’s supply chain, handling the movement of the vast majority of goods that residents and businesses rely on every day. By distinguishing these terms in statute, this bill ensures that legislation and policy better align with operational and economic functions.

Hawai‘i’s commercial ports are critical to the State’s economy and its supply chain, serving as the primary gateway for essential imports and facilitating interisland distribution of goods. With approximately 85 % of all goods consumed in Hawai‘i imported by sea, and Hawai‘i’s commercial harbor system processing the overwhelming majority of that cargo, port infrastructure and administration play a central role in maintaining economic stability and quality of life for our communities. Clear statutory recognition of commercial ports underscores the importance of these facilities in sustaining commerce, supporting businesses, and enabling industries from retail and construction to agriculture and tourism to function effectively.

Furthermore, using the term commercial ports throughout Hawai‘i law helps clarify the focus of policy toward the statewide maritime system that enables Hawai‘i’s ship-to-shelf supply chain to operate efficiently, reliably, and resiliently. Organizations in the supply chain, from shipping lines and port operators to freight forwarders and logistics partners, work collaboratively to keep essential goods flowing into and across the islands, often under challenging geographic and logistical conditions. Recognizing these facilities as commercial ports in statute reflects their indispensable role in the modern economy and supports a legal framework that can adapt to future growth, investment, and supply chain challenges.