



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## ‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

### Legislative Testimony

### Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the  
House Committee on Economic Development  
Friday, February 10, 2023 at 10:30 a.m.  
by

Christopher P. Lee, Founder/Director  
Academy for Creative Media System  
on behalf of

Vassilis L. Syrmos, Vice President for Research and Innovation  
University of Hawai'i System

### HB 932 – RELATING TO THE MOTION PICTURE, DIGITAL MEDIA, AND FILM PRODUCTION INCOME TAX CREDIT

Chair Holt, Vice Chair Lamosao, and Members of the Committee:

The University of Hawai'i (UH) supports the intent of HB 932 to enhance Hawai'i's successful motion picture/television/streaming production industry with changes to the current film production tax credit. In particular, UH strongly supports raising the current annual cap from \$50,000,000 in recognition of the success of the film, television and streaming content production industry in diversifying our economy with living wage jobs for local workers.

A stable, reliable credit is essential to continuing the growth of this vital diversification of state's economy. The Hawai'i's Film Production Tax Credit has been a success. As Sumner La Croix and James Mak concluded in their March 2021 UHERO report, *Understanding the Role of the Hawaii Film/TV/Digital Production Tax Credit in Diversifying the Hawaii Economy*: "... Since the passage of the film credit in 2006, spending in Hawai'i on TV/film productions has soared, with inflation-adjusted spending increasing by 116 percent between 2007 (\$164.5 million) and 2019 (\$355.6 million). This is much larger than the overall increase in Hawai'i real gross domestic product over the same period, a modest 17 percent..."

Thanks to the foundational and continuing support of the Legislature, the Academy for Creative Media at UH now supports 16 programs across all ten campuses. Students and graduates from ACM on every island are contributing to the creative economy with living wage jobs here in Hawai'i. HB 932 will help to keep them here and contribute to diversification of the state's economy.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.