

SB754

Linda Lingle
GOVERNOR



KAREN SEDDON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII

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HAWAII HOUSING FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
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IN REPLY REFER TO

Statement of
Karen Seddon
Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation
Before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND HOUSING

February 4, 2009 1:15 p.m.
Room 225, State Capitol

In consideration of
S.B. 754
RELATING TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

The HHFDC supports the intent of S.B. 754, as it relates to Chapter 201H, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), as long as its implementation does not impact or replace the priorities set forth in the Executive Biennium Budget for Fiscal Year 2009-2010. We defer to the Hawaii Public Housing Authority, and to the Counties, respectively, with respect to the bill's impact on Chapters 356D and 46, HRS.

S.B. 754 asks the Legislative Reference Bureau to review these HRS chapters and make recommendations for strengthening State housing laws. The HHFDC supports efforts to improve housing policy and promote affordable housing development.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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Director

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State Capitol
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Written Testimony Only

SB754

RELATING TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Testimony by the Legislative Reference Bureau
Ken H. Takayama, Director

Presented to the Senate Committee on Education and Housing

Wednesday, February 4, 2009, 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 225

Chair Norman Sakamoto and Members of the Committee:

I am Ken Takayama, Director of the Legislative Reference Bureau . Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify on S.B. No. 754. The Bureau takes no position either for or against this measure, but offers the following comments.

- 1 This bill directs the Bureau to review state and county laws relating to affordable housing, to identify strategies to "strengthen" Hawaii's housing laws.
2. We assume from some of the other provisions of the bill that "strengthen" means "calculated to increase the supply of affordable housing in the State".
3. The review called for is a big job, as the bill is drafted broadly. However, if the Legislature wants us to do this study, we will do so to the best of our ability.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify. I am open to any questions you may have.



Housing Hawaii

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Executive Director

Nani Medeiros

February 4, 2009

The Honorable Norman Sakamoto, Chair
House Committee on Education and Housing
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 230
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chair Sakamoto and Members:

RE: SB 754, RELATING TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

I am Nani Medeiros, Executive Director of Housing Hawaii, testifying on Senate Bill 754, Relating to Affordable Housing. This bill requires the Legislative Reference Bureau to study state and county laws that relate to affordable housing.

While we appreciate the intent of this bill, we do not believe that another study of the problem is what is needed to solve Hawaii's housing crisis. Enough studies and recommendations have been designed over the past decade unique to Hawaii's housing processes, market, and climate. We can provide the committee with an analysis that Housing Hawaii conducted of the State Streamlining Task Force Report of 1993, the Hawaii Economic Revitalization Task Force of 1997, Affordable Housing Task Force of 2004, Joint Legislative Housing & Homeless Task Force 2005, Economic Momentum Commission 2005, RCAC Affordable Housing in High Cost Areas Conference 2005, Affordable Housing Advisory Committee City & County of Honolulu 2006, ULI Advisory Services Panel: County of Maui Affordable Housing Strategy 2006, "Not in My Backyard" Removing Barriers to Affordable Housing, USHUD 1991. We are also very familiar with the Hawaii's National Call to Action Affordable Housing Regulatory Barriers Task Force report which was just completed last month.

The main obstacles to the development of homes which are affordable in Hawaii, as well as "affordable housing projects" are the high cost of land (because of a limited supply of developable land), the State and county regulatory processes, and infrastructure. The solutions are known, and some have been discussed for over twenty five years amongst experts in the industry. We ask the committee exercise leadership, vision, and bravery in adopting meaningful changes to Hawaii housing policy that will result in a system that delivers more affordable homes to our workers, neighbors, and families. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Senate Bill 754.

Nani Medeiros
Executive Director

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