

February 15, 2008

The Honorable Representative Rida Cabanilla, Chair
House Committee on Housing
The Honorable Representative Jerry Chang, Chair
House Committee on Water, Land and Ocean Resources
Hawai'i State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Testimony opposing HB309 HD1 Relating to Housing

Chairs Cabanilla and Chang, and members of the committees:

The Outdoor Circle (TOC) strongly opposes the elimination of height restrictions on affordable rental units in the Honolulu urban core.

While we recognize that there is a housing shortage in Hawaii and that the addition of affordable rental units would be welcomed by many in our population, meeting that goal by allowing buildings of unlimited heights is simply not in the best interest of the overwhelming majority of Honolulu residents.

For the legislature to force this type of free-for-all zoning atmosphere onto the City and County of Honolulu—or any other county for that matter—would be an egregious usurpation of home rule. This intrusion into local decision making would create an environment in which huge housing projects could be constructed without regard for residential density, impacts on infrastructure and blockage of view planes—to mention only a few of the potential negative impacts.

Yes, there is a housing shortage, but before trying to resolve the problem with radical action such as is proposed in this measure, we would encourage you to create legislation that would effectively entice developers to build affordable rental housing within existing zoning laws that are and should always be controlled by locally elected officials.

Respectfully,

Bob Loy
Director of Environmental Programs

HISTORIC HAWAII FOUNDATION

VIA WEB: <http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/emailtestimony>

To: Rep. Rida Cabanilla, Chair
Rep. Pono Chong, Vice Chair
Committee on Housing

Rep. Jerry L. Chang, Chair
Rep. Sharon E. Har, Vice Chair
Committee on Water, Land and Ocean Resources

From: Kiersten Faulkner
Executive Director, Historic Hawai'i Foundation

Committee Date: Wednesday, February 16, 2011
10:00 a.m.
Conference Room 325

Subject: **HB309 HD1, Relating to Housing**

On behalf of Historic Hawai'i Foundation (HHF), I am writing in opposition to HB309 HD1, Relating to Housing. The bill would exempt certain affordable housing projects from height restrictions in the area within Honolulu bounded by South Beretania Street, Kapi'olani Boulevard/South King Street, Kapi'olani Boulevard, and Kalākaua Avenue.

HHF is concerned that the bill would encourage demolition of properties within the subject area without regard to their historic significance. The City and County of Honolulu conducted a historic resource architectural inventory survey in 2008 that identified three potential historic districts in the McCully area, as well as historically significant individual structures.¹ The potential historic districts include 15 two-story apartment buildings built during the 1950s (possible Kapi'olani Boulevard Apartments District); another 11 apartment buildings from 1944-51 (possible Early McCully Apartments Historic District); and eight walk-up apartments from 1946 (Kapi'olani Apartment Complex). An additional five residential properties were evaluated as eligible for the historic register.

Affordable housing can be provided within historic buildings. Rather than assume that the existing housing stock needs to be replaced by high-rise projects, we encourage the appropriate rehabilitation and use of existing buildings and historic resources to achieve community benefits, including affordable housing.

HHF believes that HB309 HD1 would create economic pressure for demolition of these historic properties. Therefore HHF recommends that this measure be deferred.

¹ "Historic Resources Technical Report Honolulu High-Capacity Transit Corridor Project." August 1, 2008. Pg. 4-70.

Historic Hawai'i Foundation

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Historic Hawai'i Foundation was established in 1974 to encourage the preservation of historic buildings, sites and communities on all the islands of Hawai'i. As the statewide leader for historic preservation, HHF works to preserve Hawai'i's unique architectural and cultural heritage and believes that historic preservation is an important element in the present and future quality of life, environmental sustainability and economic viability of the state.