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**TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL, AND
MILITARY AFFAIRS
State Capitol, Conference Room 229
415 South Beretania Street
1:15 PM**

February 12, 2019

RE: SENATE BILLS NO. 145, RELATING TO THE STATE FIRE CODE; S.B. 147 RELATING TO THE STATE BUILDING CODE; S.B. 157 RELATING TO THE STATE BUILDING CODE

Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Wakai, and members of the committee:

My name is Gladys Quinto Marrone, CEO of the Building Industry Association of Hawaii (BIA-Hawaii). Chartered in 1955, the Building Industry Association of Hawaii is a professional trade organization affiliated with the National Association of Home Builders, representing the building industry and its associates. BIA-Hawaii takes a leadership role in unifying and promoting the interests of the industry to enhance the quality of life for the people of Hawaii. Our members build the communities we all call home.

BIA-Hawaii is **opposed** to:

S.B. 145, which proposes to amend the process for adoption of the state fire code to conform with other Hawaii State Building Codes.

S.B. 147, which proposes to repeal the requirement for administrative rules in the adoption process of the State Building Codes.

S.B. 157, which proposes to repeal the requirement for the adoption of administrative rules relating to the adoption process of the State Building Code.

We understand that currently Section 132-3, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), requires the state fire code to be adopted after public hearings are conducted pursuant to chapter 91. The purpose of these bills is to repeal the requirement for the state fire code to be adopted after public hearings pursuant to HRS chapter 91, and instead require the state fire code to be adopted pursuant to HRS chapter 92.

While the State Fire Council is looking to bypass their public hearing process and be part of the State Building Code Council hearing process, the State Building Code Council has various representatives of government and industry represented on the Council. The State Fire Council, on the other hand, only has fire department-related members. If the State Fire Council seeks to avoid the public hearing process for the State Fire Code, they should widen the membership of the Council to include other constituencies, such as industry and other government agencies. Otherwise, there would be **no transparency** in the amendment and adoption process for the State Fire Code.

At a time when there is a need for more government transparency, we question why the adoption of the fire code would be exempt from holding a public hearing. Government mandates made through the adoption of various building codes add to the cost of housing, which is already virtually unaffordable in Hawaii.

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We caution against allowing for a full public vetting of the State Fire Code prior to adoption as some of the elements in the code, such as mandating the installation of fire sprinklers in one and two family dwellings, will have a significant impact on future home prices.

We are opposed to S.B. 145, S.B. 147, and S.B. 157 and appreciate the opportunity to express our views on this matter.