

**Testimony Before the Senate Ways and Means Committees**  
**Supporting SB 3063 SD 1, Amending the Hawaii Constitution**  
**to Assure Resident Access to Housing**  
**Galen Fox, February 28, 2020**

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, Committee Members:

I am on Faith Action's Housing Legislation Subgroup, but testify as an individual.

At his Second Inaugural in 1937, President Franklin Roosevelt famously said, "I see one-third of a nation ill-housed, ill-clad, ill-nourished. . . . The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little."

83 years later, we have conquered lack of food and clothing. But Hawaii's affordable housing deficiency has reached crisis levels. Our children leave for lower-cost mainland homes. A majority of native Hawaiians now live elsewhere.

Making Hawaii the first state to assure residents access to housing is consistent with Hawaii's moral leadership — the first majority-minority state, the first to guarantee a women's right to choose, the first to pass the Equal Rights Amendment, and the first to give workers the right to prepaid medical care.

Hawaii produced Patsy Mink, who authored Title IX's guarantee of women's education equality, and Hawaii gave the United States Barack Obama and Hope.

Now Hawaii can once again lead the nation by amending its constitution to award its residents the right to a home.

Furthermore, at a time when Hawaii's tourist-based economy faces Coronavirus-based challenges, and at a time when interest rates are at an all-time low, we will benefit from a new commitment to construction — to build homes for the thousands of residents truly needing shelter here.