



February 9, 2021

1:00 p.m.

Conference Room 225

To: Senate Committee on Housing
Sen. Stanley Chang, Chair
Sen. Dru Mamo Kanuha, Vice Chair

From: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii
Joe Kent, Executive Vice President

RE: SB1278 — RELATING TO ZONING
Comments Only

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii would like to offer its comments on [SB1278](#), which would allow Hawaii's counties to adopt rules for the construction of fourplex dwellings on lots where single-family dwelling units are permitted.

We commend the Legislature for considering new ways to help address the state housing crisis. It is easy to focus solely on new building projects and overlook how much it could help to lift the zoning restrictions that hamper creative solutions to the lack of affordable housing.

Recently, the Grassroot Institute has distributed two publications to legislators on the ways zoning and other regulations throttle the growth of housing.

One was our policy report, [“Reform the Hawaii LUC to encourage more housing,”](#) which advocates giving the counties more authority to make decisions at the county level, thus reducing the amount of bureaucracy in development and preventing the LUC from becoming a kind of state zoning commission.

The other was a zoning reform toolkit, [“How to Build Affordable, Thriving Neighborhoods”](#) which explores different ways to grow housing and improve affordability by reforming state

and local zoning restrictions. We summarized proposals from the toolkit in a commentary published in The Maui News, ["50 ways — at least — to update Maui's zoning code."](#)

We are pleased to see that SB1278 embraces two principles in the zoning toolkit: It allows for subdivisions in lots, and it simplifies the approval process involved in building those subdivisions.

By loosening zoning restrictions to allow for the creation of fourplex dwellings, SB1278 would comprise a positive step toward addressing the state housing shortage.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our comments.

Sincerely,
Joe Kent
Executive Vice President, Grassroot Institute of Hawaii



February 9, 2021

The Honorable Stanley P. Chang, Chair
The Honorable Dru Mamo Kanuha, Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Housing
State Capitol
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Chang, Vice Chair Kanuha, and Members:

HI Good Neighbor is a group of concerned citizens from around the island who are strongly opposed to the proliferation of large detached dwellings (“LDDs”), also called “monster homes,” throughout Oahu’s residential neighborhoods.

We are opposed to SB1278, which would allow the counties to adopt rules for the construction of fourplex dwelling units on lots where single-family dwelling units are permitted in residential areas and in a city with a population of 25,000 or more or within an urban area.

Specifically, we must strongly object to proposed subsection (h) of the bill which would disallow the State and Counties from prohibiting up to four dwelling units on any parcel on which a single dwelling unit is permitted.

We have seen countless instances of unscrupulous monster home developers abusing the existing law permitting two single-family dwelling units on a single lot to get around existing laws surrounding density, parking, and occupancy. While there may be specific neighborhoods where fourplex dwellings may fit, to disallow the Counties from prohibiting fourplex dwellings on any parcel on which a single dwelling unit is permitted is a bridge too far.

Mahalo nui loa,

HI Good Neighbor

Tyler Dos Santos-Tam | Sarah Chinen | Melissa Mai'i
Aurora Muir | Christine Otto Zaa | Reyna Sueoka
Pat Watson | Trisha Kehaulani Watson | Steven Yamashiro