

SCR-3

Submitted on: 3/21/2021 9:59:21 PM

Testimony for HOU on 3/25/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
John Kawamoto	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is John Kawamoto, and I support SCR 3, which urges the counties to produce land use plans that account for housing production and demand.

Hawaii faces a housing shortage of crisis proportions. The ALICE population described by Aloha United Way has grown even further because of the economic collapse due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Today, 59% of Hawaii’s population are ALICE and below.

Even prior to Covid-19, the National Low Income Housing Coalition estimated that Hawaii faced a shortage of more than 40,000 homes for families earning incomes of 50% or below of the area median income.

In Hawaii, real estate values have steadily risen for decades, along with construction costs and other development costs. Meanwhile, wages have stagnated. As a result, fewer and fewer families can afford to pay for the housing that they need because the cost of living has outpaced their ability to pay. If they decide to pay for adequate housing, many families don’t have enough to pay for other necessities.

Every county is experiencing a housing shortage, particularly housing that is affordable to working families. The various counties engage in land use planning, but their planning processes were developed before the affordable housing crisis. These processes have changed very little over time, and as a result, land use planning at the county level is not designed to encourage the development of affordable housing.

This resolution encourages the counties to find ways to use their land use planning processes to address the housing crisis.