



▪ April 19, 2022

The Honorable Stanley Chang, Chair
The Honorable Dru Mamo Kanuha, Vice Chair
and Members of the Senate Committee on Housing

Re: Testimony in Support – HCR 126, HD1 Urging all State and County Agencies to Follow the True Intent of Chapter 201H, Hawaii Revised Statutes and the Express Provisions of Section 201H-38, Hawaii Revised Statutes
Hearing: April 21, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Senate Conference Room 225 and Videoconference

Dear Chair Chang, Vice Chair Kanuha, and Members of the Committee on Housing:

Stanford Carr Development submits testimony in **strong support** of HCR 126, HD1 that compels the counties to follow the true intent and express provisions of Hawaii Revised Statutes Chapter 201H.

Act 350 enacted during the 1997 Regular Session of the Nineteenth State Legislature recognized the critical need for housing affordability and availability, further noting the cost added by government regulation. In the public interest of expediting affordable housing, Act 350 created Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) section 201E-118 requiring counties to approve or disapprove a project within 45 days or on the forty-sixth day a project is deemed approved.

The 2005 Regular Session of the Twenty-Third Legislature enacted Act 196 whereby section 35 established a joint legislative housing and homeless task force to further identify solutions to Hawaii's affordable housing problem. Recommendations of the task force included a need to "streamline government approvals and permitting of affordable housing projects."

As reported by Hawaii Business Magazine on January 25, 2022, the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation reports that the 201H process has successfully supported construction of 12,000 units to date for families earning less than 140% AMI.

Given the stated priority of all four county councils to support development of affordable housing along with the success of the 201H process, it seems appropriate to expect the councils to consistently implement Chapter 201H applications along with providing timely review and approval.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony on this critical policy.

Respectfully,

Stanford S. Carr

HCR-126-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/19/2022 1:07:12 PM

Testimony for HOU on 4/21/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Liam Lynch	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Affordable housing is one of Hawaii's most pressing issues, and considering how much effort both public and private organizations have put into solving this problem, we should be seeing more progress. However, the state regularly undermines its own efforts either by not following through on useful legislation or by adding so many regulations that it is nearly impossible to actually implement any legislation. A recent study by the University of Hawaii's Economic Research Organization found that Hawaii had more stringent housing regulations than any other state in America. This bill acknowledges how this overregulation is keeping Hawaii from developing a better housing market. If HCR126 HD1 was followed, the state could see a lot more progress in dealing with the affordable housing crisis that has affected so many of Hawaii's residents.

HCR-126-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/19/2022 3:30:25 PM

Testimony for HOU on 4/21/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Zijun	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of this bill and would like to urge all State and County agencies to understand and follow the intent of chapter 201H. There is undeniably a shortage of affordable housing, Hawaii is already a very expensive place to live in. There should not be more restrictions or hurdles that would deter the building of affordable homes. Families living paycheck to paycheck can not handle the added stress of "not being able to afford rent", "getting evicted", etc. Affordable housing can not only solve these issues, cut down homelessness, but also it can give families living in Hawaii that important lifeline they need to climb out of poverty/evolve past living paycheck to paycheck.

HCR-126-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/20/2022 11:32:56 AM

Testimony for HOU on 4/21/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Karli Young	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Karli and I am a 23-year-old resident of Kapahulu born and raised in Honolulu. I am writing to express my support of this bill with the hope that it allows the **right** affordable housing projects to be built with less friction.

My personal experience with Oahu's housing crisis is the role its played as a factor driving my local friends to live and work on the mainland. They do not want to burden their parents or feel as though their lives are not progressing, by continuing to live in their childhood home. I am one of the few people of my friends to stay home to work, but it is greatly due to the fact that my grandma has a separate space built into her house where I can live independently and rent-free. Living on my own off of my current salary (from a reputable employer in Hawaii) would not be as easy.

Because of this experience, I am in support of growing affordable housing in Hawai'i *provided* that workforce locals are being prioritized in filling those units. I do believe this condition is at least partially satisfied, because I know of family and acquaintances who have moved into recent developments. These were people who were able to move out of their family homes as young adults and remain in Hawai'i, living on their own.

It is impressive how quickly both the public and private sectors have been working to develop housing in Hawai'i recently, and I imagine Chapter 201H, HRS, is part of the reason for this. But, changing Hawai'i's landscape is not something to be taken lightly. Just because we *can*, it doesn't always mean we *should*. It is my hope that this statute not be used as an excuse to skip proper collaboration and outreach with the communities they are affecting, or not complete due diligence in designing for and assessing the impact (both positive and negative) of a project. Community pushback *will* occur, which is why limiting hurdles beyond that is necessary. I believe the right projects in the right places will receive less community criticism and can be built to fulfill Hawai'i's need.

Mahalo for considering my testimony. I hope it provides some helpful insight from a young member of the community.

Karli Young

