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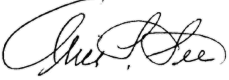
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February 1, 2023

TO: The Honorable Troy N. Hashimoto, Chair
House Committee on Housing

FROM: Alice L. Lee
Council Chair 

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF FEBRUARY 3, 2023; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 814,
RELATING TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** of this important measure. The purpose of this bill is to require counties to adopt ordinances to allow religious institutions, educational institutions, and medical institutions to build housing units on land that the institutions own for purchase in fee simple or use by the institutions, their employees, or their contractors, regardless of current zoning restrictions.

The Maui County Council has not had the opportunity to take a formal position on this measure. Therefore, I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I support this measure for the following reasons:

1. The measure will allow our county more flexibility to consider new and creative solutions to increase our housing inventory in order to ease the housing shortage crisis.
2. This measure will allow educational, medical, and religious institutions to help end the housing crisis by developing housing units on land that they own.

For the foregoing reasons, I **support** this measure.

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February 3, 2023

9 a.m.

Conference Room 312

Via Videoconference

To: House Committee on Housing

Rep. Troy N. Hashimoto, Chair

Rep. Micah P.K. Aiu, Vice Chair

From: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

Ted Kefalas, Director of Strategic Campaigns

RE: HB814 — RELATING TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Comments Only

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii would like to offer its comments on [HB814](#), which would require counties to adopt ordinances allowing religious institutions, educational institutions and medical institutions to build housing units on their own land for purchase in fee simple or use by the institutions, their employees or their contractors, regardless of current zoning restrictions.

We commend the Legislature for considering ways to increase Hawaii's housing supply through zoning reform. It is important to recognize the role that zoning plays in restricting housing growth, and think creatively about how we can streamline building permissions and approvals for new housing.

This bill proposes one such creative approach. By allowing schools, hospitals and religious institutions to create housing on their own properties, this legislation would simultaneously help them with their recruitment and retention issues by enabling them to more easily provide affordable housing for their employees.

Nonprofit institutions that have been prevented from creating housing for their own staff will now be able to offer a convenient on-campus housing benefit, thereby freeing up more housing for local families.

By limiting the acreage and use of the housing, this bill should ease any concerns that the institutions will take advantage of the by-right housing initiative to create large developments.

In addition, there is no need to fear that the inclusion of residential properties next to these institutions would cause any health or safety concerns, nor would it disturb the intent of any county or municipal plans.

In fact, mixed-use zoning, such as allowing residential construction in commercial zones, is a popular tool for encouraging the growth of housing without requiring large-scale development.

For more information on the ways that zoning can throttle the growth of housing, please refer to the Grassroot Institute's 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. If you would like us to provide you a copy of that report, please let me know.

We are pleased that HB814 embraces two principles in the zoning toolkit:

>> It allows for creative options aimed at solving serious social problems related to housing — especially as housing from such institutions will likely be aimed at better serving local communities or helping those with the greatest need.

>> And it reduces the bureaucratic burden involved in building such housing by allowing those institutions to construct that housing regardless of local zoning laws.

By allowing religious, medical and educational institutions to build affordable housing on their own lands, regardless of existing zoning restrictions, this bill would take a positive step toward addressing the state housing shortage.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our comments.

Sincerely,

Ted Kefalas

Director of Strategic Campaigns, Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

HB-814

Submitted on: 2/1/2023 10:20:09 PM

Testimony for HSG on 2/3/2023 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alan Urasaki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support of this measure.

Mahalo.