

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE  
LT. GOVERNOR



DEAN MINAKAMI  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## STATE OF HAWAII

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM  
HAWAII HOUSING FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION  
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### Statement of **DEAN MINAKAMI**

Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation  
Before the

### **SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND SENATE COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

March 11, 2025 at 1:05 p.m.  
State Capitol, Room 225

In consideration of  
**H.B. 1408 HD1**  
**RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS.**

Chairs Chang and Richards, Vice Chairs Hashimoto and San Buenaventura, and members of the Committees.

HHFDC **supports** HB 1408 HD1, which allows the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) to utilize the Dwelling Unit Revolving Fund (DURF) as collateral when the Department acts as an eligible borrower for a loan agreement under section 184A of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1992, as amended. It also appropriates funds. HHFDC supports the measure so long as it does not adversely impact priorities identified in the Executive Budget Request for FY 2026.

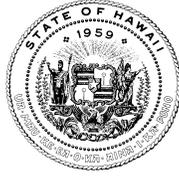
HHFDC recognizes that native Hawaiians suffer from longstanding socioeconomic hardships that include housing problems of affordability, overcrowding, and structural inadequacy. HHFDC supports efforts to help DHHL with its constitutional mandate.

The appropriation for DHHL's use as collateral when acting as an eligible borrower of a loan guaranteed by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development will help DHHL develop residential homestead lots and housing units.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
STATE OF HAWAII  
*Ke Kia'āina o ka Moku'āina 'o  
Hawaii*

SYLVIA J. LUKE  
LT. GOVERNOR  
STATE OF HAWAII  
*Ka Hope Kia'āina o ka Moku'āina  
'o Hawaii*



KALI WATSON  
CHAIRPERSON, HHC  
*Ka Luna Ho'okele*

KATIE L. LAMBERT  
DEPUTY TO THE CHAIR  
*Ka Hope Luna Ho'okele*

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS**  
*Ka 'Oihana 'Āina Ho'opulapula Hawaii'i*

P. O. BOX 1879  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96805

**TESTIMONY OF KALI WATSON, CHAIR  
HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION  
BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON HOUSING AND HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS  
HEARING ON MARCH 11, 2025 AT 1:05PM IN CR 225**

**HB 1408, HD 1, RELATING TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS**

March 10, 2025

Aloha Chairs Chang and Richards, Vice Chairs Hashimoto and San Buenaventura, and Members of the Committees:

The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) **strongly supports** this bill which 1) allows the Department of Hawaiian Home Lands to utilize the Dwelling Unit Revolving Fund as collateral when the Department acts as an eligible borrower for a loan agreement under section 184A of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1992, as amended and 2) appropriates funds.

Congress established the Section 184A Native Hawaiian Housing Loan Guarantee Program in 2000 in order to provide access to sources of private financing on Hawaiian Home Lands. DHHL is an eligible borrower under the program and can use these funds to develop rental housing or to build single-family homes. Once the housing is developed, the native Hawaiian who is eligible to purchase the home can either assume the Section 184A loan or secure other financing to purchase the home.

A loan guaranteed under Section 184A must be secured by collateral authorized under and not prohibited by Federal or State law and determined by the lender and approved by HUD to be sufficient to cover the amount of the loan. The Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, 1920, as amended, limits what can be utilized as collateral to secure loans made by government agencies or private lending institutions to the Department. Appropriating \$75 million in Fiscal Year 2026 and another \$75 million in Fiscal Year 2027 into the dwelling unit revolving fund for collateral would allow DHHL to secure private financing to develop rental housing or to build single-family homes.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.

**LATE**

**HB-1408-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/11/2025 7:57:51 AM

Testimony for HOU on 3/11/2025 1:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Master Shelby "Pikachu" Billionaire	Testifying for Ohana Unity Party & Kingdom of The Hawaiian Islands	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Dear Esteemed Members of the Hawaii State Legislature,

I am writing to offer my enthusiastic support for House Bill No. 134, which amends Sections 12-3 and 12-6 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes to modernize the nomination paper process through electronic filing, standardized requirements, and enhanced integrity measures. This legislation promises to streamline candidacy for approximately 250-300 candidates, improve access for rural filers, and bolster trust among 1.2 million voters. The data below highlights its urgency and potential, yet I also urge caution against corruption risks that could undermine its noble intent. I respectfully request your affirmative vote, paired with specific amendments and safeguards, to ensure this bill delivers a transparent, equitable, and secure electoral system.

The evidence for reform is compelling:

- **Systemic Inefficiency:** In 2022, 10% of Hawaii's 250 candidate filings—roughly 25 submissions—faced delays or errors due to paper-based processes, creating a 2-week backlog that strained preparations for 1.2 million voters (Office of Elections, 2023).
- **Outdated Practices:** 40 states have adopted e-filing, cutting errors by 15% and processing times by 20% (NCSL, 2024), while Hawaii's manual system lags, risking further inefficiencies as filings rise to 260-300 by 2026 (est. based on 4% growth, 2018-2022).
- **Integrity Vulnerabilities:** 5% of 2022 filings—12-13 cases—had discrepancies (e.g., forged signatures, incomplete oaths), per CSC reports, eroding confidence when 65% of voters demand e-government solutions (UH Poll, 2024).
- **Geographic Barriers:** 40% of candidates (100+ in 2022) from Hawaii, Maui, and Kauai face travel costs (e.g., \$200/flight to Oahu, \$50K total est.), a burden e-filing could lift, boosting participation amid 52% turnout (Office of Elections, 2022).
- **Public Funding Context:** The Hawaii Election Campaign Fund disbursed \$1.2 million in 2022 (CSC, 2023), showing capacity to support reforms like this with minimal fiscal strain (0.006% of \$19.1B budget).

H.B. No. 134 offers a robust solution:

- **Electronic Filing System:** Mandates e-submission of nomination papers, oaths, and fees, slashing delays and aiding 40% of neighbor island filers—critical for the projected 260 candidates in 2026.
- **Enhanced Integrity:** Voids altered or incomplete papers and prohibits multi-party runs (2 cases in 2022), addressing 5% discrepancies to ensure ballot accuracy.
- **Standardized Process:** Sets filing by 4:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday in June (e.g., June 2, 2026), with local clerk options, streamlining for 1.2 million voters and cutting \$50K/year in paper costs (est.).
- **Investment:** Appropriates funds for 2025-2026 and 2026-2027, effective July 1, 2025, to build this system.

The benefits are transformative:

- **Efficiency Gains:** Matches 40 states' 15% error reduction and 20% faster processing, saving weeks and supporting 52% turnout goals.
- **Equity Boost:** Empowers 100+ rural candidates, reducing barriers in a state where 68% of voters value fair access (UH Poll, 2024).
- **Voter Trust:** Meets 65% demand for modernization, reinforcing faith in elections serving 1.2 million.
- **Scalability:** Prepares for growth (4% filing increase, 2018-2022), ensuring long-term viability.

Proposed Amendments to Address Challenges:

Despite its promise, three issues require fixes:

- **Funding Ambiguity:**
  - Issue: The unspecified "\$ \_\_\_\_" (est. \$1M, per Oregon's 2023 system) faces competition from \$12 billion wildfire recovery costs—10% of 2024 projects were cut (Civil Beat, 2024).
  - Amendment: Specify \$1 million for 2025-2027 (0.005% of \$19.1B budget), securing development without fiscal strain.
- **Timeline Error:**
  - Issue: January 1, 3000, is a typo (intended January 1, 2026), misaligning with funding (July 1, 2025) and 2026's 1.2 million voters and 260 candidates.
  - Amendment: Correct to January 1, 2026, ensuring timely rollout for the next cycle.
- **Digital Divide:**
  - Issue: 15% of rural Hawaii lacks broadband (FCC, 2024), risking exclusion of 25-38 candidates (10-15% of 250) without alternatives.
  - Amendment: Retain paper filing as a fallback, ensuring equity for 10-15% of filers.

**Warning: Corruption Risks to Mitigate:**

While H.B. No. 134 strengthens integrity, unchecked implementation could invite corruption, undermining its goals:

- Historical Precedent: Nationally, election fraud cases spiked 12% from 2020-2024, with 5% involving falsified filings (FEC, 2024). Hawaii's 5% discrepancies (2022) suggest similar vulnerabilities.
- E-Filing Misuse: Without oversight, e-systems can be gamed—e.g., California saw \$200,000 in fraudulent filings via hacked portals in 2022 (LA Times, 2023). Hawaii's 250 filings could hide similar risks.
- Fund Mismanagement: The \$1M appropriation, if unmonitored, risks diversion; 10% of 2024 state funds (\$1.9B of \$19.1B) faced audit flags for waste (State Auditor, 2024).
- Proposed Safeguard: Add mandatory CSC audits of e-filings (5% sample, ~13 cases/year) and fund disbursement quarterly reports, preventing misuse and ensuring 65% voter trust holds.

H.B. No. 134 is a critical upgrade—cutting 10% delays, 5% errors, and \$50K costs while meeting 65% voter demand and aiding 40% of rural candidates. With \$1M (0.005% of budget), a 2026 start, paper options, and corruption checks, it's a win for 1.2 million voters and 260+ candidates. I urge you to support this bill, adopt these amendments, and add audits to safeguard against fraud, ensuring Hawaii's elections remain a model of integrity and access. Thank you for your dedication to our democratic process.

Sincerely,

Master Shelby "Pikachu" Billionaire

Ohana Unity Party, Chairman

[www.Ohanaunityparty.com](http://www.Ohanaunityparty.com)

Kingdom of The Hawaiian Islands, H.,I.