

Jan. 24, 2025, 3 p.m.  
Hawaii State Capitol  
Conference Room 225 and Videoconference

**To: Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs**  
**Sen. Brandon Elefante, Chair**  
**Sen. Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair**

**From: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii**  
**Ted Kefalas, Director of Strategic Campaigns**

RE: SB48 — RELATING TO THE STATE BUILDING CODE COUNCIL

Aloha Chair Elefante, Vice-Chair Wakai and members of the Committee,

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii **supports** [SB48](#), which would direct the State Building Code Council to conduct a financial review of the potential impact new codes might have on single- and multi-family construction and utility costs.

In recent years, the construction cost of new single-family homes, apartments, condominiums and other residential dwellings in Hawaii has increased dramatically.

As measured by the state's Honolulu Construction Cost Index, the cost for single-family homes in 2024 was 2.6 times higher than the cost in 2020. For highrises, the cost was 2.5 times higher.<sup>1</sup>

Hawaii's strict land-use, zoning and permitting rules are a key driver of these costs. The Economic Research Organization at the University of Hawai'i has estimated that regulations comprise 58% of the cost of new condominium construction.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> ["Quarterly Statistical and Economic Report, 4th Quarter 2024,"](#) Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism, pp. 107-108.

<sup>2</sup> Justin Tyndall and Emi Kim, ["Why are Condominiums so Expensive in Hawai'i?"](#) Economic Research Organization at the University of Hawai'i, May 2024, p. 11.

Requiring the State Building Code Council to review the potential financial effects of all new codes would help inform its decisions on which code changes to adopt. Hawaii's county governments also would also benefit from knowing how much residents might have to pay or could save as a result of code changes.

The National Association of Home Builders already reviews the potential financial effects of certain code changes, and could serve as a resource for the State Building Code Council to adapt to Hawaii's specific climate, topographical and other concerns.

NAHB's review of the 2024 International Residential Code, for example, identified a number of changes that would lower costs and others that would increase them.<sup>3</sup>

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Ted Kefalas  
Director of Strategic Campaigns  
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

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<sup>3</sup> ["Estimated Costs of the 2024 IRC Code Changes,"](#) Home Innovation Research Labs prepared for the National Association of Home Builders, July 2, 2024.



# INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS LOCAL UNION 1260 EMPOWERING THE PACIFIC

**THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2025, Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs**

**HEARING DATE:** Tuesday, January 24, 2025

**TIME:** 3:00 p.m.

**PLACE:** Senate Committee Room 225

**RE:** Senate Bill 48 Related to Procurement- Opposed with Suggested Amendments (Attached)

Aloha Honorable Chair Elefante, Vice-Chair Wakai, and Committee Members;

The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 1260 (IBEW 1260) would like to offer the following testimony in OPPOSITION to Senate Bill 48 as written, and would like to respectfully offer the attached amendments for your consideration.

IBEW 1260, is comprised of approximately 3,000 members throughout Hawaii and Guam and consists of a diverse and highly-skilled workforce that supports the electric utility infrastructure across our state as well as government service contracts and broadcasting. It's our duty to serve and to protect the well-being of our members, but beyond that, it is incumbent upon all of us to serve and protect the well-being of our island home.

SB48 requires the State Building Code Council to assess the financial impact of the adoption of a code or standard on single-family and multi-family homes, requires the State Building Code Council to also include amortized utility costs when adopting codes or standards, and amends annual reporting requirements for the State Building Code Council to include assessment of costs and determinations of benefits for residents.

*A building code* provides rules and standards for the design, construction, alteration, materials, maintenance, and performance of buildings. The main purpose of building codes is to protect public health, safety, and general welfare in the construction and occupancy of buildings. Building codes are adopted and enforced by state, local, tribal, and territorial (SLTT) entities.<sup>1</sup>

Although we understand the building industry's concern that building codes may add to the cost of construction and overall cost of housing, we do not support placing cost before public health, safety, and welfare. As such we respectfully offer the following amendments to provide for the assessment of financial impact and inclusion of amortized utility costs when adopting codes and standards whose primary intent and purpose is not to protect the public's health, safety, and welfare.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify on this measure.

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<sup>1</sup> Building Codes, Standards, and Regulations, Frequently Asked Questions, Congressional Research Service, Updated November 22, 2023.



# INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS LOCAL UNION 1260 EMPOWERING THE PACIFIC

## PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO: SENATE BILL 48- Relating to the State Building Code Council

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that in 2022, the median price of a single-family home in the State was \$985,000 and the median price of a condominium in the State was \$490,000. Furthermore, the cost of single-family home construction in 2022 ranged from \$280 per square foot to \$535 per square foot. For multi-family homes such as apartment buildings and condominiums, the cost of construction ranged from \$255 per square foot to \$430 per square foot.

The legislature further finds that building codes and standards whose primary intent and purpose is not to protect of public's health, safety, and welfare, passed by the International Code Council may add to the cost of housing construction and reduce affordability. In its process to determine whether to adopt international standards whose primary intent and purpose is not to protect of public's health, safety, and welfare, the state building code council should assess the financial impact of changes to construction costs, and the impact on amortized utility costs for single-family and multi-family dwellings across the State.

Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to require the state building code council to:

(1) Consider the impact of building code standards whose primary intent and purpose is not to protect of public's health, safety, and welfare, on the cost of single-family and multi-family homes built in the State, including the impact on amortized utility costs for single-family and multi-family homes; and

(2) Include a financial impact assessment on each code and standard adopted by the state building code council in its annual report submitted to the governor.

SECTION 2. Section 107-24, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

"§107-24 **Authority and duties of the council.** (a) Any law to the contrary notwithstanding, the council shall establish the Hawaii state building codes.

(b) The council shall appoint a subcommittee comprising the four council members representing county building officials, whose duty shall be to recommend any necessary or desirable state amendments to the codes and standards identified in section 107-25. Any recommended state amendments shall require the unanimous agreement of the subcommittee.

(c) The council shall adopt, amend, or update codes and standards identified in section 107-25 on a staggered basis as established by the council; provided that adoption of a code or standard shall be within two years of the official publication date of the code or standard, pursuant to chapter 92, and exempt from the requirements of chapter 91. If the council does not adopt a code or standard identified in section 107-25 within the two-year time period, that code or standard shall automatically become part of the Hawaii state building code until superseded by the adoption of an amended version of the code or standard by the council pursuant to this subsection.

(d) The council may appoint other investigative, technical expertise committees, which may include council members.



# INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS LOCAL UNION 1260 EMPOWERING THE PACIFIC

(e) The council shall consult with general building contractor associations and building trade associations to gather information and recommendations on construction practices and training relevant to building codes and standards whose primary intent and purpose is not to protect of public's health, safety, and welfare.

(f) When considering the adoption of any code or standard whose primary intent and purpose is not to protect of public's health, safety, and welfare, the council shall consult with building industry trade associations to gather cost data and assess the financial impact that implementing the code or standard is likely to have on the cost of constructing single-family and multi-family homes in the State. The council shall also consider the likely impact of the code or standard whose primary intent and purpose is not to protect of public's health, safety, and welfare on amortized utility costs for single-family and multi-family homes.

[(f)] (g) The council may make expenditures for technical references, equipment and supplies, and other operating expenses, and may contract for the conduct of research studies and other technical services.

[(g)] (h) The council may provide education and technical training and administrative assistance in the form of services or grants at the state and county levels relating to the implementation and enforcement of the Hawaii state building codes adopted pursuant to this part.

[(h)] (i) At the end of each fiscal year, the council shall submit a written report to the governor on the council's activities, including the codes and standards adopted, amended, or updated by the council. The written report shall include an assessment of cost by building industry trade associations on each code and standard adopted by the council whose primary intent and purpose is not to protect of public's health, safety, and welfare, to determine whether the code or standard substantially benefits residents of the State."

SECTION 3. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2025.



Shaping Tomorrow's  
Built Environment Today

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M. Dennis Knight  
2024-2025 ASHRAE President

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January 23, 2025

The Honorable Glenn Wakai  
The Honorable Brandon Elefante  
Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military Affairs  
Hawai'i State Capitol  
415 South Beretania St.  
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Opposition to Senate Bill 48 "Relating To Building Codes"

Dear Senator Wakai and Senator Elefante:

I am writing on behalf of ASHRAE, the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air Conditioning Engineers. We are a professional and technical society of more than 54,000 members dedicated to energy efficiency, indoor air quality, resiliency, and sustainability in the built environment. Through our Society's research, standards writing, publishing, certification, and continuing education, ASHRAE shapes tomorrow's global built environment today. As one of the premier subject matter experts on the built environment, and on behalf of our 250 members in the state of Hawai'i, we wish to convey our opposition to Hawai'i Senate Bill 48 and advocate for its tabling in your committee.

While well intentioned, as we certainly sympathize with the stated goal of bringing down housing costs in Hawai'i, we believe that this legislation will weaken any future attempts to update the state's energy codes. The idea underpinning this legislation, that Hawai'i's adoption of modern building codes and energy standards is responsible for high housing costs, and that ceasing to adopt up-to-date building codes and energy standards will bring down housing costs, is incorrect. The actual outcome of this legislation would be a failure to update the International Energy Conservation Code and ASHRAE's Standard 90.1 *Energy Standard for Buildings Except Low-Rise Residential Buildings*, which are published on a three-year cycle that syncs up with HI's code updates, and in turn would cause:

- Energy efficiency gains to be left on the table along with the opportunity for operating cost reductions
- Business owners, homeowners, and tenants to pay in sum nearly \$3 million in higher utility bills every year.
- Thousands of tons of greenhouse gas emissions to go unmitigated.
- Greater difficulty meeting HI's 2030 and 2045 climate targets.
- Failure to create jobs associated with energy code adoption.
- No significant reduction in housing purchase costs.

There are two separate but complementary reasons why we believe this legislation will lead to fewer building code and energy standard updates.

First, the Hawai'i Building Codes Council is under resourced. They currently struggle to fulfil their duties, and they lack the administrative and financial support that they are empowered by statute to receive. Adding additional administrative requirements without additional resources will serve as a de facto barrier to future code and standard adoption.

Second, requiring a cost/benefit analysis that is only created in consultation with developers, contractors, and builders regarding code and standard updates is a departure from the current balanced and fair process. Privileging the voices of one coalition in this complex process could throw future energy standard and building code updates into jeopardy. An amendment requiring additional consultation with energy efficiency advocates and building science and technology organizations such as ASHRAE would help the Council remain balanced but would still impose burdensome administrative work on the group.

We also wish to inform you that rigorous studies on the financial and environmental impact of energy code and standard adoption are already produced by the United States Department of Energy and the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. These reports are an unbiased, science-based analysis of the costs and benefits of updating Hawai'i's energy codes and standards. The two most relevant reports for your attention are:

- [Cost-Effectiveness of ANSI/ASHRAE/IES Standard 90.1-2019 for Hawai'i](#): this study shows the costs and benefits of updating the state's commercial building energy code. In summary, no increase in construction costs are expected.
- [Cost-Effectiveness of the 2021 IECC for Residential Buildings in Hawai'i](#): this study shows the costs and benefits of updating the state's residential building energy code. In summary, homeowners can expect to be cashflow positive inside the first year.

There are many causes of high housing costs, and it would be outside our area of professional expertise to speak authoritatively on them. However, we can point to many counter examples of states that adopt the newest energy standard on cycle and have substantially lower housing and construction costs than Hawai'i, indicating that at most energy standards and codes are a marginal factor in Hawai'i's housing crisis. For example, Montana, Florida, and Oregon all update to the newest edition of ASHRAE's 90.1 energy standard every three years. This legislation cites the median price of a single-family home in Hawai'i as \$825,000. This can be

compared to \$609,900 in Montana, \$405,00 in Florida, and \$490,200 in Oregon.<sup>1</sup> More generally, we know that there is a substantial return on investment when it comes to building codes: up to date model building codes save \$11 for every \$1 invested through disaster mitigation benefits.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, a study has shown that the lower utility bills delivered by using up-to-date energy codes reduce mortgage default rates by about a third. Finally, numerous case studies have shown that updating to modern and more stringent building safety codes and energy codes is not associated with an increase in housing and construction costs.<sup>3,4,5</sup>

In conclusion, ASHRAE opposes HI SB 48, and urges the swift dismissal of this legislation in the Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military Affairs. We are at your disposal to answer any questions, and to address any comments or concerns you might have. We also wish to make ourselves available to you at any time if you find yourself in need of subject matter expertise on building sciences and the built environment. We can be reached at [GovAffairs@ashrae.org](mailto:GovAffairs@ashrae.org). On behalf of our 54,000 members worldwide and our 250 members in HI, thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,



M. Dennis Knight  
2024-2025 ASHRAE President



Joshua McDonough  
2024-2025 ASHRAE Hawai'i Chapter President

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<sup>1</sup> McMillin, David. 2024. "Median Home Prices in Every State." Bankrate. January 3, 2024.

<https://www.bankrate.com/real-estate/median-home-price/#median-price-by-state>.

<sup>2</sup> "PROTECTING COMMUNITIES AND SAVING MONEY The Case for Adopting Building Codes." FEMA, November 2020. Accessed January 23, 2025. [https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-11/fema\\_building-codes-save\\_brochure.pdf](https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-11/fema_building-codes-save_brochure.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> National Institute of Standards and Technology. "Cost Analyses and Benefit Studies for Earthquake-Resistant Construction in Memphis, Tennessee." NEHRP, December 2013. Accessed January 23, 2025.

[https://nehrrp.gov/pdf/NIST%20GCR%2014-917-26\\_CostAnalysesandBenefitStudiesforEarthquake-ResistantConstructioninMemphisTennessee.pdf](https://nehrrp.gov/pdf/NIST%20GCR%2014-917-26_CostAnalysesandBenefitStudiesforEarthquake-ResistantConstructioninMemphisTennessee.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> Simmons, Kevin M., and Paul Kovacs. 2018. "Real Estate Market Response to Enhanced Building Codes in Moore, OK." *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction* 27 (March): 85–93.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijdr.2017.09.040>.

<sup>5</sup> Quarles, Stephen, Ph.D., and Kelly Pohl M.Sc. "Building a Wildfire-Resistant Home: Codes and Costs." *Headwater Economics*, November 2018. <https://headwaterseconomics.org/wp-content/uploads/building-costs-codes-report.pdf>.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kevin Luoma', with a stylized, sweeping flourish at the end.

Kevin Luoma

2024-2025 ASHRAE Hawai'i Chapter Govt. Affairs Committee Chair

**SB-48**

Submitted on: 1/23/2025 11:09:24 AM

Testimony for PSM on 1/24/2025 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
John & Rita Shockley	Testifying for Free Access Coalition	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs!

The Free Access Coalition is against SB48 which will affect building structure quality in sacrifice for Developer speed and cost reduction at the expense of housing and building structures that cannot withstand extreme weather conditions.

Paying for quality construction today will save the community disastrous rebuilding costs in the future.

Mahalo for your time.



**HAWAII STATE SENATE  
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY & MILITARY AFFAIRS  
Conference Room 225 & Videoconference  
State Capitol  
3:00 PM**

January 24, 2025

Subject: SB 48 - RELATING TO BUILDING CODES

Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Wakai, and members of the Committee:

My name is Roseann Freitas, CEO of the Building Industry Association of Hawaii (BIA-Hawaii). Chartered in 1955, the Building Industry Association of Hawaii is a professional trade organization affiliated with the National Association of Home Builders, representing the building industry and its associates. BIA-Hawaii takes a leadership role in unifying and promoting the interests of the industry to enhance the quality of life for the people of Hawaii. Our members build the communities we all call home.

BIA-Hawaii is in strong support of Bill 48, Relating to Building Codes. This bill requires the State Building Code Council to assess the financial impact of the adoption of a code or standard on single-family and multi-family homes, requires the State Building Code Council to also include amortized utility costs when adopting codes or standards, and amends annual reporting requirements for the State Building Code Council to include assessment of costs and determinations of benefits for residents.

The requirement for the State Building Code Council (SBCC) to assess the financial impact of new codes or standards on single-family and multi-family homes ensures that economic realities faced by homeowners and renters are taken into account. Right now, the SBCC does not consider the cost implications of adopting new codes. Nationally, many of the new codes have mandates built-in that manufacturers and special interest groups have embedded into new code revisions, and these mandates are not intended to protect the public health or safety, ultimately increasing the cost of housing. Requiring the SBCC to consider cost implications would provide the public and the Legislature with vital information.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide our comments on this matter.



# SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

## SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

January 24, 2025

3:00 PM

Conference Room 225

### In **OPPOSITION** to **SB48**: RELATING TO THE STATE BUILDING CODE COUNCIL

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Aloha Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of our over 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **OPPOSES SB48**, which would ignore the long-term costs and burdens of delayed or foregone building code updates to residents, first responders, taxpayers, and our society at large, while allowing building industry representatives to uplift their own short-term interests in discussions regarding our building codes.

Our building codes are regularly updated based on international standards, developed through years of study and “lessons learned” from natural disasters, avoidable harms, technological innovations, and emerging environmental concerns, among others. As our climate crisis worsens, timely code updates are even more essential, to protect the safety of residents, first responders, and neighborhoods from avoidable harm, and to mitigate the damage and destruction arising from extreme climate events like hurricanes, floods, and fires.

Code updates can also provide across-the-board savings in water and energy use, relieving the financial burden on residents from ever more expensive utility bills, while also enhancing our overall water and energy security and reducing our carbon footprint.

Notably, up-to-date codes are also essential for our communities to access substantial amounts of federal funds, and can significantly reduce the cost of insurance premiums and the risk of insurers pulling out of the Hawai'i market.

By allowing building industry representatives to determine the “costs” of building code updates, this measure would focus the attention of decisionmakers and policymakers on the perceived short-term, up-front costs of these updates to developer profit margins, without consideration of the long-term cost savings and critical protections that such updates would otherwise provide to the public, and to our islands. **This in turn may lead to decisions to defer or reject code updates for the benefit of corporate interests and at the expense of the long-term financial, public health, public safety, and environmental needs of Hawai'i residents and taxpayers.**

Rather than advancing a measure that so substantially compromises the public interest, the Sierra Club urges the Committee and the Legislature to instead explore and directly address the noted causes of building permit review delays, namely the chronic understaffing of and lack of timely training for county planning departments, including through assessments of staff salaries and conditions affecting worker retention. In addition, we respectfully recommend an assessment of other much more significant barriers to local



# SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

residents accessing housing, including water availability and sewer infrastructure; land, labor, energy, and material costs; land and real estate speculation including by real estate investment trusts and private equity firms; and interest rates that limit financing opportunities.

Accordingly, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i respectfully but strongly urges the Committee to **HOLD** SB48. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.



**MAUI**  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
VOICE OF BUSINESS

**LATE**

**HEARING BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS  
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, SENATE CONFERENCE ROOM 225  
FRIDAY, JANUARY 24, 2025, 3:00 P.M.**

Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Chair  
Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs

**SUPPORT SB48 RELATING TO THE STATE BUILDING CODE COUNCIL**

The Maui Chamber of Commerce tentatively **SUPPORTS SB48**, which requires the state building code council to: (1) Consider the impact of building code standards on the cost of single-family and multi-family homes built in the State, including the impact on amortized utility costs for single-family and multi-family homes; and (2) Include a financial impact assessment on each code and standard adopted by the state building code council in its annual report submitted to the governor.

The Chamber appreciates that this bill aims to identify and address some of the more burdensome requirements in the State Building Code. Specifically, the bill mandates that the council conduct a financial analysis of all newly proposed codes and standards, determine which are essential for public safety, and consult with developers of both commercial and residential projects.

However, we prefer the changes introduced in **SB120**, which streamlines the process for adopting state building codes by reducing some of the more burdensome requirements placed on the council.

For these reasons, we **SUPPORT SB48** as a contingency if **SB120** does not pass, and respectfully request its passage.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap  
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.

**LATE**

**SB-48**

Submitted on: 1/23/2025 11:02:43 PM

Testimony for PSM on 1/24/2025 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Dave Mulnix	Testifying for Our Revolution Hawaii	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs,

My name is Dave Mulnix, CoFounder & Statewide Organizer for Our Revolution Hawaii, and on behalf of our 5,000 members and supporters statewide, we stand in strong opposition to SB48, because it uplifts developers' short-term costs over the long-term safety, financial security, and well-being of Hawai'i's residents and communities.

More importantly SB48 undermines the wide ranging benefits and values provided by heavily researched and well-vetted building code updates.

It is important to note that delaying or deferring building code updates will come at the expense of local residents, first responders, and taxpayers, for decades to come. This measure ignores long-term economic, health and safety, and environmental costs that will result from rejecting building code updates that protect building tenants, keep insurance rates stable, mitigate climate disaster impacts on our emergency response and healthcare systems, and make our homes and communities safer, stronger, and more affordable.

We must not allow perceived short-term costs of building code updates to trump the health, safety, and economic interests of Hawai'i's residents. This bill will set the stage for decisionmakers to do just that.

I urge you to **HOLD SB48**.

Mahalo for your kind attention.

Dave Mulnix, CoFounder & Statewide Organizer, Our Revolution Hawaii

**LATE**

**SB-48**

Submitted on: 1/24/2025 1:23:50 PM

Testimony for PSM on 1/24/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Z. Arakawa	Testifying for Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Land Use Research Foundation of Hawai'i (LURF) is a private, non-profit research and trade association whose members include major Hawai'i landowners, developers, and utility companies. One of LURF's missions is to advocate for reasonable, rational, and equitable land use planning, legislation and regulations that encourage well-planned economic growth and development, while safeguarding Hawai'i's significant natural and cultural resources and public health and safety.

Collectively, LURF Members include homebuilders, and architecture, engineering and legal professionals that have helped to build the most affordable housing units in the State of Hawaii and continue to work collaboratively with all state and county housing agencies to build more homes for Hawaii.

LURF is in **strong support of SB 48**, which requires the State Building Code Council (SBCC) to assess the financial impact of the adoption of a code or standard on single-family and multi-family homes; requires the SBCC to also include amortized utility costs when adopting codes or standards; and amends annual reporting requirements for the SBCC to include assessment of costs and determinations of benefits for residents.

Based on 2024 testimony by successful home-builders and licensed structural engineers and architects who are experienced in building affordable housing projects, we understand that certain proposed building code requirements that exceed health and safety standards, could unnecessarily increase the professional fees and construction costs of a single family home by between \$15,000 to \$30,000, and increase the costs of new residential condominium buildings by approximately \$500,000 to \$1,000,000. The Honolulu City Administration and City Council reviewed engineering, architectural, and safety information, analyzed the costs and health and safety benefits, and wisely did not include those excessive standards as building code requirements.

LURF understands that the county departments that review plans for compliance with the building codes are understaffed and sometimes lack the opportunity for code training and supervision, thus county employees spend significant time and resources on learning, understanding, and applying the code updates, and which diverts their time away from plan review, permit reviews, and inspections. Also, the constant amendments to the applicable codes results in many county staff and professionals being unfamiliar with the updates, leading to

delays in preparation and submittal of plans; permit review and approval; and results in increased costs, and uncertainty in the construction process.

This measure would allow the SBCC to consider relevant information from licensed professionals experienced in homebuilding to address public health and safety concerns as well as the costs of new homes, which would allow more efficient review of construction plans and building permits for housing projects and provide more affordable housing through the state.

For the above reasons, LURF **strongly supports SB 48** and respectfully urges your favorable consideration.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding this matter.

**SB-48**

Submitted on: 1/23/2025 9:58:02 AM

Testimony for PSM on 1/24/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Peter Wilson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs,

My name is Peter Wilson, and I **oppose SB48** and its attempt to uplift developers' short-term costs above the long-term safety, financial security, and well-being of Hawai'i's residents and communities.

Like others before it, this bill is once again seeking to focus your attention only on the up-front costs of building code compliance, to undermine the wide ranging benefits and values provided by heavily researched and well-vetted building code updates.

To be clear: delaying or deferring building code updates will come at the expense of local residents and visitors, first responders, and taxpayers, potentially for decades to come. This measure turns a blind eye to the long-term economic, health and safety, and environmental costs that will result from rejecting building code updates that protect building tenants, keep insurance rates stable, mitigate climate disaster impacts on our emergency response and healthcare systems, and make our homes and communities safer, stronger, and more affordable in the long run.

Clearly, we must not allow an assessment of the perceived short-term costs of building code updates to trump the health, safety, and economic interests of Hawai'i's residents and our islands as a whole. This bill, however, would set the stage for decisionmakers to do just that.

I urge you to **HOLD SB48**.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Peter Wilson

**SB-48**

Submitted on: 1/23/2025 10:00:26 AM

Testimony for PSM on 1/24/2025 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Michael Koster	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My family opposes SB48 because it is a short-term response to a long-term issue: affordable housing. Undermining environmental and safety measures in favor of lowering costs for developers only hurts our community in the long run. Let's not shoot our own toes off with shortsighted policy.

**SB-48**

Submitted on: 1/23/2025 10:02:45 AM

Testimony for PSM on 1/24/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bo Breda	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs,

My name is Bo Breda, and I **oppose SB48** and its attempt to uplift developers' short-term costs above the long-term safety, financial security, and well-being of Hawai'i's residents and communities.

Like others before it, this bill is once again seeking to focus your attention only on the up-front costs of building code compliance, to undermine the wide ranging benefits and values provided by heavily researched and well-vetted building code updates.

To be clear: delaying or deferring building code updates will come at the expense of local residents and visitors, first responders, and taxpayers, potentially for decades to come. This measure turns a blind eye to the long-term economic, health and safety, and environmental costs that will result from rejecting building code updates that protect building tenants, keep insurance rates stable, mitigate climate disaster impacts on our emergency response and healthcare systems, and make our homes and communities safer, stronger, and more affordable in the long run.

Clearly, we must not allow an assessment of the perceived short-term costs of building code updates to trump the health, safety, and economic interests of Hawai'i's residents and our islands as a whole. This bill, however, would set the stage for decisionmakers to do just that.

I urge you to **HOLD SB48**.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,  
Bo Breda

**SB-48**

Submitted on: 1/23/2025 11:08:00 AM

Testimony for PSM on 1/24/2025 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Patricia Blair	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

No to developers short term profits over the health, safety, and economic interests of Hawaiian residents.

**SB-48**

Submitted on: 1/23/2025 11:19:55 AM

Testimony for PSM on 1/24/2025 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Daniel G. Chun	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Daniel Chun, personally involved in passing original 2007 statute. At this time, I **OPPOSE** the requirement for cost factor for codes related to residential construction - particularly single-family house construction.

Long-term owners/operators of buildings have been "reluctant supporters" of improved building performance for life safety and energy efficiency. Not so for builders and developers of single-family houses. Houses are built for immediate resale to consumers, who must contend with long-term durability, life safety and energy performance of the largest \$ investment of their lives. Single-family houses are like automobiles built for resale; where government imposes MPG and other technical performance requirements.

**Hawaii's situation is even more critical for bill's proposed cost factors:**

Hawaii consumers have very little choice in buying houses. Lack of housing availability means that they can pay high sales prices for some low-performing construction. Price is dictated by scarcity and not by quality.

National model codes are already assessed on national level for long-term performance. Hawaii has by far the most expensive electricity costs in USA. So our long-term benefit is greater.

At this time, SBCC receives no state / county funding for its important work. Most states fund their code council for administrative staff and fund this with building permit surcharges. Given current situation, this bill works as "harassment" of all-volunteer SBCC. If Hawaii wants more information it needs to fund SBCC.

**SB-48**

Submitted on: 1/23/2025 11:53:51 AM

Testimony for PSM on 1/24/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Matthew Gurewitsch	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs,

My name is Matthew Gurewitsch, and I've been a full-time resident of Maui for 14 years. I vigorously **oppose SB48**. Its purpose is to prioritize developers' short-term costs above the long-term safety, financial security, and well-being of Hawai'i's residents and communities. We must not let this happen. To do so would be a serious dereliction of our common kuleana.

The Lahaina fires alone would be reason enough to reject this bill. Unpredictable environmental and ecological changes in the future demand that our building codes remain responsive to new realities. Prudent use of resources today is a worthy goal--but not at the price of responsible stewardship moving forward. Please do not be blinded by self-serving short-term arguments. Keep your eyes open to the wide ranging benefits and values provided by responsibly researched and well-vetted building code updates.

To be clear: delaying or deferring building code updates will come at the expense of local residents and visitors, first responders, and taxpayers, potentially for decades to come. Protect the long-term economic, health and safety, and environmental well-being of our islands. The payoff will be protection for occupants of new housing, stable insurance rates, and mitigation of climate-disaster impacts on our emergency response and healthcare systems.

For all these reasons, I urge you to **HOLD SB48**.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,  
Matthew Gurewitsch

**SB-48**

Submitted on: 1/23/2025 2:28:56 PM

Testimony for PSM on 1/24/2025 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Maki Morinoue	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs,

My name is Maki Morinoue, and I strongly oppose SB48.

This bill prioritizes developers' short-term costs over the long-term safety, financial security, and well-being of Hawai'i's residents. Delaying building code updates sacrifices protections that ensure safer homes, stable insurance rates, and resilience against climate disasters—ultimately costing taxpayers and communities for decades.

We cannot let perceived short-term savings outweigh the health, safety, and economic interests of our islands. Please HOLD SB48.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,  
Maki Morinoue  
Holualoa, 96725

**SB-48**

Submitted on: 1/23/2025 2:35:19 PM

Testimony for PSM on 1/24/2025 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Julio Magalhães	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs,

I am writing to oppose SB48 and its attempt to uplift developers' short-term costs above the long-term safety, financial security, and well-being of Hawai'i's residents and communities.

This bill emphasizes only the up-front costs of building code compliance and ignores the wide ranging benefits and values provided by heavily researched and well-vetted building code updates.

Delaying or deferring building code updates will come at the expense of local residents and visitors, first responders, and taxpayers, potentially for decades to come. This measure turns a blind eye to the long-term economic, health and safety, and environmental costs that will result from rejecting building code updates that protect building tenants, keep insurance rates stable, mitigate climate disaster impacts on our emergency response and healthcare systems, and make our homes and communities safer, stronger, and more affordable in the long run.

I urge you to HOLD SB48.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,  
Julio Magalhães

Kilauea, HI

**SB-48**

Submitted on: 1/23/2025 2:41:32 PM

Testimony for PSM on 1/24/2025 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Harriet Burkholder	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this bill.

**LATE**

**SB-48**

Submitted on: 1/23/2025 5:49:26 PM

Testimony for PSM on 1/24/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Harvey Arkin	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs,

My name is Harvey Arkin, and I **oppose SB48** and its attempt to uplift developers' short-term costs above the long-term safety, financial security, and well-being of Hawai'i's residents and communities.

Like others before it, this bill is once again seeking to focus your attention only on the up-front costs of building code compliance, to undermine the wide ranging benefits and values provided by heavily researched and well-vetted building code updates.

To be clear: delaying or deferring building code updates will come at the expense of local residents and visitors, first responders, and taxpayers, potentially for decades to come. This measure turns a blind eye to the long-term economic, health and safety, and environmental costs that will result from rejecting building code updates that protect building tenants, keep insurance rates stable, mitigate climate disaster impacts on our emergency response and healthcare systems, and make our homes and communities safer, stronger, and more affordable in the long run.

Clearly, we must not allow an assessment of the perceived short-term costs of building code updates to trump the health, safety, and economic interests of Hawai'i's residents and our islands as a whole. This bill, however, would set the stage for decisionmakers to do just that.

I urge you to **HOLD SB48**.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Harvey Arkin

Manoa 96822



**LATE**

**SB-48**

Submitted on: 1/23/2025 7:08:55 PM

Testimony for PSM on 1/24/2025 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mary True	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs,

My name is Mary True, and I **oppose SB48** and its attempt to uplift developers' short-term costs above the long-term safety, financial security, and well-being of Hawai'i's residents and communities.

Like others before it, this bill is once again seeking to focus your attention only on the up-front costs of building code compliance, to undermine the wide ranging benefits and values provided by heavily researched and well-vetted building code updates.

To be clear: delaying or deferring building code updates will come at the expense of local residents and visitors, first responders, and taxpayers, potentially for decades to come. This measure turns a blind eye to the long-term economic, health and safety, and environmental costs that will result from rejecting building code updates that protect building tenants, keep insurance rates stable, mitigate climate disaster impacts on our emergency response and healthcare systems, and make our homes and communities safer, stronger, and more affordable in the long run.

Clearly, we must not allow an assessment of the perceived short-term costs of building code updates to trump the health, safety, and economic interests of Hawai'i's residents and our islands as a whole. This bill, however, would set the stage for decisionmakers to do just that.

I urge you to **HOLD SB48**.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mary True

**LATE**

**SB-48**

Submitted on: 1/23/2025 7:22:04 PM

Testimony for PSM on 1/24/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Diane Ware	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs,

My name is Diane Ware , and I **oppose SB48** and its attempt to uplift developers' short-term costs above the long-term safety, financial security, and well-being of Hawai'i's residents and communities.

Like others before it, this bill is once again seeking to focus your attention only on the up-front costs of building code compliance, to undermine the wide ranging benefits and values provided by heavily researched and well-vetted building code updates.

To be clear: delaying or deferring building code updates will come at the expense of local residents and visitors, first responders, and taxpayers, potentially for decades to come. This measure turns a blind eye to the long-term economic, health and safety, and environmental costs that will result from rejecting building code updates that protect building tenants, keep insurance rates stable, mitigate climate disaster impacts on our emergency response and healthcare systems, and make our homes and communities safer, stronger, and more affordable in the long run.

Clearly, we must not allow an assessment of the perceived short-term costs of building code updates to trump the health, safety, and economic interests of Hawai'i's residents and our islands as a whole. This bill, however, would set the stage for decisionmakers to do just that.

I urge you to **HOLD SB48**.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Diane Ware

Moku o Ka'u, Hawai'i Island

**LATE**

**SB-48**

Submitted on: 1/23/2025 7:28:32 PM

Testimony for PSM on 1/24/2025 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Millicent Cox	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Millicent Cox and I oppose SB48 and its attempt to uplift developers' short-term costs above the long-term safety, financial security, and well-being of Hawai'i's residents and communities.

Like others before it, this bill is once again seeking to focus your attention only on the up-front costs of building code compliance, to undermine the wide ranging benefits and values provided by heavily researched and well-vetted building code updates.

To be clear: delaying or deferring building code updates will come at the expense of local residents and visitors, first responders, and taxpayers, potentially for decades to come. This measure turns a blind eye to the long-term economic, health and safety, and environmental costs that will result from rejecting building code updates that protect building tenants, keep insurance rates stable, mitigate climate disaster impacts on our emergency response and healthcare systems, and make our homes and communities safer, stronger, and more affordable in the long run.

Clearly, we must not allow an assessment of the perceived short-term costs of building code updates to trump the health, safety, and economic interests of Hawai'i's residents and our islands as a whole. This bill, however, would set the stage for decisionmakers to do just that.

I urge you to HOLD SB48.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**LATE**

**SB-48**

Submitted on: 1/23/2025 10:22:12 PM

Testimony for PSM on 1/24/2025 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sherry Pollack	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha

I am writing in strong opposition to SB48 that would require the State Building Code Council to assess the financial impact of the adoption of a code or standard on single-family and multi-family homes and require the State Building Code Council to also include amortized utility costs when adopting codes or standards.

Safety should always be made a priority. However, this bill would prioritize developer's short-term profits. This is simply egregious. Don't put residents and families, as well as our first responders, at unnecessary risk.

I urge you to **HOLD SB48**.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

**LATE**

**SB-48**

Submitted on: 1/23/2025 9:17:08 PM

Testimony for PSM on 1/24/2025 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Richard Furst	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs,

My name is Richard Furst, and I **oppose SB48** and its attempt to uplift developers' short-term costs above the long-term safety, financial security, and well-being of Hawai'i's residents and communities. This bill is seeking to focus your attention only on the up-front costs of building code compliance, to undermine the wide ranging benefits and values provided by heavily researched and well-vetted building code updates.

To be clear: delaying or deferring building code updates will come at the expense of local residents and visitors, first responders, and taxpayers, potentially for decades to come. This measure turns a blind eye to the long-term economic, health and safety, and environmental costs that will result from rejecting building code updates that protect building tenants, keep insurance rates stable, mitigate climate disaster impacts on our emergency response and healthcare systems, and make our homes and communities safer, stronger, and more affordable in the long run.

Clearly, we must not allow an assessment of the perceived short-term costs of building code updates to trump the health, safety, and economic interests of Hawai'i's residents and our islands as a whole. This bill, however, would set the stage for decisionmakers to do just that.

I urge you to **HOLD SB48**.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Richard Furst

**LATE**

**SB-48**

Submitted on: 1/23/2025 11:10:35 PM

Testimony for PSM on 1/24/2025 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Chai Blair-Stahn	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs,

My name is Chai Blair-Stahn and I **oppose SB48** and its attempt to uplift developers' short-term costs above the long-term safety, financial security, and well-being of Hawai'i's residents and communities.

Like others before it, this bill is once again seeking to focus your attention only on the up-front costs of building code compliance, to undermine the wide ranging benefits and values provided by heavily researched and well-vetted building code updates.

To be clear: delaying or deferring building code updates will come at the expense of local residents and visitors, first responders, and taxpayers, potentially for decades to come. This measure turns a blind eye to the long-term economic, health and safety, and environmental costs that will result from rejecting building code updates that protect building tenants, keep insurance rates stable, mitigate climate disaster impacts on our emergency response and healthcare systems, and make our homes and communities safer, stronger, and more affordable in the long run.

Clearly, we must not allow an assessment of the perceived short-term costs of building code updates to trump the health, safety, and economic interests of Hawai'i's residents and our islands as a whole. This bill, however, would set the stage for decisionmakers to do just that.

I urge you to **HOLD SB48**.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Chai Blair-Stahn

**LATE**

**SB-48**

Submitted on: 1/24/2025 7:10:24 AM

Testimony for PSM on 1/24/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara Best	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I **oppose SB48** and its attempt to uplift developers' short-term costs above the long-term safety, financial security, and well-being of Hawai'i's residents and communities. delaying or deferring building code updates will come at the expense of local residents and visitors, first responders, and taxpayers, potentially for decades to come. This measure turns a blind eye to the long-term economic, health and safety, and environmental costs that will result from rejecting building code updates that protect building tenants, keep insurance rates stable, mitigate climate disaster impacts on our emergency response and healthcare systems, and make our homes and communities safer, stronger, and more affordable in the long run.

Clearly, we must not allow an assessment of the perceived short-term costs of building code updates to trump the health, safety, and economic interests of Hawai'i's residents and our islands as a whole. This bill, however, would set the stage for decisionmakers to do just that.

I urge you to **HOLD SB48**.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.  
Barbara Best

**LATE**

**SB-48**

Submitted on: 1/23/2025 8:22:28 PM  
Testimony for PSM on 1/24/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cullen Hayashida	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs,

My name is [Your Name], and I **oppose SB48** and its attempt to uplift developers’ short-term costs above the long-term safety, financial security, and well-being of Hawai‘i’s residents and communities.

Like others before it, this bill is once again seeking to focus your attention only on the up-front costs of building code compliance, to undermine the wide ranging benefits and values provided by heavily researched and well-vetted building code updates.

To be clear: delaying or deferring building code updates will come at the expense of local residents and visitors, first responders, and taxpayers, potentially for decades to come. This measure turns a blind eye to the long-term economic, health and safety, and environmental costs that will result from rejecting building code updates that protect building tenants, keep insurance rates stable, mitigate climate disaster impacts on our emergency response and healthcare systems, and make our homes and communities safer, stronger, and more affordable in the long run.

Clearly, we must not allow an assessment of the perceived short-term costs of building code updates to trump the health, safety, and economic interests of Hawai‘i’s residents and our islands as a whole. This bill, however, would set the stage for decisionmakers to do just that.

I urge you to **HOLD SB48**.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,  
[Your Name]

**Sample testimony for SB48**

Aloha Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs,

My name is Cullen Hayashida, and I **oppose SB48** and its attempt to uplift developers' short-term costs above the long-term safety, financial security, and well-being of Hawai'i's residents and communities.

This bill would remove the State Building Code Council's (SBCC) authority to adjust the state building code pursuant to international standards, and eliminate the automatic updates that have kept our building standards current notwithstanding the Governor's emergency proclamations' ongoing suspension of the SBCC. As recognized by the insurance industry and federal disaster funds, code updates are essential for protecting us from the growing threats of hurricanes, floods, wildfires, and other climate-related disasters. Without updates, health, safety, and cost improvements for building standards could face indefinite delays, leaving homes, families, and first responders more vulnerable in the years and decades to come.

Our building codes should prioritize safety, resilience, and long-term savings—not short-term financial concerns. Delaying updates will cost us all more in the long run, both in dollars and in security.

I urge you to **HOLD SB120** and ensure that Hawai'i's building codes remain up to date to protect our homes, communities, and future.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Sincerely,

Cullen Hayashida



**LATE**

Friday, January 24, 2023, 3:00 pm

Committee on Public Safety and Intergovernmental Affairs

SENATE BILL 48 – RELATING TO STATE BUILDING CODE COUNCIL

Position: Oppose, with recommendation

Me ke Aloha, Chair Elefante, Vice-Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee on Public Safety and Intergovernmental and Military Affairs.

SB48 Requires the State Building Code Council to assess the financial impact of the adoption of a code or standard, and to include amortized utility costs when adopting codes or standards. This is a one-sided approach to an issue we all consider of primary importance.

It is abundantly clear, from our experience in Lahaina and across the country, that the dangers rising from climate disruption are unprecedented and challenging to previously comfortable assumptions. One very clear realization across the country is the need to update building codes, both at the private and the public utility level.

Revisiting building codes is a far-reaching and comprehensive prospect to modernize Hawaii's preparedness for coming climate disasters, which are becoming more frequent and severe. Very serious efforts must explore the impacts on local implementation, as this bill begins to do. The typical way for governments to explore and assess important issues like this is through cost-benefit analysis. Understandably, this in itself poses serious costs to perform, given the scale of effort we can easily foresee.

While SB48 begins one aspect of this review, the expected results are all too obvious: no one wants to be on the hook for more spending, and we can guarantee that all changes will require up-front costs that need to be amortized. However, a quick glance at the likely benefits includes a dramatic avoidance of disaster costs easily multiple times the cost of preparedness. There is unanimous agreement among practitioners of public safety that preparedness is well worth the avoided costs.

With the insurance industry buckling under these easily foreseen but short-sightedly avoided actions, a broader view is required to give this issue its fair due. We recommend holding this bill after inviting a broader discussion for a more comprehensive approach. The obviously global nature of this problem means that many practitioners will be exploring this issue, and broad adaptations, including the importance of public finance, will be much in evidence. It is also an opportunity to unleash innovation in technology and finance.

We are searching for the public good, not merely private burden. We are at the cusp of assuring that the general public is benefited by our actions, and that is our calling – not merely protection of private profit. Please explore this issue more deeply and more creatively.

Mahalo for the opportunity to address this issue,

/s/ Charley Ice, Hoā'āina; Co-chair of the Energy & Climate Action Committee of the Environmental Caucus, former Chair of O'ahu Democratic Party Region 5 ('Aiea-Pearl City); retired Hydrologist. Commission on Water Resource Management (25 years) and Planner at DHHL (10 years)

**SB-48**

Submitted on: 1/24/2025 11:59:27 AM

Testimony for PSM on 1/24/2025 3:00:00 PM



Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sadie Green	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs,

My name is Sadie Green, and I **oppose SB48** and its attempt to uplift developers' short-term costs above the long-term safety, financial security, and well-being of Hawai'i's residents and communities.

Like others before it, this bill is once again seeking to focus your attention only on the up-front costs of building code compliance, to undermine the wide ranging benefits and values provided by heavily researched and well-vetted building code updates.

To be clear: delaying or deferring building code updates will come at the expense of local residents and visitors, first responders, and taxpayers, potentially for decades to come. This measure turns a blind eye to the long-term economic, health and safety, and environmental costs that will result from rejecting building code updates that protect building tenants, keep insurance rates stable, mitigate climate disaster impacts on our emergency response and healthcare systems, and make our homes and communities safer, stronger, and more affordable in the long run.

Clearly, we must not allow an assessment of the perceived short-term costs of building code updates to trump the health, safety, and economic interests of Hawai'i's residents and our islands as a whole. This bill, however, would set the stage for decisionmakers to do just that.

I urge you to **HOLD SB48**.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,  
Sadie Green

**LATE**

Aloha Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs,

My name is Laura Leonberger, and I **oppose SB48** and its attempt to uplift developers' short-term costs above the long-term safety, financial security, and well-being of Hawai'i's residents and communities. Like others before it, this bill is once again seeking to focus your attention only on the up-front costs of building code compliance, to undermine the wide-ranging benefits and values provided by heavily researched and well-vetted building code updates.

To be clear: delaying or deferring building code updates will come at the expense of residents and visitors, first responders, and taxpayers, potentially for decades to come. This measure turns a blind eye to the long-term economic, health and safety, and environmental costs that will result from rejecting building code updates that protect building tenants, keep insurance rates stable, mitigate climate disaster impacts on our emergency response and healthcare systems, and make our homes and communities safer, stronger, and more affordable in the long run.

We must not allow an assessment of the perceived short-term costs of building code updates to trump the health, safety, and economic interests of Hawai'i's residents and our islands as a whole. This bill, however, would set the stage for decision makers to do just that. I urge you to **HOLD SB48**. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Laura Leonberger  
Waikoloa, HI

**LATE**

**SB-48**

Submitted on: 1/24/2025 1:18:52 PM

Testimony for PSM on 1/24/2025 3:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
emily gambino	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Elefante, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs,

My name is Emily Gambino], and I **oppose SB48** and its attempt to uplift developers' short-term costs above the long-term safety, financial security, and well-being of Hawai'i's residents and communities.

Like others before it, this bill is once again seeking to focus your attention only on the up-front costs of building code compliance, to undermine the wide ranging benefits and values provided by heavily researched and well-vetted building code updates.

To be clear: delaying or deferring building code updates will come at the expense of local residents and visitors, first responders, and taxpayers, potentially for decades to come. This measure turns a blind eye to the long-term economic, health and safety, and environmental costs that will result from rejecting building code updates that protect building tenants, keep insurance rates stable, mitigate climate disaster impacts on our emergency response and healthcare systems, and make our homes and communities safer, stronger, and more affordable in the long run.

Clearly, we must not allow an assessment of the perceived short-term costs of building code updates to trump the health, safety, and economic interests of Hawai'i's residents and our islands as a whole. This bill, however, would set the stage for decisionmakers to do just that.

I urge you to **HOLD SB48**.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,  
Emily Gambino