



## TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB534 WITH COMMENTS

Relating to the Hawai'i Community Development Authority

Senate Committee on Water and Land

Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs

Senate Committee on Housing

January 29, 2025

1:00 p.m.

Capitol Auditorium

Aloha e Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang, Vice Chairs Elefante, San Buenaventura, and Hashimoto, and Members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

Mahalo for hearing SB534, which is part of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs' (OHA's) 2025 Legislative Priorities. OHA appreciates the time dedicated to considering this important bill which provides an innovative approach to addressing the State's housing crisis while also fulfilling the terms of the historic 2012 settlement between the State and OHA by unlocking the full development value of the Kaka'ako Makai lands. OHA submits this testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT of SB534**, and respectfully requests that the Committee adopt the amendments proposed below.

### Overview of SB534

OHA's Kaka'ako Makai workforce development bill offers an innovative solution to addressing the housing crisis in urban Honolulu by prioritizing the development of **affordable, owner-occupant, workforce-focused housing**. This initiative aims to provide essential housing options for Hawai'i's critical workforce, including educators, healthcare professionals, law enforcement personnel, hospitality workers, civil service employees, and construction industry workers—individuals who form the backbone of the state's economy and community services. At the same time, OHA remains committed to ensuring continued public access and use of Kaka'ako Makai. See map below. The bill sets forth both a commitment to fair, community-centered development of Kaka'ako Makai, and a development template for ensuring that those who serve us can afford to live and thrive in the communities where they work.

The proposed development of Kaka'ako Makai also **presents a unique opportunity to invest in a Hawaiian cultural center and other important OHA initiatives** funded by revenue generated from market sales of residential units, as well as mixed-use and

commercial income. The cultural center that OHA plans to construct here would serve as a vibrant hub for public education, community engagement, and the perpetuation of Native Hawaiian traditions and practices. By integrating this cultural cornerstone into the development, OHA can advance its core mission of improving the lives of Native Hawaiians, while ensuring that the community benefits of the project extend beyond the families who will directly benefit from moving into affordable workforce housing units set aside under the terms of the bill. **See SB534, § 2 (reserving 50% +1 unit for workers making at or below 140% of the area median income).**

### The Need for SB534

As detailed in a recent study published by the Economic Research Organization at the University of Hawai'i (UHERO), as of 2023, only one in five local households across the State (20%) could afford a mortgage on the median-priced single-family home.<sup>1</sup> Among renters, 56% of households are rent-burdened (spending more than 30% of their income on rent) while 28% are severely rent-burdened (spending more than half their income on rent).<sup>2</sup> In other words, home ownership is outside the reach of the vast majority of local residents, and the majority of renters are burdened or severely burdened by market rate rental prices.

**“The consequences of unaffordable housing continue to show up in out-migration, homelessness, and more families being priced out of the local market.”<sup>3</sup>** For example, in 2022, more than 67,000 former Hawai'i residents moved to other states, with the high-cost of housing identified in surveys as a leading cause of out-migration.<sup>4</sup> During the same post-Covid time-period, Hawai'i rose to number four on the list of states with the highest rates of homelessness,<sup>5</sup> a tragic distinction that does not reflect the long-standing value of our community to help those in need.

On the island of O'ahu, the median single family home has increased to \$1,030,000 (second to Maui where the median single family home is priced at \$1,050,000), and the median condominium price has increased to \$566,805.<sup>6</sup> As detailed in the UHERO Report case-study looking at The Central condominium project in Ala

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<sup>1</sup> Tyndall, J., Bond-Smith, D., Inafuku, R., Rhinebolt, V., Wood, C., & Kim, E. (2024). *The Hawai'i Housing Factbook 2024*. University of Hawaii Economic Research Organization (UHERO), p. 1, <http://uhero.hawaii.edu> (hereinafter “UHERO Report”).

<sup>2</sup> UHERO Report at p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> UHERO Report at p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> UHERO Report at 7.

<sup>5</sup> UHERO Report at 7

<sup>6</sup> UHERO Report at 3.

Moana, construction of a single new condominium unit **that is sold to a local resident** can help up to four families “upgrade” to better living conditions as previously occupied condominium units open.<sup>7</sup> **Therefore, owner-occupant developments prioritizing local workers such as that proposed in SB534 have positive ripple effects for housing throughout the community.**

### Proposed Amendments

#### a. Association Fees and Special Fund

The association fees and special fund proposed under the bill serve an important function to ensure that those who benefit from the development authorized under this bill contribute to the upkeep of common areas of the parcels owned by OHA, including the lei of green promenade that will enhance public shoreline access in the Kaka’ako Makai area. See map below.

However, as currently drafted the bill unfairly places the burden of funding the special fund on future residential owners, to the exclusion of commercial tenants and lessees. Moreover, the language could be read to suggest that OHA residents, tenants, and lessees will fund upkeep of public areas on properties owned by others, including the large public park parcel owned by City and County of Honolulu. See map below. **As noted elsewhere, OHA only owns 14% of the lands in Kaka’ako Makai.** Therefore, fees should be appropriately limited to only those lands owned by OHA. Moreover, the association fees and special account should be under OHA’s control, as the underlying fee simple owner of the land.

Accordingly, OHA requests the following amendment to SB 5343 (deletions in strike-through, additions underlined):

**§206E-B Kakaako makai association fee.** The ~~authority~~ office of Hawaiian affairs shall determine a Kakaako makai association fee to be collected from all ~~residential developments in~~ residents, tenants, and lessees of Kakaako ~~on~~ lands identified in section 206E-A(a); ~~provided that the fee shall be collected from residential owners.~~

**§206E-C Kakaako makai special account.** Kakaako makai association fees collected pursuant to section 206E-B shall be deposited into a special account in the ~~Hawaii community development revolving fund established in section 206E-16~~ office of Hawaiian affairs special fund. Moneys from the special account shall be used to fund various services and projects, including but not limited to ~~maintenance, improvements, free public parking for park users, public beach access, and security, and parks and open spaces, for the Kakaako community development district makai of Ala Moana Boulevard and between Kewalo Basin and the foreign~~

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<sup>7</sup> UHHERO Report at pp.10-13.

~~trade zone, including the Kewalo Basin area.~~ Disbursements from the special account shall be made in accordance with procedures adopted by the authority and approved by the director of finance office of Hawaiian affairs.

a. Floor Area Ratio

As OHA seeks to expand affordable workforce housing through the construction of residential towers, ensuring the project's financial feasibility while maintaining low maintenance costs for housing units is critical to bringing this initiative to fruition. To achieve this, and to allow flexibility in the construction of the proposed 400-foot towers along Ala Moana Boulevard, OHA requests an increase to the existing Floor Area Ratio limits by revising subsection (e) to proposed Hawai'i Revised Statutes section §206E-A, to read as follows:

(e) Any other law to the contrary notwithstanding, the building height limit shall be four hundred feet and the maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) shall be no more than 10.0 for any residential development approved by the authority on the parcels bounded by Ala Moana Boulevard, Ilalo Street/Ward Avenue, and Forrest Avenue pursuant to this section.

Additionally, and to be clear the workforce housing construction is proposed for Lots I and E (see map), we proposed the addition of Ward Avenue as a bounding street as to Lot E, as indicated in the proposed amendment above.

Mahalo nui for your consideration of this testimony. SB534 aligns with OHA's primary mission to improve the conditions of Native Hawaiians while also tackling the ongoing affordable housing shortage facing our community. We look forward to partnering with the legislature on this and other important initiatives to improve life in Hawai'i nei over the coming years.



# Kaka'ako Makai

## OHA Lands Map

Spread across nine non-contiguous parcels, the 30 acres of OHA's lands represent just 14% of the total land area (221 acres) of Kaka'ako Makai. OHA's plans include low density and high density workforce housing to address the states critical housing shortage as well as ground floor mixed use commercial and a Native Hawaiian cultural center. Plans also include preserving the oceanfront with a "lei of green" promenade.

OHA lands with low density residential development (65 ft.)

OHA lands with residential workforce housing (400 ft.)

OHA lands with hotel development (200 ft.)

"Lei of Green" Promenade

Proposed residential development boundary

Existing public ocean access stairway



**HAWAII COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

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Statement of  
**CRAIG K. NAKAMOTO**  
**Executive Director**  
Hawai'i Community Development Authority  
before the  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND,**  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**  
And the  
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING**

Wednesday, January 29, 2025  
1:00 PM  
State Capitol, Auditorium & Videoconference

In consideration of  
**S.B. 534**  
**RELATING TO THE HAWAII COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY.**

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

The Hawai'i Community Development Authority (HCDA) respectfully offers both general and specific comments on S.B. 534 for the committee's consideration. Our comments are offered to inform, based on a perspective of good planning for the Makai area in HCDA's role as the planning and redevelopment agency established by the Legislature for the Kaka'ako community development district, which includes the Makai area.

For context, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) and the State of Hawai'i executed that certain Agreement, effective as of February 28, 2012. The purpose of the Agreement, and the attached proposed legislation, sought to settle outstanding claims between the State and OHA (referred to herein as the "OHA Agreement").

Summary of the Bill's Major Provisions

This bill proposes to:

- (i) Authorize the HCDA to approve any plan or proposal for residential development on “identified parcels” as shown in Figure 1 below [Page 8, Line 10];
- (ii) Require an applicant, for development on the identified parcels, to conduct community outreach prior to any contested case hearing held by HCDA pursuant to Chapter 206E, Hawaii Revised Statutes, and applicable rules [Page 9, Line 10];
- (iii) Legislatively direct that the height limit for residential development be increased to 400 feet on the parcels bounded by Ala Moana Boulevard, Ilalo Street, and Forrest Avenue, as shown in Figure 2 below [Page 10, Line 13];
- (iv) Require applicants for residential development to submit a mitigation plan and provide notice of nuisances associated with the development [Page 10, Line 18];
- (v) Set forth requirements for 50% plus one housing units targeted to buyers earning no more than 140% of the area median income under Section 201H rules, and the eligibility requirements for the same on some, but not all, of the identified parcels, as shown in Figure 2 below [Page 11, Line 8];
- (vi) Establish a makai association fee to be administered and collected by the HCDA [Page 12, Line 7];
- (vii) Establish a special account to hold such association fees that shall be disbursed according to rules and procedures adopted by HCDA and approved by the Director of Budget and Finance [Page 12, Line 12]; and
- (viii) Exempt residential developments approved pursuant to this bill from the HCDA’s public facilities dedication fees [Page 13, Line 6]



**Figure 1:** Parcels identified for residential development (in S.B.534).



**Figure 2:** Parcels identified for workforce housing and 400-foot-tall building height limits (in S.B.534).

### General Comments

In lieu of a legislatively mandated land use change and height change, we suggest that a community planning effort, with community engagement, of the Makai area, led by HCDA, is needed. There are several reasons for undertaking a more fundamental examination of the Makai area, including the following:

(a) Land Ownership. There have been significant changes in land ownership in the Kaka'ako makai area, including the transfer of lands from HCDA to OHA and the City and County of Honolulu Department of Parks and Recreation. A new, comprehensive community planning effort would be able to recognize the role of these landowners in supporting a wider community vision for Kaka'ako makai.

(b) Residential Uses. The Legislature has expressed interest in revisiting the allowable land uses in Kaka'ako makai, specifically the ban on residential use.

(c) Contaminated Soil Hazards. Environmental hazard remediation plans in order to consider the soil and water contamination hazards under residential development scenarios. Existing environmental hazard management plans only considered mitigation for commercial and industrial uses, since residential development was not allowed. Kaka'ako Makai is built on fill material that includes municipal incinerator ash, construction and household debris, car batteries, and other refuse. Contaminants of concern include PCBs, lead, arsenic, copper, mercury, naphthalene, selenium, TPH-O, benzo(a)pyrene, and others. The environmental remediation measures necessary to allow residential uses on these sites needs to be identified.

(d) Comprehensive Planning. Various development proposals have surfaced without the benefit of comprehensive planning and analyses of infrastructure capacity. Examples of such proposals include a mobility hub on Lot C, a terminal for the proposed interisland seaglider services, hotel accommodations for neighbor island residents visiting the UH Cancer Center, and a south shore multimodal trail. New development in the makai area should be coordinated and planned in a holistic manner and in accordance with a comprehensive plan.

(e) Flood Hazards and Climate Change. A comprehensive analysis to identify sea level rise, climate adaptation, and flood hazard mitigation strategies for the makai area also needs to be undertaken. The current base flood elevations range from 5 to 10 feet above sea level, and the ground floor of residential development parcels will need to be raised to this elevation to make the building eligible for the National Flood Insurance Program. The makai area is also within the current 3.2-foot sea level rise exposure area. Over the long-term, Ala Moana Boulevard and the other streets in Kaka'ako may also need to be raised in order to preserve accessibility and maintain resiliency as the sea level rise becomes a greater issue during the coming years (See Figures 3 and 4 below).



**Figure 3:** 100-year flood hazard zones (annual 1% chance of occurrence) and base flood elevations in the makai area.



**Figure 4:** 3.2-foot sea level rise exposure area in the makai area.

(f) Affordability. The economics and long-term affordability and sustainability of affordable residential homes in high-risk waterfront areas may also need to be assessed. In the future, underwriters may be reluctant to issue homeowner insurance policies for residential units in flood zones and sea level rise exposure areas, or they may charge higher premiums. How these factors affect the affordability of housing in these areas should be evaluated.

### Community Planning – Pending Legislation

There is a current budget request in HB300 and SB473 (the Governor's Budget), for Community Planning for Kaka'ako Makai, with an appropriation of \$1 million for HCDA to facilitate community engagement and help to promote coordinated development of the area. HCDA has requested Chair Kahele and OHA participate in the community planning process to update the master plan and administrative rules for the Makai Area of the Kaka'ako Community Development District.

Furthermore, the Budget Bills request \$2 million for assessment, community outreach, and planning to promulgate rules to implement Act 221, which requires HCDA to consider the impacts of climate change and sea level rise and climate-resilient development in the design and siting of buildings in its Kaka'ako district.

### Specific Comments

Should the committee prefer, instead, to move this bill and without limiting our general comments, we offer the following comments on specific items in the bill for your consideration, as follows:

(1) Development Risks. There seems to be a presumption that residential development will yield maximum income [**Page 4, Lines 13-19**]. Development is risky. Site location, conditions, soil suitability, environmental hazards, and hazard remediation costs add to the risk and cost of development. The feasibility and marketability of OHA's residential, leasehold market and affordable housing product is uncertain, especially if OHA hopes to maximize income. Soil conditions and the presence of hazardous materials in the Makai area, and the cost of climate change adaptation could make a 400-foot residential tower in the Makai area infeasible.

(2) Community Planning. To reiterate, land uses in the Makai area, including residential or other uses, should be community driven and not legislatively directed [**Page 8, Lines 10-21**]. It should be noted that when Act 15 (SLH 2012) transferred land in the Makai area from HCDA to OHA, the HCDA was prohibited from approving any plan for residential development in the Makai area. OHA accepted the transfer of land, on an as-is basis, and with the existing HCDA zoning and entitlements and the prohibitions. See, OHA Agreement.

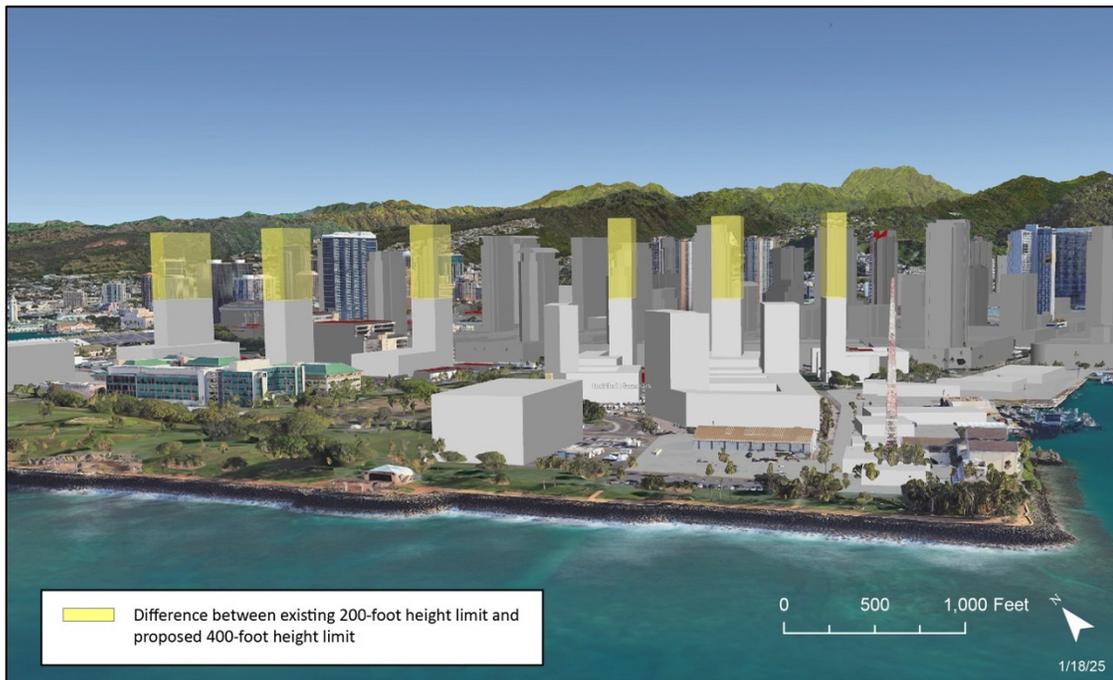
(3) Unclear Boundary Description. The boundary description is unclear and potentially incorrect [Page 9, Lines 3-6]. In subsection (6), one boundary is described as Ahui Street from its intersection with Olomehani Street to the shoreline of Kewalo Basin. Ahui street does not go all the way to the shoreline. Shoreline parcel belongs to the City and County of Honolulu and is part of the Kakaako Waterfront Park. This boundary should be revised and restated. In subsection (7), the shoreline of Kewalo Basin does not go all the way to Ala Moana Boulevard. The boundary description for the identified parcels and the parcels slated for residential development and 400-foot increases in tower heights includes the City-owned Gateway Park also appears to be incorrect and should be corrected. The boundary description also includes parcels on the Ewa side of Keawe street that are owned by HCDA and are being used for the Na Kupuna Makamae Center (the historic Kaka'ako Pumping Station), the State of Hawai'i Sheriff Division, and the City and County of Honolulu's Ala Moana wastewater pumping station (See Figure 5 below).



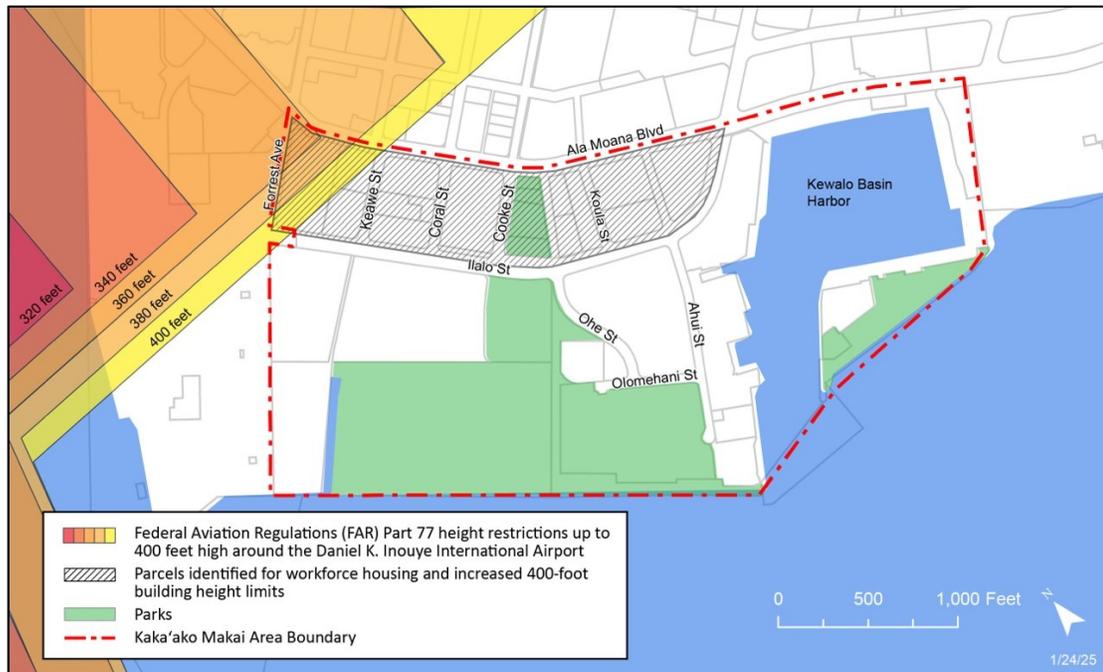
**Figure 5:** Land ownership and proposed residential in the makai area (in S.B.534).

(4) Building Height Considerations. The bill proposes to direct that building heights be increased from 200 feet to 400 feet for some of the identified parcels, as shown in Figure 5 below [Page 10, Lines 13-17]. The urban form in the Makai Area was intended to be diverse, with a mix of structures rising to levels of 200 feet and stepping down to 65 feet and 45 feet along the waterfront. The current urban form of the height of structures rising to 200 feet and stepping down to 65 and 45 feet along the waterfront follows the same urban form contained in the 2005 Makai Area Plan. The 200-foot height limit was established in consideration of the Makai area being in the

vicinity of the airport and the approach of airplanes. It should be noted that when Act 15 (SLH 2012) transferred land in the Makai area from HCDA to OHA, the 200-foot building height limit in the Makai area was applicable. OHA accepted the transfer of land, on an as-is basis, and with the existing HCDA zoning and entitlements, including the 200-foot height limit. The additional height limit and accompanying density needs to be studied, as mentioned above (See Figures 6 and 7 below).



**Figure 6:** Difference between existing 200-foot building height limit and proposed 400-foot height limit.



**Figure 7:** Height restrictions up to 400 feet around the Daniel K. Inouye International Airport.

(5) Hearing Requirements. Public hearings held by the HCDA for development permits should continue to be contested case, quasi-judicial hearings as required by law and rules. The bill language appears to require HCDA to hold hearings that are exempt from Chapter 91 **[Page 9, Line 10, to Page 10, Lines 1 to 6]**. The contested case, quasi-judicial hearing is a two-part process that requires a presentation hearing followed by a decision-making hearing. Therefore, we request that such language be deleted.

(6) Environmental Reviews. Any proposal submitted to HCDA for approval should also include a completed Chapter 343, Environmental Impact Statement, and a completed Chapter 6E review by the Hawai'i State Historic Preservation Division. The Chapter 343 review will help to ensure that any environmental concerns related to the proposed development will be disclosed, addressed, and mitigated **[Page 10, Lines 18 to 21]**.

(7) Reserved Housing. The provisions of this section should be governed by HCDA's reserved housing rules. In the OHA Agreement, OHA agreed to be bound by HCDA's zoning, land use, and other conditions under HCDA's jurisdiction pursuant to the OHA Agreement **[Page 11, Lines 8 to 20]**. Therefore, OHA and Kamehameha Schools' reserved housing units should be subject to HCDA's reserved housing rules.

(8) Potential Future Loss of Affordability. This section proposes income-based eligibility requirements for the “50% plus 1” affordable units. It is unclear whether or not these affordable units will be provided through the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development’s Section 201H program [**Page 11, Lines 8 to 20**]. This section also limits the sale of residential units to prospective “owner-occupants”, as such term is defined in Section 514B-95, HRS. That section essentially defines an owner-occupant as a person who lives in their “principal residence” (as defined by the Hawai’i Department of Taxation) for a period of not less than 365 consecutive days. As written, the residential units can be sold to anyone at market price after one year at which time it may not remain affordable. There is no language to prevent local or foreign investors from purchasing units. Given the language, it is highly likely that the units will be sold in fee-simple at market price to any buyer after one year, resulting in loss of affordability and alienation of the land. There is no language in the bill to preserve local ownership and affordability. As currently drafted, these rules would also apply to the four blocks which are owned by Kamehameha Schools in the Makai Area.

(9) Affordability Requirements. Please note that only parcels bounded by Ala Moana Boulevard, Forrest Avenue, and Ilalo Street have affordability requirements. The remaining parcels will be exempt from affordability requirements (see Figure 8 below). Only two of parcels owned by OHA will be required to have affordability requirements. Why? There should be affordability requirements for all residential developments proposed by OHA in the Makai area and the reserved housing should be governed by HCDA’s reserved housing rules.



**Figure 8:** Residential parcels exempt from affordability requirements.

(10) Landowner Association Fee. This section proposes to create a mechanism to assess an “association fee” from landowners pursuing residential development with such fees being passed onto individual unit owners, presumably as a lien, like taxes, against their units **[Page 12, Line 7]**. We offer the following comments and concerns:

- a. Association fees will be collected by and deposited into a special account created by HCDA. The moneys collected will be used for park maintenance, pay for public parking for park users, public beach access, security, and parks and open spaces. To the extent fees are collected for maintenance of parks that are the city’s responsibilities, those fees seem unnecessary and unfairly burdensome on the unit owners, who will not be the only users of public facilities.
- b. OHA, rather than HCDA, should establish the association, and levy and administer the use of the fees.
- c. Association fees, along with real property taxes, homeowners’ association fees, homeowners (HO 6) insurance, mortgage principal and interest payments, mortgage insurance, are part of the cost of home ownership. Depending on the amount of the proposed association fees, home ownership may not be affordable, especially to the owners of OHA’s affordable units.

(11) Public Facilities Dedication Requirements. The bill proposes that applicants for residential developments are exempted from the HCDA's public facilities dedication requirements [Page 13, Lines 6 to 16]. Development on parcels identified should be required to dedicate public facilities. The purpose of public facilities dedication from a proposed development is to enhance the quality of the public urban environment within the development by requiring parks, public plazas, and community gathering spaces. The HCDA uses these fees to purchase, create, expand, or improve public facilities within the district. These fees are part of the development permit process. Exempting a development from this requirement will result in a less than desired public urban environment for the development as well as the larger Kaka'ako community.

(12) Site conditions. HCDA notes that there are other site conditions and infrastructure needs which may influence the economic viability of different development proposals. There is a 60-inch diameter wastewater force main which currently passes through the parcel along Forrest Avenue that is proposed for a residential tower. In addition, two new 60-inch force mains were recently installed along Ilalo Street. These could present some engineering challenges for large-scale development of this parcel.

In addition to the environmental contamination issues described previously, there are other soil conditions which could present challenges for development. An alluvial channel was previously located through the central portion of the makai area, and the substrata is relatively poor to average (See Figures 9 and 10 below). These could necessitate deeper, more costly foundations to support taller buildings. In addition, the retaining wall bulkhead and wharf at Kewalo Basin along Ilalo Street (Fisherman's Wharf) was constructed almost 100-years ago and must be replaced. The revetment along the ewa side of Kewalo Basin must also be rebuilt (See Figure 11 below). Altogether, these shoreline improvements are estimated to cost around \$100 to \$120 million dollars.

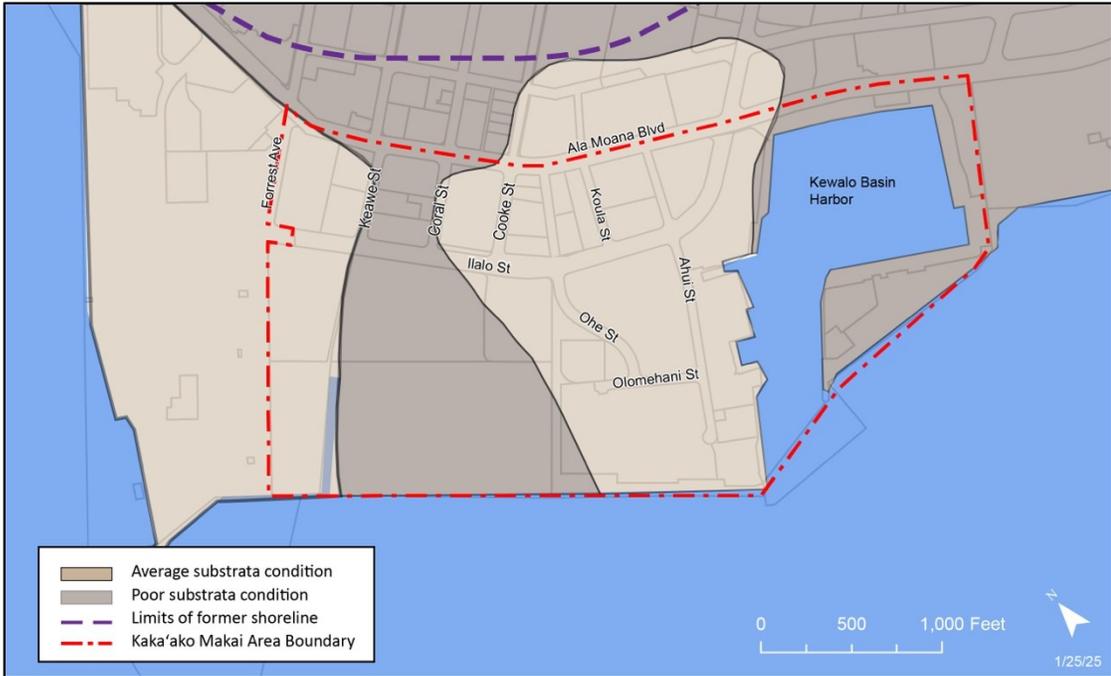


Figure 9: Substrata condition.

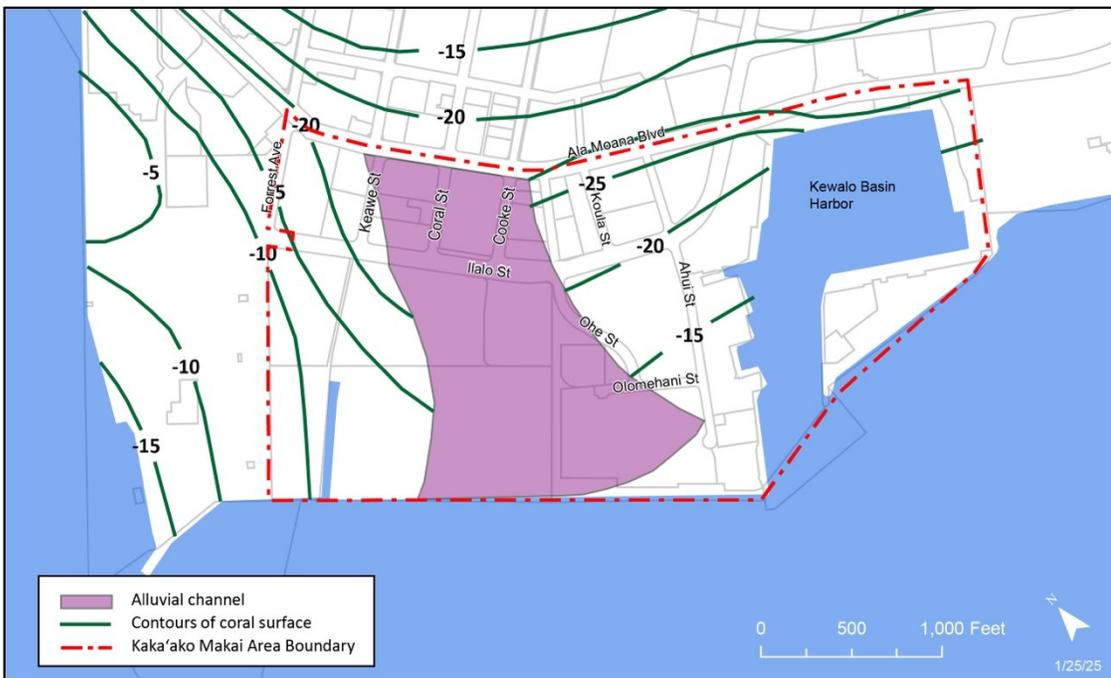


Figure 10: Coral subsurface condition.



**Figure 11:** View of Kewalo Basin Harbor looking ewa, showing Fisherman’s wharf and 100-year-old bulkhead (under wharf) which requires reconstruction.

(13) Transportation. Improvements to Ala Moana Boulevard may be required to accommodate increased development activity in the makai area, such as widening of Ala Moana Boulevard. A tram or people mover may also be needed to connect the makai area with the Skyline rail stations.

(14) Tsunami Hazards. The makai area is within the tsunami hazard evacuation zone and should be considered in the development of a major residential community (See Figure 12 below).



**Figure 12:** Tsunami hazard evacuation zones.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.



**TESTIMONY OF  
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA  
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2025**

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**ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:**

S.B. NO. 534, RELATING TO THE HAWAII COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY.

**BEFORE THE:**

SENATE COMMITTEES ON WATER AND LAND AND ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS AND ON HOUSING

**DATE:** Wednesday, January 29, 2025      **TIME:** 1:00 p.m.

**LOCATION:** State Capitol, Auditorium

**TESTIFIER(S):** Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or Kevin C. Tongg or Christopher J.I. Leong, Deputy Attorneys General

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Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and Members of the Committees:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments because the Department has concerns that this bill could be challenged as (1) special legislation in violation of article XI, section 5, of the Hawai'i State Constitution, and (2) authorizing an illegal tax in violation of article VIII, section 3 of the Hawai'i State Constitution.

This bill: (1) authorizes the Hawai'i Community Development Authority (Authority) to approve the residential development on any parcel identified in the parcels bounded by: (a) Ala Moana Boulevard, (b) Forrest Avenue from its intersection with Ala Moana Boulevard to Ilalo Street, (c) Ilalo Street from its intersection with Forrest Avenue to Ohe Street, (d) Ohe Street from its intersection with Ilalo Street to Olomehani Street, (e) Olomehani Street from its intersection with Ohe Street to Ahui Street, (f) Ahui Street from its intersection with Olomehani Street to the shoreline of the Kewalo Basin, and (g) the shoreline of Kewalo Basin to its intersection with Ala Moana Boulevard; (2) raises the building height limit to four hundred feet for residential development on the parcels bounded by Ala Moana Boulevard, Ilalo Street, and Forrest Avenue; (3) requires any residential development approved by the Authority on the parcels bounded by Ala Moana Boulevard, Ilalo Street, and Forrest Avenue to allocate at least fifty percent plus one unit of the residential units in the development for affordable housing with priority

given to essential workers within a five-mile radius of Kakaako makai; (4) limits the sale of residential units developed in certain residential developments to prospective owner-occupants; (5) requires the Authority to determine a Kakaako makai association fee to be deposited into a special account in the Authority's revolving fund established in section 206E-16, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to fund various public services and projects; and (6) exempts those parcels identified in (1) above from the requirement to dedicate public facilities of land or facilities, or cash payments, as a condition of development.

Article XI, section 5, of the Hawai'i State Constitution requires the State to legislate over its lands or lands under its control through general laws as opposed to special laws. An unconstitutional special law regulates specific parcels of land rather than land generally. Att. Gen. Op. 07-2. The reason behind this constitutional provision is protect against the dangers inherent in special legislation intended to favor a specific individual, class, or entity. See Sierra Club v. Department of Transportation of State of Hawai'i, 120 Hawai'i 181, 231 (2009).

As currently drafted, this bill appears to be a special law because it proposes to lift the residential and height restrictions on specifically identified parcels of state land, and requires residential developments on specifically identified parcels of state land to allocate at least fifty percent plus one unit of the residential units in the development for affordable housing with priority given to essential workers within a five-mile radius of Kakaako makai. To address this constitutional concern, we suggest amending the bill as follows:

1. Replace paragraph (1) on page 7, lines 8-9 with: "Clarifying the procedural requirements for the Hawaii community development authority to approve residential development on certain parcels;"
2. Delete paragraph (2) on page 7, line 10;
3. Delete paragraph (3) on page 7, lines 11-20;
4. Renumber paragraph (4) on page 8, lines 1-3, and paragraph (5) on page 8, lines 4-6, to paragraphs (2) and (3), respectively;

5. Replace the title of the new section 206E-A proposed by section 2 of this bill on page 8, lines 10-12, with: "**Kakaako residential development procedure; public hearing; disclosures; nuisance mitigation.**";
6. Replace the text for section 206E-A(a) on page 8, line 12, to page 9, line 9, with:  
"If the authority finds that a developer's plan or proposal for a residential development in that portion of the Kakaako community development district makai of Ala Moana boulevard and between Kewalo Basin and the foreign trade zone is reasonable and consistent with the development rules and policies of the Kakaako community development district, then the authority may approve the proposed residential development project; provided that approval may be granted only after the applicant seeking approval conducts public hearings held in accordance with subsection (b) and section 206E-5.6.";
7. Delete section 206E-A(e) on page 10, lines 13-17;
8. Delete section 206E-A(g) on page 11, lines 8-20;
9. On page 13, lines 20-21, delete from section 206E-31.5 the proposed new wording, "and except as provided in section 206E-A(a),"; and
10. At page 13, line 19, to page 14, line 16, repeal paragraph (2) of section 206E-31.5 in its entirety, and make other appropriate amendments as follows:  
**"§206E-31.5 Prohibitions.** Anything contained in this chapter to the contrary notwithstanding, the authority is prohibited from[:  
~~(1) Selling~~ selling or otherwise assigning the fee simple interest in any lands in the Kakaako community development district to which the authority in its corporate capacity holds title, except with respect to:  
    ~~[(A)]~~ (1) Utility easements;  
    ~~[(B)]~~ (2) Remnants as defined in section 171-52;  
    ~~[(C)]~~ (3) Grants to any state or county department or agency;  
    ~~[(D)]~~ (4) Private entities for purposes of any easement, roadway, or infrastructure improvements; or

~~[(E)] (5) Reserved housing as defined in section 206E-101[; or  
(2) Approving any plan or proposal for any residential development in that  
portion of the Kakaako community development district makai of Ala Moana  
boulevard and between Kewalo Basin and the foreign trade zone]."~~

We also have concerns that this bill may improperly delegate the Legislature's taxing power to the executive branch in violation of article VIII, section 3 of the Hawai'i State Constitution, and the separation of powers doctrine. Article VIII, section 3 of the Hawai'i State Constitution provides that "[t]he taxing power shall be reserved to the State, except so much thereof as may be delegated by the legislature to the political subdivisions[.]" The taxing power is a legislative power, and "[t]he executive branch is left only with the power to administer and enforce the state's tax laws, not to levy new taxes." Hawaii Insurers Council v. Lingle, 120 Hawai'i 51, 70 (2008) (citing McCandless v. Campbell, 20. Haw. 411, 417 (Haw. Terr. 1911)). The separation of powers doctrine is not expressly set forth in any single constitutional provision, but Hawaii's government is divided and allocated among three co-equal branches. Id. at 69-70 (quotations and citations omitted). A department may not exercise powers that were not constitutionally granted, unless powers are properly incidental to the department's performance of constitutionally granted powers. Id. at 70.

As currently drafted, this bill requires the Authority to determine a "Kakaako makai association fee" in section 206E-B on page 12, lines 7-11. The Hawai'i Supreme Court adopted two separate tests to determine whether a law is a fee or a tax. To determine whether a charge is a service fee, the court analyzes whether the charge (1) applies to the direct beneficiary of a particular service, (2) is allocated directly to defraying the costs of providing the service, and (3) is reasonably proportionate to the benefit received. State v. Medeiros, 89 Hawai'i 361, 367 (1999). To determine whether a charge is a regulatory fee, the court analyzes whether (1) a regulatory agency assesses the fee, (2) the agency places the money in a special fund, and (3) the money is not used for a general purpose but rather to defray the expenses generated in specialized investigations and studies, for the hiring of professional and expert services and the acquisition of the equipment needed for the operations provided by law for the

payor. Hawaii Insurers Council v. Lingle, 120 Hawai'i 51, 65-66 (2008). If the charge is neither a service or regulatory fee, then it is a tax.

Applying the above tests to the "Kakaako makai association fee" in section 206E-B on page 12, lines 7-11, it could be subject to challenge on the grounds that it is neither a service fee nor a regulatory fee, but instead a tax. As discussed above, the taxing power must be exercised by the Legislature, and cannot be delegated except to counties, which exercise subordinate legislative powers. The executive branch cannot be left with the discretion to fix the rate of tax, to determine the method of taxation, or to adjust its apportionment among the taxpayers. To address this constitutional concern, we suggest amending this bill as follows:

1. Replace the title and text for section 206E-B on page 12, lines 7-11, with:  
**"§206E-B Kakaako makai fee.** The authority shall determine and assess a Kakaako makai service or regulatory fee in accordance with applicable law."; and
2. Replace the text for section 206E-C on page 12, line 12, to page 13, line 3, with:  
"Fees collected pursuant to section 206E-B shall be deposited into a special account in the Hawaii community development revolving fund established in section 206E-16. Moneys from the special account shall be used to fund various public services and projects for the Kakaako community development district makai of Ala Moana Boulevard and between Kewalo Basin and the foreign trade zone, including the Kewalo Basin area, as determined by the authority in accordance with applicable law. Disbursements from the special account shall be made in accordance with procedures adopted by the authority and approved by the director of finance."

Finally, we recommend clarifying the relationship between the definition of "owner-occupant" on page 12, lines 5-6, with the Authority's reserved housing rules. The definition of "owner-occupant" in this bill adopts the definition in section 514B-95, HRS, that requires the owner-occupant to reside in the residential unit for only three hundred sixty-five consecutive days, whereas the Authority's recent reserved and workforce housing rules require an owner-occupant to reside in the residential unit for

ten years. We suggest amending this bill by adding to the end of the sentence at page 12, line 6: ", provided that this definition shall not control over the authority's applicable reserved and workforce housing rules."

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.



**STATE OF HAWAI'I | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I**  
**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION | KA 'OIHANA ALAKAU**  
869 PUNCHBOWL STREET  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-5097

January 29, 2025  
1:00 P.M.  
State Capitol, Auditorium

**S.B. 534**  
**RELATING TO THE HAWAII COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, & Housing

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The Department of Transportation (DOT) offers comments on SB 534, which proposes raising the building height limit for two of the six parcels owned by the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) in the Kakaako Makai area to four hundred feet.

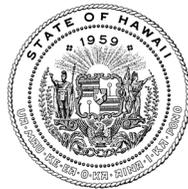
The OHA Kakaako Makai parcels are located within four miles of Daniel K. Inouye International Airport (DKI) and are directly beneath the aircraft approach and departure slopes for the airport. Notably, the parcel identified as Tax Map Key (1) 2-1-015:061 lies within a protected airspace zone essential for flight safety and operations. Under the Federal Aviation Regulation, Part 77, structural heights in this area are restricted to less than 355 feet above mean sea level. Similarly, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, Chapter 262, Airports Zoning Act, reinforces these height limitations to safeguard aviation operations.

Additionally, it is important to note that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) requires the completion of FAA Form 7460-1, *Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration*, for any construction or alterations exceeding 200 feet. This process is critical for FAA review to assess the potential impacts of such structures on aviation safety and operations. With an average of 27,000 monthly landings at DKI, any decision to raise height limits could have significant ramifications for flight safety, operational efficiency, and the community.

Future developments on these parcels should also consider the potential for single-event noise from aircraft operations, as well as possible exposure to fumes, smoke, vibrations, odors, and other effects of regular airport activities.

In closing, DOT strongly advises that all developments within five miles of state airports review the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development's [Technical Assistance Memorandum](#) for guidance on compliance with regulatory requirements. Developers must be prepared to address the concerns outlined above and obtain all necessary permits to ensure their projects align with federal and state regulations.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

LUIS P. SALAVERIA  
DIRECTOR

SABRINA NASIR  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE**  
*Ka 'Oihana Mālama Mo'ohelu a Kālā*  
P.O. BOX 150  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM  
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND  
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE  
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT DIVISION  
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION  
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT

**WRITTEN ONLY**

TESTIMONY BY LUIS P. SALAVERIA  
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE  
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON WATER AND LAND, HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS, AND  
HOUSING  
ON  
SENATE BILL NO. 534

**January 29, 2025**  
**1:00 p.m.**  
**Auditorium and Videoconference**

RELATING TO THE HAWAII COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

Senate Bill (S.B.) No. 534 establishes three new sections to Chapter 206E, HRS, to allow the Hawai'i Community Development Authority (HCDA) to approve residential development on certain parcels of land in the Kaka'ako Makai area within their Kaka'ako Community Development District (KCDD): 1) establish a 400-foot height limit on these residential developments; 2) require any residential development approved by HCDA on a subset of the parcels to allocate at least 50% plus one unit of the residential units to households with income at or below 140% of the area median income, with priority given to individuals who are essential workers working within a five-mile radius of the Kaka'ako Makai area; 3) allow HCDA to determine a Kaka'ako Makai association fee to be collected from all residential developments within the Kaka'ako Makai area; and 4) create a subaccount within the Hawai'i Community Development Revolving Fund established in Section 206E-16, HRS, to deposit the aforementioned fees and to fund various services and projects for the Kaka'ako Makai area. S.B. No. 534 also amends

Sections 206E-12 and 206E-31.5, HRS, to exempt the new residential developments from HCDA dedication rules and statutory prohibitions related to KCDD.

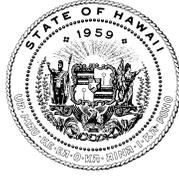
B&F notes that the account established in Section 206E-16, HRS, is a special fund and not a revolving fund as indicated in Section 2 of this bill.

Furthermore, as a matter of general policy, B&F does not support the creation of any special fund or special fund subaccount that does not meet the requirements of Section 37-52.3, HRS. Special funds should: 1) serve a need as demonstrated by the purpose, scope of work, and an explanation why the program cannot be implemented successfully under the general fund appropriation process; 2) reflect a clear nexus between the benefits sought and charges made upon the users or beneficiaries or a clear link between the program and the sources of revenue; 3) provide an appropriate means of financing for the program or activity; and 4) demonstrate the capacity to be financially self-sustaining. Regarding S.B. No. 534, it is difficult to determine whether the proposed special fund subaccount would be self-sustaining.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

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*

P. O. BOX 1879  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96805

TESTIMONY OF KALI WATSON, CHAIR  
HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION  
BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND, THE SENATE  
COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS, AND THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON  
HOUSING  
HEARING ON JANUARY 29, 2025 AT 1:00PM IN THE AUDITORIUM

**SB 534, RELATING TO THE HAWAII COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

January 28, 2025

Aloha Chairs Tam, Evslin, and Ilagan, Vice Chairs Templo, Miyake, and Hussey, and Members of the Committees:

The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) **supports** this bill which 1) allows the Hawaii Community Development Authority to approve residential development on certain parcels of land in the Kakaako Makai area, 2) raises the building height limit on certain parcels in the area, 3) requires a certain percentage of the residential units developed on certain parcels to be allocated to households at or below a certain income level, with priority given to certain essential workforce in the area, 4) limits the sale of residential units developed in certain residential developments to prospective owner-occupants, and 5) requires the Hawaii Community Development Authority to determine a Kakaako Makai Association Fee to be collected from all residential developments on certain parcels to be deposited into a special account in the Hawaii Community Development Revolving Fund to fund various services and projects in the Kakaako Makai area.

SB534 will help to facilitate residential housing on lands managed by both the Office of Hawaiian Affairs and Kamehameha Schools, which may be used by DHHL. DHHL remains committed to working with the noted organizations to provide affordable residential housing and communities where shared beneficiaries can live, work, and play.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.



P.O. Box 37158, Honolulu, Hawai`i 96837-0158  
Phone: 927-0709 [henry.lifeoftheland@gmail.com](mailto:henry.lifeoftheland@gmail.com)

COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND  
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair  
Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS  
Senator Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Chair  
Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING  
Senator Stanley Chang, Chair  
Senator Troy N. Hashimoto, Vice Chair

DATE: Wednesday, January 29, 2025  
TIME: 1:00 PM  
PLACE: Auditorium & Videoconference

re: SB 534 Hawaii Community Development Authority                      OPPOSE

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

Life of the Land is Hawai`i's own energy, environmental and community action group advocating for the people and `aina for 55 years. Our mission is to preserve and protect the life of the land through sound energy and land use policies and to promote open government through research, education, advocacy and, when necessary, litigation.

Save Our Kakaako et al successfully prevented Alexander and Baldwin`s plan to build high-rise towers and retail shops on 36 acres of prime state waterfront property surrounding Kewalo Basin Harbor in 2006.

A law was passed in 2006 to prevent such highrise development on the seaward side of Ala Moana Boulevard. Kakaako Makai was to be protected as part of a larger plan to create a green belt of parks and open promenades.

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) took ownership of 30 acres of land on the makai side of Kakaako in 2012 as part of the state`s settlement of a \$200 million debt it was owed in payments for ceded lands.

OHA asserts that the passed laws and regulations are outdated, and should be overturned.

OHA has used various tactics over the years to amend the law to promote development to provide housing for Native Hawaiians although by law OHA cannot set aside any of the proposed condos in Hakuone for Native Hawaiians.

The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands (DHHL) is the only state agency that can impose that kind of racial restriction.

As highrise development continues in other areas of Kakaako, it is important that land dedicated to being part of a larger plan to create a green belt of parks remains open

Mahalo,

Henry Curtis

Executive Director



1200 Ala Kapuna Street • Honolulu, Hawai'i 96819  
Tel: (808) 833-2711 • Fax: (808) 839-7106 • Web: www.hsta.org

**Osa Tui, Jr.**  
President  
**Logan Okita**  
Vice President  
**Cheney Kaku**  
Secretary-Treasurer  
**Ann Mahi**  
Executive Director

**TESTIMONY TO THE HAWAII SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND, COMMITTEE ON  
HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS, AND COMMITTEE ON HOUSING**

**Item: SB 534 – Relating to the Hawai'i Community Development Authority**

**Position: Support**

**Hearing: Wednesday, January 29, 2025, 1:00 pm, Auditorium**

**Submitter: Osa Tui, Jr., President - Hawai'i State Teachers Association**

Dear Chairs Inouye, Richards and Chang, Vice Chairs Elefante, San Buenaventura and Hashimoto and members of the committees,

The Hawai'i State Teachers Association (HSTA) **supports** SB 534, which recognizes the critical need for workforce housing in the urban core of Honolulu, particularly for educators. The bill's provision to prioritize essential workers, including teachers, for the workforce housing developed on certain parcels of land in Kaka'ako Makai is commendable.

The high cost of living in Hawai'i, with housing costs being 2.7 times the national average, has made it increasingly difficult for many essential workers, including teachers, to afford to live in the communities they serve. This has resulted in a severe teacher shortage, as many educators are forced to leave the profession or the state due to the unaffordable housing market.

The development of affordable housing in Kaka'ako Makai, with priority given to essential workers, would be a significant step towards addressing the teacher shortage and ensuring that our keiki have access to a quality education. The proximity of this housing to schools and other essential services in the urban core would make it an ideal location for teachers and their families.

The HSTA urges the passage of SB 534 which helps provide solutions to the affordable housing crisis in Hawai'i. The future of our education system and the well-being of our communities depend on it.

Mahalo.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 12:10:47 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ilima DeCosta	Testifying for Hui Malama Pono Hawaii	Support	In Person

Comments:

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support of SB534, which would finally allow native Hawaiians the ability to grow our lahui on lands that were promised for this purpose.

The Kaka'ako makai lands were designated as the key element of a settlement between the State of Hawai'i and the native Hawaiian community. The fact that the lands have been hampered with legal red tape - while Howard Hughes and other non kanaka maoli entities continue to build luxury units - is not only a fatal legal flaw in the purpose of the settlement, but a further insult to the native Hawaiian people.

The area of Kaka'ako once housed and employed many native Hawaiian people, and their 'iwi is still being discovered at new developments. Now, instead of a thriving lahui, many kanaka maoli who live in Kaka'ako do so as unsheltered residents, our lifespan cut short by the lack of housing. Aue.

The causes of homelessness are many, but the key to undoing this hewa is to grant native Hawaiian organizations - like OHA, but hopefully others - the ability to develop truly affordable workforce housing for native Hawaiians and many others who work, play and live in Kaka'ako.

Native Hawaiians have been displaced from our lands and dispossessed of our right to a full renewal of our people's well being; this unjust status of ill health and displacement will finally be remedied with the passage of SB534.

Mahalo for passing SB534 out of committee and sending it to the Governor for his signature.



January 27, 2025

To: Chair Senator Lorraine R. Inouye  
Chair Herbert M. “Tim” Richards III  
Chair Senator Stanley Chang  
Members

### **Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB 534**

My name is Ron Iwami, President of Friends of Kewalo.

I would like to open with we are not against residential development nor are we against OHA, but when anyone attempts to change a landmark law that has been protecting this last open public oceanfront land on the South Shore of Oahu, under the guise of being environmentally safe and feasible to build, and under the guise of being affordable, That is not Pono.

To elaborate, this law has been protecting this special land for 19 years and was passed by the legislature unanimously except one, showing the strong public sentiment for this land.

This sentiment still remains today because everyone I have asked if they would like to see more highrises for Kaka’ako Makai, and everyone said NO, we have enough already mauka with more coming. Ask yourself that.

An urban planner told me that KM is unsafe to build being on toxic brownfields and unstable filled land to support 400 ft towers. He said there will be tremendous construction costs to remediate the land and make safe. He predicted that it would all have to be sold at multi-million dollar prices with no affordable in order to pencil out.

Friends Of Kewalo would like to require OHA to complete an EIS by a neutral contractor and a feasibility study before they present a proposal such as this.

Last thing, HCDA is currently moving ahead to organize a series of Community Outreach sessions to see what the public wants for KM.

The righteous thing to do is we all take a pause and let this process play out and see what the People want. After all, you all took a oath to listen to the People and make decisions accordingly. Its been going on 13 years since OHA got the land, and nothing has been done. What is one more year.

In closing, back in 2005/2006, when this public land was to be sold to Alexander and Baldwin to build residential highrises, when the People were saving this land, OHA was standing with us with the Stewardship mindset WE and FOREVER. Now after becoming owners of the land they now stand with the Ownership mindset of ME and NOW.

Former Governor George Ariyoshi said it well,  
He says “ HCDA asked, how can we put this land to use now? The People asked what do we want from this land in perpetuity? The People asked the better question with the realization that when the land is developed, other potentials are gone.”

We need to think beyond the “Making of a Quick Buck.” In 10 years, the money will be gone. The residential towers, if allowed to be built, will alter public access to the ocean. True riches of the land come when you can provide for the People year after year, generation after generation in perpetuity. That is how we all THRIVE...

Mahalo for this opportunity to share our mana‘o.  
I am open and available to talk more about solutions.

Ron Iwami  
Friends of Kewalo, President  
Non Profit 501 C-3  
808 2265-477  
Email: Ronald@kewalo.org

*To Protect, Preserve, and Malama Kewalo Basin Park and the surrounding shoreline  
and ocean to ensure that the recreational user will continue to have access  
and the ability to enjoy the area for future generations to come.*

www.kewalos.org







**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 10:04:32 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Audrey Lee	Testifying for Malama Moana	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

**I am testifying in very strong opposition to SB534 for the following reasons.**

1. The case being made for affordable housing is not believable in that it appeals to the idea of having housing that Hawaiian people without housing currently can afford. Yet, the AMI is maintained to be 140% which makes the property prices around \$750-800K for a two bedroom apt. If those without housing could afford this now, they would probably not be homeless. Also, the priority for housing is being given to those who work in a 5 mile radius of the area in specific fields of work. After those who might possibly qualify for this priority runs out, the sales for these affordable units will be freed up to sell at market prices. Definitely not affordable, but being touted as a means of putting money into OHA accounts for the benefit of the Hawaiian people. If affordable housing for the Hawaiian people were the main goal of OHA, why have an AMI to dictate who can buy in that development? Why not say, whatever you can afford is fine? Because this is not the main goal of OHA. It is just a way to confuse the public and politicians to think it has anything to do with affordable housing so that the current law can be changed by passing SB534.

2. The main goal of OHA is to make the most money possible from the lands they were given by the State in exchange for lands that were previously taken by the State. It is not credible that this goal would evolve into a plan for affordable housing over contaminated lands in danger of significant sea level rise in the near future and expecting that the money generated from market price units would accomplish OHA's main goal. To wit, once the standing law of not building over 200' or changing the zoning to residential is overturned, OHA will be able to achieve their goal of making top dollar by selling their properties at Kaka'ako Makai to any developer who has been waiting for this opportunity.

3. Once protection is lifted from this last oceanfront area, it will beckon all those who thought it could not be done to look at other oceanfront areas in our state. The hole in the dam will be unplugged.

4. If OHA was serious in building affordable housing for the Hawaiian people or anyone, wouldn't it be of grave importance to know the land on which it is being built is safe to live and thrive on? Wouldn't an EIS come first before trying to overturn a law restricting residential zoning? They might not care if they were just going to turn it around to sell and let someone else worry about such things. This is the picture we are all seeing and it is not a pretty one.

For these reasons and more, I very strongly oppose SB 534 and ask all of you to do the same. Let's come up with a better way to make that money, OHA. And as for affordable housing, let's get a clear picture of what's actually out there and what kind of housing is most needed and by whom. This is a key issue. But SB534 is not about that issue.



## Kamehameha Schools®

Senate Committee on Water and Land  
Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs  
Senate Committee on Housing

**LATE**

Time: 1:00 p.m.  
Date: January 29, 2025  
Where: Auditorium

### TESTIMONY

By: Kā'eo Duarte  
Vice President, 'Āina Pauahi

#### **RE: SB534, Relating to Hawaii Community Development Authority**

Aloha e nā Luna Ho'omalū Inouye, Richards, Evslin, nā Hope Luna Ho'omalū Elefante, San Buenaventura, Miyake, a me nā Lālā o nā Kōmike.

Kamehameha Schools appreciates this opportunity to **support** SB534.

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) is critically important to the advancement of our Native Hawaiian families, culture, and lāhui and to the well-being of our State. For its success, OHA relies, in large part, on the State fulfilling its long-standing trust obligations to Native Hawaiians and continuing its ongoing public policy of recognizing and uplifting Native Hawaiian well-being, self-determination, self-governance, and sovereignty. SB534 addresses these obligations and aligns with this public policy.

The intention of SB534 enables OHA with the means to better serve Hawai'i's workforce, which includes many Native Hawaiian individuals and families. We support this good intention, which uplifts our communities and helps to ensure the perpetuation of our culture.

At Kamehameha Schools, we work to advance our Native Hawaiian people through education, and we are committed to working with community partners, organizations and State leaders in our collective efforts to empower and elevate the well-being of our lāhui.

Kamehameha Schools owns lands that would be covered by SB534 and at this time, Kamehameha Schools has no plans for the development of our parcels.

Founded in 1887 by the legacy of Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop, Kamehameha Schools (KS) is a private, educational, charitable trust committed to improving the capability and well-being of Native Hawaiian people through education. KS envisions a thriving lāhui where learners, grounded in Christian and Hawaiian values, grow into 'ōiwi leaders who inspire and contribute to their communities, both locally and globally.



# Iron Workers Stabilization Fund

T. George Paris  
Managing Director

**LATE**

January 29, 2025  
1:00 pm

Senate Committee on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing  
Auditorium & Videoconference.

Re: Support for SB534-relating to the Hawaii Community Development Authority

Aloha Chairs, Chang, Richards, Inouye, Vice Chairs, Hashimoto, Buena Ventura, Elefante and members of the Committee on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing

The Ironworkers Stabilization Fund stands in **strong support** of SB534 with its current intent, which addresses the critical issue of affordable housing in Hawai'i. This legislation takes a multi-pronged approach to increase the availability of housing for essential workers. SB534 would empower the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to develop its lands for workforce housing and mixed development.

In the 2024 survey by Asset Limited Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) reported an alarming 180,000 residents are currently considering relocating elsewhere for financial relief. This significant exodus has detrimentally impacted our workforce and significantly impacted all Labor Unions.

This is a crucial step towards addressing the housing needs of Hawai'i's residents and ensuring that OHA's lands are utilized to benefit the community and also fund programs for the advancement of native Hawaiians and **to keep our local families home.**

I urge this committee to pass SB534 without delay. This legislation represents a balanced and comprehensive approach to addressing the housing crisis in Hawai'i while ensuring the sustainable development of the Kakaako Makai area.

Sincerely,

T. George Paris  
Managing Director

KAKA'AKO MAKAI COMMUNITY PLANNING ADVISORY COUNCIL  
TESTIMONY IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO SB 534  
RELATING TO THE HAWAII COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair  
Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Senator Herbert "Tim" Richards, III, Chair  
Senator Joy San Buenaventura, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

Senator Stanley Chang, Chair  
Senator Troy N. Hashimoto, Vice Chair

**LATE**

Aloha Senators:

The Kaka'ako Makai Community Planning Advisory Council (CPAC) was established in 2006 by H.C.R 30, which called for a collaborative community working group to develop a Master Plan for Kaka'ako Makai. Also in 2006, the State Legislature established laws under Chapter 206E-31, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to 1) prohibit residential development in Kaka'ako Makai and 2) prohibit the sale of state land in Kaka'ako.

CPAC became the diverse working group comprised of many members of the public, including Hawaiian Beneficiaries and OHA representatives, which created the Kaka'ako Makai Vision and Guiding Principles and the Kaka'ako Makai Master Plan as approved and adopted by the Hawaii Community Development Authority (HCDA) in 2010. In 2023 the HCDA revised the Kaka'ako Makai Area Rules to incorporate the 2010 Kaka'ako Makai Master Plan and its Kaka'ako Makai Vision and Guiding Principles.

From 2006 through today, the issues against residential development in Kaka'ako Makai have remained constant. Kaka'ako Makai remains one of Honolulu's last remaining open recreational shoreline areas, and this State public trust land is frequented daily by myriad recreational ocean and park users including surfers, fishermen, divers, picnickers and visitors.

Kaka'ako Makai was originally a shoreline fishing area built on infill from two (2) large incinerators that burned trash and generated toxic ash high in lead, arsenic, mercury, asbestos and other toxic waste. Cattle were herded from barges into pits with DDT pesticides and tanks of petroleum corroded by salty ground water leaking petroleum and benzene. Used transformers leaking PCBs were dumped here, and a pesticide mixing plant built in Kaka'ako Makai discarded carcinogenic chemicals. These and other toxic materials remain underground in Kaka'ako Makai today, capped with an impermeable surface membrane with large piping emitting methane gas released from below the surface, and most of the underground toxins have leached to the soil below while being undisturbed for decades. And below the toxic infill throughout Kaka'ako Makai, is the seabed where underground seawater mixes with subterranean streams that carry onshore storm water into the changing tides.

But if the protective long-standing law is changed and this toxic-infilled land is disturbed by the construction of 200-foot to 400-foot high-rise residential towers built on required foundation pilings penetrating deep into this toxic infill, the embedded toxins will be released into the nearby ocean shoreline and public park recreational areas, causing a public health disaster when these toxins become dislodged and contaminate the underground streams, coral, rocks and lava tubes. Equally concerning would be heavy construction damage to the basalt cap that protects the freshwater aquifer from ocean seawater, consequently releasing the toxins.

Excavation to construct the huge foundations for the towers will also compromise toxic materials imbedded in Kaka'ako Makai. In Waikiki, Ala Moana, Kaka'ako Mauka and even near Ala Moana Park, construction of large buildings have resulted in sinkholes, broken sidewalks, and broken water mains and sewer lines. In Kaka'ako Makai large berms in Waterfront Park cap toxic waste under impermeable membranes to keep the public safe. But consider what would happen if there was a sinkhole or other breach of the toxic landfill, necessarily closing the popular Park and denying access to the public.

Necessary remediation of the toxic waste would create a HAZMAT site and all equipment coming in contact with toxins would need to be decontaminated, with the water used to clean the equipment safely collected and taken to a certified toxic waste disposal site. There are no such disposal sites in the state for this type of hazardous waste, which would have to be shipped out of state. These environmental concerns and remediation costs would make affordable housing impossible.

The Hawaiian Beneficiaries were severely shortchanged when a former governor made a deal with OHA to take this toxic land. Instead and to remedy this disrespectful endeavor, for truly affordable housing needed by the Beneficiaries an equal amount of land of equal value to the debt owed to the Beneficiaries should be exchanged by the State for non-toxic clean land in the present Aloha Stadium Redevelopment Area, now slated for residential development. And in the best interests of Hawaii's communities including Native Hawaiian Beneficiaries and the general public, OHA, a State agency, should first convene a publicly-vetted master plan process for the clean exchanged land.

OHA has repeatedly sought to overturn the prohibition of residential development and sale of State land in Kaka'ako Makai that has remained undeveloped for over a dozen years since ACT 15 (Senate Bill 2783) was approved in 2012. Notably, ACT 15 states the following for the public trust lands in Kaka'ako Makai presently under OHA:

For purposes of this section and this Act, "as is, where is" means that the office of Hawaiian affairs is accepting the Properties in their existing condition as of March 1, 2012, the close of the office's period for due diligence, without representations or warranties of any kind or nature.

All too often public access restrictions and limitations result from rampant residential development of public land sold to developers and out of state investors, and the public has the right to know what OHA's true intentions are.

The 2010 Kaka'ako Makai Master Plan was created through a comprehensive community planning process to preserve the tranquil nature and scenic cultural view planes from the Mountains to the Sea as part of the "lei of green" planning effort, echoing the preservation of the Magic Island park land that was formerly considered for hotel and resort development.

The participants of the CPAC Master Planning process and the “Save Our Kaka’ako Makai” movement fully understand the public value of preserving Kaka’ako Makai’s public trust lands and the importance of preserving the now limited shoreline public access for future generations.

**For all of the above reasons, CPAC opposes Senate Bill 534.**

Sincerely,

Wayne Takamine  
Chair, Kaka’ako Makai Community Planning Advisory Council

Kanekoa Crabbe  
Vice Chair, Kaka’ako Makai Community Planning Advisory Council

Michelle Matson  
Secretary, Kaka’ako Makai Community Planning Advisory Council



## Queen Emma Hawaiian Civic Club

Pō‘aono, Ianuali 25, 2025 (Saturday, January 25, 2025)



### TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB534

TO: Senate Committees on Water and Land (WAL), Hawaiian Affairs (HWN), and Housing (HOU)

RE: Testimony in Support of SB534 Relating to the Hawai‘i Community Development Authority

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing,

I am writing in strong support of SB534 for the following reasons:

SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012. By raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement and generate revenue to expand programs and services, including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.

Further, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate. It mandates that 50% +1 unit of the proposed residential towers be designated as affordable workforce housing for residents earning less than 140% of the Area Median Income (AMI), with priority given to essential workers in healthcare, hospitality, education, law enforcement, civil service, and construction.

Honolulu is currently facing a severe housing crisis that has left thousands of local residents struggling to find affordable housing. According to recent data, an estimated 35,000 housing units across the city sit vacant, with many of them owned by investors who keep them unoccupied rather than making them available for local families. This artificial scarcity has driven up housing costs, making it increasingly difficult for residents to afford a place to live. The median rent for a one-bedroom apartment in Honolulu has surged to \$2,100, compared to the national average of \$1,600. More than 60% of renters in Honolulu are now considered severely cost-burdened, meaning they spend over 30% of their income on housing alone.

At the same time, SB534 maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands. The development of residential properties in Kaka‘ako Makai will contribute

much-needed funds through association fees that can support infrastructure maintenance, such as the Lei of Green promenade, public parks, and essential services for local residents.

In summary, SB534 provides an opportunity to address Honolulu's dire housing crisis while ensuring that the Kaka'ako Makai lands serve their highest and best use for the benefit of the Hawaiian people and the broader community. Passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai'i.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Josann Meyer Parker Jenks".

Josann Meyer Parker Jenks  
President, Queen Emma Hawaiian Civic Club

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 7:05:26 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kenneth R. Conklin, Ph.D.	Testifying for Center for Hawaiian Sovereignty Studies	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

OHA's main reason for pushing this legislation is the same as any landowner's reason for seeking up-zoning -- self-enrichment. 400-foot-tall apartment towers would generate huge amounts of income for OHA, while lowering the desirability of other properties across the street whose viewplanes would be destroyed and whose lifestyles would be severely impacted by traffic congestion and by overwhelming the infrastructure regarding water, sewage, roads, and the services of the fire department and police department.

OHA has repeatedly asserted that it was somehow cheated when it accepted the land at Kakaako makai in settlement for alleged underpayment of a portion of ceded land revenues. But OHA accepted that settlement knowing full-well about the zoning restriction, and there were members of the OHA negotiating team who had significant backgrounds in real estate valuations and zoning regulations. OHA could easily make plenty of money by developing these lands with low-rise businesses, but instead OHA's negligence has allowed these lands to remain barren for many years.

The Hawaii Community Foundation is a race-focused institution headed by people whose backgrounds lie with other race-focused institutions such as Bishop Estate (now rebranded as Kamehameha Schools) and OHA. HCF managed hundreds of millions of dollars in private donations and government grants for the recovery of Lahaina following the devastating wildfires; but ethnic Hawaiian people and their cultural issues got most of the help even though only about 10% of the residents were ethnic Hawaiians. The Filipino community, comprising three times that many people, got so little help they complained publicly and felt compelled to create their own agency.

Please defeat this bad bill.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 5:13:00 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 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!

Once again the Office of Hawaiian Affairs(OHA) is making another bid to have the Legislature vacate the zoning restrictions on ceded lands at Kaka'ako Makai and allow them to build 400 ft tall luxury residential condominiums on their beach front properties. They say they need the capital from this venture to "help kanaka maoli" with a cultural center, museum, etc. Most native Hawaiians can't afford to be in this new environment because of the costs to live in the Honolulu area, specifically Kaka'ako.

The last ocean front in Honolulu needs to be preserved with development that complies with the State mandates that are in place today. If OHA cannot do this, perhaps a deal to resell the land back to the State is more appropriate than piling up high-rise residential condos on the property.

Should OHA be allowed to skirt the zoning prohibitions at Kaka'ako Makai, it opens the flood gates for other land owners in the area to build out the area and turn it into yet another Waikiki.

The Legislature needs to shelve OHA's coastal destruction project.

Mahalo for your time.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 3:40:26 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Joyce Kamemoto	Testifying for Friends of Kewalos	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am not in support of SB 534. My reasons are not solely against residential plans, but the verbiage in the bill leaves too much uncertainty as to which parcels will be for what purpose. It's important to keep the importance of preserving this area for the benefit of all ohana to enjoy for decades to come. Without the specifics of parcel designations, this preservation may be compromised.



## UNITED PUBLIC WORKERS

AFSCME Local 646, AFL-CIO

### THE SENATE KA 'AHA KENEKOA

#### THE THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2025

**COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND**  
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair  
Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair

**COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**  
Senator Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Chair  
Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Vice Chair

**COMMITTEE ON HOUSING**  
Senator Stanley Chang, Chair  
Senator Troy N. Hashimoto, Vice Chair

Wednesday, January 29, 2025, 1:00 PM  
Auditorium & Videoconference

**Re: Testimony on SB534 – RELATING TO THE HAWAII COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang; Vice Chairs Elefante, San Buenaventura, and Hashimoto; and Members of the Committees:

The United Public Workers, AFSCME Local 646, AFL-CIO ("UPW") is the exclusive bargaining representative for approximately 14,000 public employees, which includes blue collar, non-supervisory employees in Bargaining Unit 1 and institutional, health, and correctional employees in Bargaining Unit 10, in the State of Hawaii and various counties. Additionally, UPW also represents approximately 1,500 members in the private sector.

UPW supports SB534, which allows the Hawaii Community Development Authority ("HCDA") to approve residential development on certain parcels of land in the Kakaako Makai area. Additionally, this measure requires a certain percentage of the residential units developed on certain parcels to be allocated to households at or below a certain income level, with priority given to certain essential workforce in the area while limiting the sale of residential units developed in certain residential developments to prospective owner-occupants.

For many years, Hawaii has had the distinction of having the highest cost of living in the U.S., based in part on the average price of food, utility, and transportation costs. However, it is widely known that the high cost of housing, particularly in urban Honolulu, is the most substantial cost for working families and

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1426 North School Street  
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362 East Lanikaula Street  
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**KAUAI**

2970 Kele Street, Suite 213  
Lihue, Hawaii 96766-1803  
Phone 808.245.2412

**MAUI**

841 Kolu Street  
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793-1436  
Phone 808.244.0815

1.866.454.4166

Toll Free - *Molokai/Lanai only*

has become a significant financial burden for hard-working local residents who want to remain in Hawaii.

By allocating more than 50% of residential units to households with income at or below 140% of the area median income, limiting the sale of residential units to prospective owner-occupants, and prioritizing the housing needs of Oahu's essential workforce, we believe the development of Kakaako Makai could provide some of our members with a path to homeownership in urban Honolulu.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in support of this measure.

---

**HEADQUARTERS**

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Hilo, Hawaii 96720-4336  
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Wailuku, Hawaii 96793-1436  
Phone 808.244.0815

1.866.454.4166

Toll Free - *Molokai/Lanai only*

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 4:02:09 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jennifer Mather	Testifying for Lahaina Hawaiian Civic Club	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

Lahaina Hawaiian Civic Club is appreciative for the opportunity to offer testimony in SUPPORT of SB534 understanding it to be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai'i.

Mahalo nui,  
Jen Mather  
Co-Chair, Government Relations Committee  
Lahaina Hawaiian Civic Club

# SHOPO



STATE OF HAWAII ORGANIZATION OF POLICE OFFICERS

Robert Cavaco  
State Board President

" A Police Organization for Police Officers Only "  
Founded 1971

Term of Office  
1-2022 to 12-2025

January 27, 2025

The Honorable Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair  
The Honorable Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice-Chair  
Senate Committee on Water and Land

The Honorable Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Chair  
The Honorable Joy A. San Buenaventura, Vice-Chair  
Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs

The Honorable Stanley Chang, Chair  
The Honorable Troy N. Hashimoto, Vice-Chair  
Senate Committee on Housing  
Hawaii State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Elefante, Chair Richards, Vice Chair San Buenaventura, Chair Chang and Vice Chair Hashimoto:

**Re: SB 534 – Relating to the Hawaii Community Development Authority**

I serve as the President of the State of Hawaii Organization of Police Officers ("SHOPO") and write to you on behalf of our Union in **support** of SB 534. This bill allows the Hawai'i Community Development Authority to approve residential development on certain parcels of land in the Kaka'ako Makai area and is intended to address several initiatives, including making much needed affordable housing available to the essential workforce in the project's area including those serving in law enforcement.

Unfortunately, the reality is that due to the shortage of affordable housing, fewer families are able to afford to buy or rent a home here. Hawai'i is the most expensive state in the nation for housing, with those costs being 2.7 times the national average. Against this backdrop, our county police departments continue to experience a severe staffing crisis. In 2024, Honolulu Police Department alone had 425 uniformed or sworn-officer vacancies. This staffing crisis is a concern to our community we cannot ignore. We understand the county police departments are doing what they can to immediately fill vacancies but the challenge is in part due to things outside their control such as Hawaii's high cost of living and attracting and keeping a sufficient number of qualified police officer recruits that are committed to stay in Hawai'i rather than take their training and leave to other states offering more competitive compensation in relation to the cost of living. Alleviating the difficult problems of lack of affordable housing and the police officer shortage in Hawai'i will take many different initiatives and time and this bill is a crucial step in the right direction.

We thank you for allowing us to be heard on this very important issue and we hope your committee will unanimously support SB 534.

Respectfully Submitted

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Cavaco".

ROBERT CAVACO  
SHOPO President

RC: ja

**Main Office & Honolulu Chapter Office**  
1717 Hoe Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96819-3125  
Tel: (808) 847-4676 "84 SHOPO"  
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Lihue, Hawaii 96766-5708  
Tel: (808) 246-8911

**Maui Chapter Office**  
1887 Wili Pa Loop, Suite 2  
Wailuku, Hawaii 96793-1253  
Tel: (808) 242-6129  
Fax: (808) 242-9519

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 10:18:54 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Klaus Radtke	Testifying for alohahawaiiionipaaorg	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Senators:

Alohahawaiiionipaa Board members testified for years against residential high-rise development by Victoria Ward, Limited in Kakaako along Ala Moana Blvd. mauka (mountainside) because of serious environmental and public safety concerns. The Victoria Ward proposals did not, and the present OHA proposals as stated in SB534 in areas not zoned for residential high-rise development also do not provide sustainable development defined as *“development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of Hawaii’s future generations to meet their own needs.”*

During many of the Victoria Ward public hearings, it became clear to us that such “vested” development proposals, supported also by what seemed to be staged public testimony, “had to be approved” because they provided critical living wage employment in the construction industry as well millions of dollars in State and local tax revenues. OHA has now also stressed that it is proposing similar high-rise residential development for economic reasons and to provide affordable housing. However, the claim of creating affordable housing will probably not even provide such for its trustees because of the unattainable formulas used that had also been strongly opposed by OHA in the past.

OHA’s proposed projects are largely situated within the NOAA 3-foot sea-level-rise zone and also within the ocean’s edge of a former white sand beach that stretched along present Ala Moana Blvd. before the area was capped with unstable landfills that included toxic wastes. When OHA proposed to its supporters a few years ago to develop residential high-rises there, environmental and safety concerns were of course not addressed as OHA clearly stated then that it should have the same right to develop as Victoria Ward across the street. With the now acknowledged unstoppable global warming expected to greatly exceed 1.5 degree C, sea-level-rise is also expected to greatly exceed the one-foot increase predicted by NOAA for 2050. Localized or area-wide subsidence or sinking of the unstable coastline accelerated by the cumulative weight of the now-clustered high-rises, anchored in less than rock-solid bedrock, also needs to be seriously addressed.

Astronauts that have spent time in space have strongly stated that unstoppable Climate Change that is already causing the death of millions of people all around the world can only be stopped if we prioritize Planet Earth over the economy. So, Senators, what shall it be? Protecting our Aina

or continued, unfettered development for profit now in the last ocean-side open space in Honolulu.

Haunani Chandler, Pres. alohahawaiiionipaa.org

Klaus Radtke, Ph.D., Wildland Resource Scientist, Board Member

*alohahawaiiionipaa.org is a tax-exempt public benefit charity under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue code whose major aims are to keep the Hawaiian spirit, heritage and culture alive and flourishing while also furthering women`s health, education and protecting the environment and planet earth.*

E-mail: alohahawaiiionipaa@gmail.com



**HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION**

AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

**RANDY PERREIRA**, Executive Director • Tel: 808.543.0011 • Fax: 808.528.0922

The Thirty-Third Legislature, State of Hawaii  
The Senate  
Committee on Water and Land  
Committee on Hawaiian Affairs  
Committee on Housing

Testimony by  
Hawaii Government Employees Association

January 29, 2025

S.B. 534 — RELATING TO THE HAWAII COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY.

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO supports the concept of S.B. 534 which requires a certain percentage of the residential units developed on certain parcels to be allocated to households at or below a certain income level, with priority given to certain essential workforce in the area.

The HGEA represents many employees within healthcare, education, law enforcement, and in general, thousands of civil servants that would be prioritize if this housing development were to move forward because they work within Downtown Honolulu and the Civic Center. Many of our members struggle with existing rent or mortgage, and we recognize the need for the development of more thoughtful affordable workforce housing. Reports indicate that our state's workforce has a 24% vacancy rate and 30% of our state's current workforce is eligible to retire in the next five years. Therefore, the state and counties must develop modern and attractive benefits to recruit and retain the next generation of public employees. We believe workforce housing can serve as one of many tools to help accomplish this.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of S.B. 534.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira  
Executive Director

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 9:09:20 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Chelle C Pahinui	Testifying for Naalehu Theatre	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Chelle Pahinui, ED

Na'alehu Theatre



## *Native Hawaiian Chamber of Commerce*

P.O. Box 597

Honolulu, HI 96809

Nativehawaiianchamberofcommerce.org nhccoahu@gmail.com

### 2024-2025 Directors

Kelea Levy, President  
Jay Vannetta, First VP  
Brandon Souza, Second VP, Secretary  
Napali Woode, Treasurer  
Mike Rawlins, Past President  
Dr. H.K. Blaisdell-Brennan  
Winfred Cameron  
Cedric Duarte  
Logan Frietas  
Chasen Kim  
Max Mukai  
Makalika Naholowa'a  
Dr. Angela Pratt  
Andrew Rosen, Executive Director

January 28, 2025

### **Re: Testimony in Support of SB534**

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

The Native Hawaiian Chamber of Commerce (the "**Chamber**") was formed in 1974 to promote a vibrant economic environment, build relationships, and improve the quality of life for Native Hawaiians in business. The Chamber represents a diverse membership, including individuals, businesses of all sizes and industries that share an interest in the Chamber's mission.

The Chamber SUPPORTS SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give the Office of Hawaiian Affairs ("**OHA**") the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka'ako Makai that helps address Hawai'i's critical need for affordable and workforce housing and will give local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu. This is important for Chamber members who suffer the impact of the housing crisis on the cost and availability of staff needed to drive their businesses.
- Further, SB534 will enable OHA to advance its plans to also build mixed use commercial space and a Native Hawaiian cultural center that will foster a virtuous cycle of relationship building, community strengthening, and business opportunities for all who visit and use it, including Chamber members, who have a particular interest in a space like the one OHA plans to build that will center Native Hawaiian values and culture in its design and management.
- Finally, SB534 will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka'ako Makai lands and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians, including members of the Chamber.

In short, SB534 will enable OHA to advance development that squarely addresses the pillars of the Chamber's mission - it will increase the vibrancy of the economic environment in Honolulu, build a live-work-play community that enhances pilina in our community, and provide opportunities that benefit Chamber members and many others.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Mālama pono,

Andrew Rosen

Executive Director

Native Hawaiian Chamber of Commerce

P: 808.208.5816

[www.nativehawaiianchamberofcommerce.org](http://www.nativehawaiianchamberofcommerce.org)

# INTERNATIONAL LONGSHORE & WAREHOUSE UNION



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The Thirty Third Legislature  
Regular Session of 2025

## COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

Senator Stanley Chang, Chair  
Senator Troy N. Hashimoto, Vice Chair

## COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair  
Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair

## COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Senator Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Chair  
Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Vice Chair  
Hawaii State Capital Auditorium & Videoconference  
Wednesday, January 29, 2025, 1:00 p.m.

### **STATEMENT OF THE ILWU INTERNATIONAL – HAWAII ON SB534 RELATING TO THE HAWAII COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

Housing Chair Chang and Honorable Chairs and Committee Members,

We stand in **STRONG SUPPORT** of SB534.

The housing crisis in Hawaii has reached a critical point, threatening the very foundation of our communities. Rising costs have placed housing out of reach for our working class people. Hawaii's working class chooses to either commute long distances, impacting their well-being and family life or leaving Hawaii altogether.

SB534 offers a solution, requiring that 50% plus 1 of the units be reserved for affordable housing. We can ensure that the people who make Hawaii a magical destination to visit can afford to live here. This commitment to affordable housing is not just about providing shelter; it's about creating a more sustainable and equitable future.

When our working-class people can live in the communities they serve, we strengthen our economy, improve our quality of life, and ensure a brighter future for generations to come.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brandon W. K. Wolff', written in a cursive style.

Brandon W. K. Wolff  
Vice President  
ILWU International - Hawaii



## *Hawaii's Thousand Friends*

335 Hahani Street #342132 \* Kailua, HI 96734 \* Phone (808) 262-0682 \* E-Mail: [htf3000@gmail.com](mailto:htf3000@gmail.com)

### COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair  
Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair

### COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Senator Herbert "Tim" Richards, III, Chair  
Senator Joy San Buenaventura, Vice Chair

### COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

Senator Stanley Chang, Chair  
Senator Troy N. Hashimoto, Vice Chair

### SB 534 RELATING TO THE HAWAII COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Aloha Senators,

Hawaii's Thousand Friends, a non-profit water and land use planning organization that is dedicated to protecting the environment, human health, and cultural and natural resources has grave concerns regarding development in Kakaako Makai.

In 2009 the Environmental Protection Agency funded the Department of Health Hazard Evaluation and Emergency Response Office to support Kakaako Makai Environmental Hazard Evaluation study and the Environmental Hazard Management Plan which was prepared for HCDA.

The reports found that the original coastline of the Kakaako Makai District was previously at or below sea level and followed the present location Ala Moana Boulevard. Between 1913 and 1927 a seawall was constructed, and artificial "fill" materials were deposited behind the seawall. The fill material consisted of toxic ash from the burning of municipal refuse, unburned refuse, construction debris, household debris, automobile batteries, other miscellaneous refuse and dumped debris.

In 1930, the first of two incinerators was built on the southeast portion of Ahui Street. In the mid 1940's a second incinerator was constructed in the area. From the late 1940's until the 1960's, the land areas seaward of both incinerators were expanded to the south with fill material and ash from the incinerators.

The studies found, among other things, that the soil contained total petroleum hydrocarbons of varying carbon ranges, gasoline, diesel, oil, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), semi-volatile organic compounds including polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons, polychlorinated biphenyls, heavy metals, various pesticides and dioxins/furans.

These brownfield studies revealed that certain makai locations contained toxic ash from the two municipal waste incinerators that spewed high levels of lead, zinc, dioxins, mercury, silver, copper asbestos and arsenic. These toxins were spread as “fill” contaminating the surface and groundwater. Leaking underground petroleum storage tanks also spread benzene, DDT, and PCBs from discarded transformers in various locations. Direct contact with soil may result in incidental oral ingestion and/or dermal absorption of Chemicals of Concern (COC).

Ground disturbances required for pile driving, foundations and other infrastructure could emit hazardous waste, affecting coastal ecosystems and exposing humans to toxins. Direct contact with toxic soil may result in incidental dermal absorption and oral ingestion of Contaminants of Concern (COC). This was found to be true relating the Love Canal, one of the significant situations leading to the passage of the federal Superfund Act due to housing being built adjacent to a landfill.

**The reports identified parcels being assessed as Units. Below are the Contaminants of Concern (COC) found in each unit.**

- **Unit 5 identified as E on the OHA Lands Map has no COC in the soil or groundwater. This is the site of the Department Building and is unclear if this site has been tested for any COC.**
- **Units 1-3 identified on F/G on the OHA Lands Map found 11 soil COC and 2 ground water COC.**
- **Unit 6 identified as A on the OHA Lands Map found no soil COC and 7 groundwater COC.**
- **Unit 7 identified as B on the OHA Lands Map found 12 soil COC and 6 groundwater COC.**
- **Unit 8 identified as C on the OHA Lands Map found 16 soil COC and 11 groundwater COC.**
- **Ala Moana WWPS identified as I on the OHA Lands Map found 3 soil COC, aquatic endotoxicity and 7 groundwater COC.**

**The studies did not cover parcels along Ala Moana but since a seawall was constructed along the coastline i.e. Ala Moana Boulevard and artificial “fill” materials were deposited behind the seawall there is a good possibility that the soil, now covered with asphalt and buildings, contains Contaminants of Concern.**

According to the 1990 Mink & Lau report, the property is underlain by the Nuuanu Aquifer System, which is part of the Honolulu Aquifer Sector. The groundwater in this aquifer is described as being used as well as ecologically important but is not a direct drinking water source. The report notes, however, that the site has a second aquifer of the same system.

The aquifer is a confined, basal aquifer in flank compartments. The lower aquifer is described as a currently used drinking water source containing groundwater with low salinity. The Mink and Lau Report describes this source as irreplaceable with a low vulnerability to contamination. Previous groundwater monitoring in and around the subject property indicated that groundwater was detected at depths ranging from 5.8 feet below ground surface to 8.5 feet below ground surface. To stabilize 400-foot buildings as intended in SB 534 would require pilings to be drilled deeper and would break the currently encapsulated hazardous materials.

Ground disturbances required for foundations, piles to support multi-story buildings and other infrastructure could release hazardous waste, affecting coastal ecosystems and exposing humans to toxins. For areas within the Kakaako Makai District contaminated groundwater may pose environmental hazards to marine life.

Kewalo Basin and Mamala Bay support coral reefs, local bird and fish populations and provides public recreational opportunities to locals and visitors. Ground penetration impact disturbances required for foundations, piles to support multi-story buildings and other infrastructure could release the known hazardous waste, and contaminated groundwater areas within the Kakaako makai District could expose people to toxins and pose environmental hazards to marine life within this coastal ecosystem.

According to the 2012 Kakaako Makai – Hazard Assessment, because of its location adjacent to the ocean, Kakaako Makai is vulnerable to natural marine hazards including sea level rise related to global warming and climate change, hurricane storm surge, and tsunami inundation. (Kakaako Makai – Hazard Assessment 2012)

The sea level surrounding Hawaii has been rising and is projected to rise an additional 1 to 3 feet or more during the 21st century. Sea level rise will raise the water table in the Kakaako region and lead to drainage issues during high tide, especially during and after rainfall, therefore affecting road access.

State tsunami hazard maps based on the worst case reveal that the Kakaako Makai area is vulnerable to a worst-case tsunami and modeling of a category 4 hurricane coming onshore at Ewa shows the Honolulu/Kakaako business district vulnerable to storm surge with up to 3 to 10 feet of flooding.

If the State, knowing that the Kakaako Maki area is infill, contaminated with toxins, is unstable, and susceptible to the impacts of sea level rise, will changes the current pro-active policy of prohibiting residential development and allowing residential high-rise condo development in Kakaako Makai, make the State liable for a) property damages during and after construction, b) health issues during and after construction, and c) contamination of the ocean and marine life from such development?

For the above reasons, Hawaii's Thousand Friends urges your committees to protect human health and the environment and vote against this measure.



# International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

**LOCAL UNION NO. 1186 • Affiliated with AFL-CIO**

1935 HAU STREET, ROOM 401 • HONOLULU, HI 96819-5003  
TELEPHONE (808) 847-5341 • FAX (808) 847-2224

TO: SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND, COMMITTEE ON  
HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS, AND COMMITTEE ON HOUSING  
Hearing on Wednesday, January 29, 2025 at 1:00p.m., Auditorium

RE: TESTIMONY IN **SUPPORT** OF SB 534

Honorable Chairs Lorraine R. Inouye, Herbert M. “Tim” Richards III, and Stanley Chang  
Vice Chairs Brandon J.C. Elefante, Joy A. San Buenaventura, and Troy N. Hashimoto  
Members of the Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 1186 (IBEW 1186), is comprised of over 3,000 men and women working in electrical construction, telecommunications, civil service employees, and educator and faculty associations.

IBEW 1186 **SUPPORTS** this bill which we believe presents significant opportunities for our members and the broader community. Proposed building height limits translates directly to larger-scale projects and a greater demand for labor. This means more jobs for our members, increased work hours, and a boost to our local economy.

Furthermore, the requirement for a percentage of units to be designated as affordable housing, with priority for essential workers, aligns with the needs of many in our industry. Affordable housing is a crucial issue for our workforce, and this bill takes a direct step towards addressing it. SB534 not only promotes the growth and development of the Kakaako Makai area, but also invests in the workforce that will build and maintain its infrastructure.

This bill will have a positive impact on economic growth, job creation, and a more sustainable future for Hawaii.

For these reasons, **IBEW 1186 SUPPORTS SB 534.**

Sincerely,

Damien T.K. Kim  
Business Manager/  
Financial Secretary



Randy Perreira  
President

# HAWAII STATE AFL-CIO

888 Mililani Street, Suite 501 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Telephone: (808) 597-1441  
Fax: (808) 593-2149

The Thirty-Second Legislature  
The Senate  
Committee on Water and Land  
Committee on Hawaiian Affairs  
Committee on Housing

Testimony by  
Hawaii State AFL-CIO

January 29, 2025

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB534 - RELATING TO THE HAWAII COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
AUTHORITY

Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang, Vice Chairs Elefante, San Buenaventura, and Hashimoto, and members of the Committees:

The Hawaii State AFL-CIO is a state federation of 74 affiliate labor organizations representing over 68,000 union members in Hawaii. The AFL-CIO serves its affiliates by advocating for the rights of working families, promoting fair wages, ensuring safe working conditions, and supporting policies that strengthen Hawaii's workforce.

The Hawaii State AFL-CIO supports SB534, which allows residential development in the Kakaako Makai area and prioritizes affordable housing for essential workers. Expanding housing access for Hawaii's workforce is a critical step in addressing affordability challenges and ensuring families can continue to live and work in Hawaii.

This measure provides a pathway to strengthen Hawaii's economy and retain workers by creating housing opportunities for those who are essential to our communities.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chris Burnett".

Chris Burnett  
Director, Committee on Political Education



**HAWAII LODGING & TOURISM**  
**ASSOCIATION**

*Testimony of  
Mufi Hannemann  
President & CEO  
Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association*

*Committees on: Water and Land; Hawaiian Affairs; & Housing  
Wednesday, January 29, 2025*

**SB 534– Relating to the Hawai'i Community Development Authority**

Chair Inouye, Chair Richards, Chair Chang, and Members of the Committees,

I am submitting the following testimony on behalf of the Hawai'i Lodging & Tourism Association (HLTA), the state's largest and oldest private-sector tourism organization, representing over 700 members, nearly 50,000 rooms, and more than 40,000 lodging employees

HLTA supports SB534, which would allow the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to develop certain parcels in Kaka'ako Makai for residential use, with a focus on workforce housing. We commend OHA for its visionary approach in leveraging this valuable land resource to help address Hawai'i's housing crisis while generating revenue to support Native Hawaiian programs.

The high cost of living in Hawai'i remains one of the most pressing challenges for residents. Even for those employed in well-paying jobs, affording housing—particularly in the urban core where many job opportunities exist—remains a significant barrier. Workforce housing developments like the one proposed in this measure directly support working families, allowing them to live closer to their jobs, reduce commuting times, and enhance their quality of life.

We greatly appreciate the language in this bill which prioritizes essential workers, including those in the hospitality sector. The visitor industry is a major economic driver in Hawai'i, employing tens of thousands of local residents. Ensuring that hospitality workers have access to affordable housing near their places of work will help strengthen our industry, support our workforce, and promote economic stability.

For these reasons, HLTA is in support of SB534 and urges its passage. Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



# INTERNATIONAL LONGSHORE & WAREHOUSE UNION

LOCAL OFFICE • 451 ATKINSON DRIVE • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96814 • PHONE 949-4161

HAWAII DIVISION: 100 West Lanikaula Street, Hilo, Hawaii 96720 • OAHU DIVISION: 451 Atkinson Drive, Honolulu, Hawaii 96814  
MAUI COUNTY DIVISION: 896 Lower Main Street, Wailuku, Hawaii 96793 • KAUAI DIVISION: 4154 Hardy Street, Lihue, Hawaii 96766  
HAWAII LONGSHORE DIVISION: 451 Atkinson Drive, Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

## LOCAL 142

January 28, 2025

The Thirty-Third Legislature  
Regular Session of 2025

### THE SENATE

#### Committee on Water and Land

Sen.. Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair

#### Committee on Hawaiian Affairs

Sen.. Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Chair

#### Committee on Housing

Sen.. Stanley Chang, Chair

State Capitol, Auditorium & Videoconference

Wednesday, January 29, 2025; 1:00 p.m.

### STATEMENT OF THE ILWU LOCAL 142 ON SB534 RELATING TO THE HAWAII COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Honorable Chairs and Committee Members,

We stand in **STRONG SUPPORT** of SB534.

In 2025, we are all acutely aware of the housing crisis gripping our community. Soaring costs have pushed many local families who are our essential workers in industries such as -health care, hospitality, education, law enforcement, civil service, and construction- out of reach of homeownership. This not only exacerbates social inequality but also threatens the very fabric of our communities.

By committing to the inclusion of 50% plus 1 of affordable housing units, we can begin to address our critical shortage of affordable housing and keep our essential workers within reach of their jobs and families.

SB534 is not just about housing; it's about preserving the unique character of our State. A community that values and supports its workforce is a stronger, more resilient community. By creating a more equitable and inclusive housing market, we can ensure that Hawaii remains a place where those who are generationally rooted, has the opportunity to thrive and remain in their home.

Christian West  
President, ILWU Local 142

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 12:58:48 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pu'uhonua Bumpy Kanahele	Testifying for NATION OF HAWAII	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**DATE: January 28, 2025**

**Testimony in Support of SB534: Relating to the Hawai'i Community Development Authority**

Aloha Chair, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill 534, a transformative piece of legislation that would enable the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to fully utilize the Kaka'ako Makai lands to benefit the lāhui and to strengthen the cultural and economic future of Native Hawaiians. This bill is a critical step in the reconciliation process called for in the U.S. Apology Resolution (Public Law 103-150), which recognized the illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom and the harm it caused to the Native Hawaiian people.

**The Apology Law and Its Relevance to SB534**

In 1993, the U.S. Congress passed Public Law 103-150, the Apology Resolution, which formally acknowledged the wrongful overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom in 1893 and the subsequent harm to Native Hawaiians. The Resolution not only expresses regret for these actions but calls for a reconciliation process between the State of Hawai'i and the Native Hawaiian people. One of the key aspects of this reconciliation is the restoration of self-determination and economic empowerment to Native Hawaiians.

SB534 represents a concrete step in fulfilling that reconciliation process. By removing the residential use ban on the Kaka'ako Makai lands and allowing for the development of affordable housing and residential towers, the bill empowers OHA to fully realize the value of this land—land that was conveyed to OHA in 2012 as part of a settlement for unpaid revenues owed under the Hawai'i State Constitution and Hawai'i Revised Statutes Chapter 10. This development is not just an economic opportunity; it is a critical part of the healing and restoration of Native Hawaiian self-determination, which is central to the Apology Resolution's call for reconciliation.

**Expanding Opportunities for the Lāhui and Hawai'i's Residents**

SB534 enables OHA to capture the full value of the Kaka'ako Makai lands, which were originally valued based on the potential for residential development. This bill will allow the

development of residential towers along Ala Moana Boulevard, with a specific provision that 50% + 1 unit in any tower be reserved for affordable workforce housing. This will not only provide housing to essential workers but will also create opportunities for those who are most in need, including Native Hawaiians, to benefit from this development.

The bill prioritizes affordable housing for residents working in healthcare, hospitality, education, law enforcement, civil service, and construction—sectors that support the wellbeing of all Hawai‘i residents. Through this, SB534 helps address the severe housing crisis in Hawai‘i, while at the same time, allowing for the creation of a Hawaiian sense of place and strengthening the cultural fabric of the urban Honolulu area.

### **The Significance of SB534 in the Context of Reparative Justice**

The repeal of the residential use ban and the subsequent development authorized by SB534 are key elements in the ongoing efforts to repair the historic injustices done to Native Hawaiians. As the Apology Resolution highlights, the U.S. government acknowledges the harm that was caused by the overthrow and its lasting effects on the Native Hawaiian people. This bill is a practical response to that apology, seeking to provide the resources and opportunities necessary for Native Hawaiians to thrive in their own homeland.

SB534 is not just a development project; it is a recognition of the promise made to Native Hawaiians through the settlement of the Kaka‘ako Makai lands and a means by which OHA can fulfill its mission of improving the conditions of Native Hawaiians through economic development, education, health, and culture.

### **Conclusion**

I strongly urge the passage of SB534. This bill not only unlocks the full potential of the Kaka‘ako Makai lands but also advances the ongoing reconciliation process between the State of Hawai‘i and the Native Hawaiian people. By allowing OHA to develop this land for housing, cultural, and community purposes, we take an important step toward fulfilling the ideals of justice and self-determination for Native Hawaiians, as outlined in the Apology Resolution.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I stand in strong support of SB534 and look forward to seeing this bill advance for the benefit of the lāhui and all Hawai‘i residents.

Mahalo,  
Pu‘uhonua Dennis Bumpy K. Kanahale

President, Nation of Hawai‘i

puuhonua@nohgov.com





The Senate Committees on Water & Land  
The Committee on Hawaiian Affairs  
and  
The Committee on Housing  
January 29, 2025  
1:00 PM

**LATE**

RE: SB 534, Relating to the Hawaii Community Development Authority

Attention: Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Change, Vice Chairs Elefante, San Buenaventura, and Hashimoto, and members of the Committees

The University of Hawaii Professional Assembly (UHPA) **supports SB 534**, relating to the Hawaii Community Development Authority.

SB 534 prioritizes affordable housing for six essential industries, including education. Through the prioritization of workforce housing, more hardworking University of Hawaii Faculty will have an opportunity to reside within Urban Honolulu, close to multiple UH campuses.

**UHPA supports and requests the passage of SB 534.**

Respectfully submitted,

Christian L. Fern  
Executive Director  
University of Hawaii Professional Assembly



January 29, 2025

TESTIMONY OF THE ASSOCIATION OF HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUBS  
To the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs & Housing

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**SB 534 - RELATING TO THE HAWAI'I COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
AUTHORITY**

Aloha Chair Inouye, Chair Richards, Chair Chang, Vice Chairs, and Members of the  
Committees:

The Association of Hawaiian Civic Club **supports** SB 534 which allows for the approval of residential development on certain parcels in Kaka'ako Makai, raises building height limits, and requires a portion of the units built on these parcels to be made available to households of certain income levels.

This bill will support the Office of Hawaiian Affairs in realizing the full value of the parcels in Kaka'ako Makai that it acquired during the settlement agreement in 2012. The existing prohibitions against residential development and the height restrictions have prevented this in the past.

The Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs has a long-standing track record of advocating for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and other Native Hawaiian trusts, in its efforts to manage trust assets on behalf of beneficiaries. Over the past 15 years, our organization has adopted dozens of resolutions at our annual conventions to this end. We believe this measure will lead to great future opportunities for those served by the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.

Founded by Prince Kūhiō in 1918, the Hawaiian Civic Club movement is the oldest Native Hawaiian community-based advocacy movement. The Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs is a not-for-profit organization that is a confederation of 60 individual and autonomous Hawaiian Civic Clubs and 3,500 members located across Hawai'i and across the continental United States.

We appreciate your favorable consideration of this bill.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 9:08:05 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kawaiohawaiki Anakalea	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

The priority needs to be native Hawaiians or people who have lived here 20 or more years.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 11:30:56 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Neil Abercrombie	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

I wish to testify in person.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 10:20:29 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Celeste Rojas	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Celeste Rojas

carojas911@gmail.com

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 1:21:04 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kapua Keliikoa-Kamai	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

**Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:**

**I am Kapua Keliikoa-Kamai and I RISE IN SUPPORT of SB534 534 SB RELATING TO THE HAWAII COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY. While I agree with much of OHA’s reasons below, I have the following reservations and request for:**

**1. Consideration:**

- **While the household income criteria is at or below one hundred forty percent. We need to help the lower income levels to the greatest extent possible too. Incorporate a balance of various AMI individual residents. Pg 11, lines 12-13.**
- **Modify essential workers like First Responders/Front Line personnel as the TOP PRIORITY (Police, Fire, Ambulance/Emergency Medical Technicians, Emergency Room/Medical Facility Personnel, FOOD Industry and IN-CLASS Educators, etc). The horrendous COVID experience told us that our food industry and educators are an absolute front-line component too; also includes the construction industry and others. Pg 11, lines 13-20.**
- **Give preference to individuals with ten years of Hawai‘i residency a high priority. In as much as legally possible, to limit eligibility for exemptions for housing developments under chapter 201H and other legal statutes, rules, ordinances, etc.**

**2. Other (OHA/our) reasons:**

- **SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.**
- **Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.**

- **Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai'i's critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.**

**I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai'i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai'i's median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.**

**In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai'i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.**

**Mahalo**

**Kapua Keliikoa-Kamai**

## **Testimony of Lee Sichter** **Opposing SB534**

My name is Lee Sichter, I am a resident of Kāne`ohe, O`ahu, and am testifying today as a private citizen in opposition to SB534. I am presently a lecturer at the Department of Urban and Regional Planning (DURP) at the University of Hawai`i at Mānoa but I am not here today representing the views of the University.

I previously worked in Hawai`i as a planning consultant for 37 years, specializing in the preparation of environmental impact statements and land use permits. After a 23-year career at Belt Collins Hawaii where I eventually became a Principal Planner, I left to open my own practice, Lee Sichter LLC. Prior to entering the private sector, I served for two years on the staff of the Chair of the Honolulu City Council, the Honorable Patsy T. Mink, as her planning advisor.

On March 30, 2010, I was commended by the Hawaii State Senate with a resolution (certificate no. 345) honoring my participation in the Environmental Review Working Group which proposed recommendations for revisions to Chapter 343, Hawaii Revised Statutes, our state's environmental review law.

I oppose SB534 because it is premature. We do not know at this time whether the properties proposed for residential high-rise development are environmentally suitable and we cannot know this until extensive environmental and geotechnical analysis is conducted.

Doing business as Lee Sichter LLC, I was hired as a planning consultant by the Hawaii Community Development Authority (HDCA) in 2012 for a multi-year contract to prepare a master plan for transit-oriented development in the mauka portion of Kaka`ako; essentially preparing Kaka`ako for the arrival of the City's elevated light rail system. I am the author of the Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Overlay Plan for Kaka`ako-Mauka (2013) and the author of its accompanying Environmental Impact Statement (2015).

The preparation of the TOD Overlay Master Plan triggered the need for an environmental assessment, pursuant to Chapter 343-5(a)(1), HRS, which states:

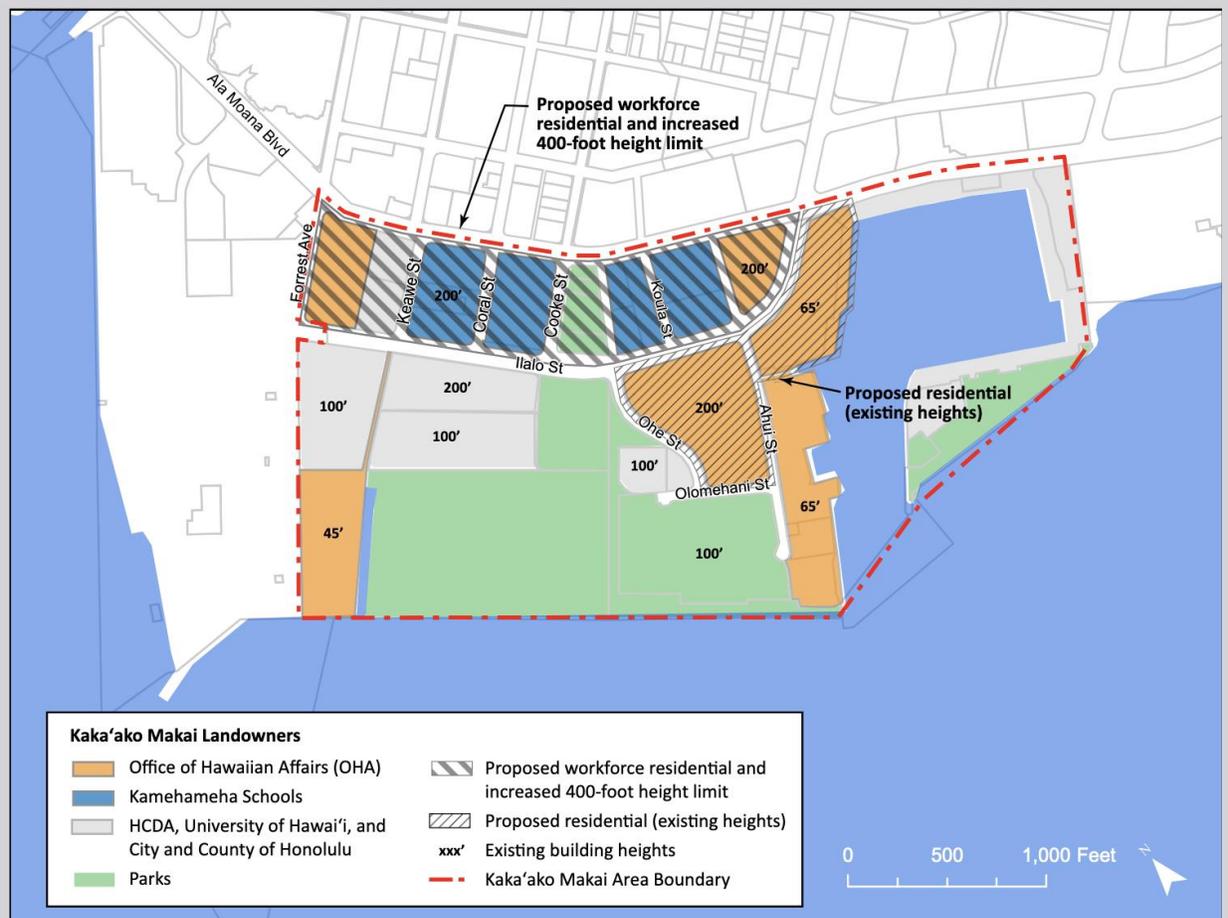
- “(a) Except as otherwise provided, an environmental assessment shall be required for actions that:
- (1) Propose the use of state or county lands or the use of state or county funds, other than for funds to be used for feasibility or planning studies for possible future programs or projects that the agency has not approved, adopted, or funded, or funds to be used for the acquisition of unimproved real property...”. [emphasis added]

Because of the significance of anticipated impacts, a full environmental impact statement for the TOD Overlay Plan was required upon our publication of the Draft TOD Overlay Plan in 2013.

The development of land pursuant to the proposal in SB534 to increase a height limit to facilitate residential development of certain lands in Kaka`ako Makai owned by the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), Kamehameha Schools (KS), and HCDA will trigger the same requirement for an environmental assessment pursuant to Chapter 343-5(a)(1), HRS, because the proposal involves some lands owned and funded by OHA, a state agency. In addition, because all of Kaka`ako Makai is contained within the Special Management Area, any development of those lands, regardless of who owns them, will require an SMA Use Permit – Major, which also triggers environmental assessment pursuant to Chapter 25, ROH (Revised Ordinances of Honolulu), and Chapter 205A, HRS.

At this point in time, it is not clear what specific land uses are being proposed by OHA. No detailed master plan has been presented. The term ‘work-force housing’ is a broad description of a housing product that can take many forms. But the stated purpose to increase the height limit on certain properties to 400 feet for the purpose of encouraging HCDA to approve residential development suggests that several residential towers of up to 400 feet in height are being considered. The location of this proposed development is identified in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: Proposed Workforce Residential Development Area**



Source: HDCA, 2025

It should be noted that Chapter 343-1, HRS, states that the purpose of Hawai'i's environmental law is to ensure that environmental, economic, and technical considerations are given appropriate consideration by decision makers. Therefore, it would be premature for the Hawaii State Senate to enact any legislation that would designate future land uses on OHA's Kaka`ako Makai lands without the benefit of first fully understanding what the environmental, economic, social, and technical impacts of those proposed land uses might be. And because environmental assessment is required for a state agency proposing land development or the expenditure or state funds, an environmental assessment pursuant to Chapter 343, HRS would be the appropriate vehicle for disclosing those impacts to decision-makers prior to legislative action.

When the applicant is a state agency, this is typically accomplished by the applicant first preparing and publishing a detailed master plan for its proposed development, and then evaluating the impacts of development disclosed in that master plan by conducting an environmental assessment or impact statement pursuant to applicable law. In the current instance, there appears to be no such master plan. To date, all I am aware of is a few public relations style aspirational disclosures.

Chapter 343-5(b), HRS, states that an environmental assessment shall be done "...at the earliest practicable time...". For OHA to solicit density revisions for its properties and properties owned by others without first preparing and disclosing a detailed master plan and subjecting it to rigorous environmental analysis is highly irregular because it is essentially asking decision-makers to grant *carte-blanche* approvals without knowing what is actually being proposed and the extent of environmental, social, technical, and economic impacts that could result.

**Therefore, I urge the State Senate to defer action on SB534 until such time that OHA publishes a detail draft of a master plan for the Makai Lands and then conducts the requisite environmental impact statement pursuant to Chapter 343, HRS and Chapter 25, ROH.**

To understand the issues at hand, we must reflect upon the history of Kaka`ako Makai. Relying upon research conducted by Mr. Peter Young (dba Ho`okuleana LLC<sup>1</sup>) and the Limtiaco Report<sup>2</sup>, I have determined that in 1900, the population of Honolulu was about 58,000. Beginning forty years earlier in the 1860s, the city government collected garbage and burned it in open fires along the shoreline east of Honolulu Harbor in the area now corresponding to Kaka`ako.

In 1900 there was a road called Ala Moana Road right along the shoreline between downtown and what we now call Atkinson Boulevard. The land on the makai side, the ocean side of the road, consisted of mudflats, salt pans, tide pools, and a fringing reef with a coral shelf about 20-20 feet deep. Kakaako Makai did not exist and the area mauka of the road was only sparsely settled. The map below was used by HCDA in 2014 as part of a public presentation on the history of Kaka`ako's parks (see Figure 2). HCDA overlaid the area of Waterfront Park and

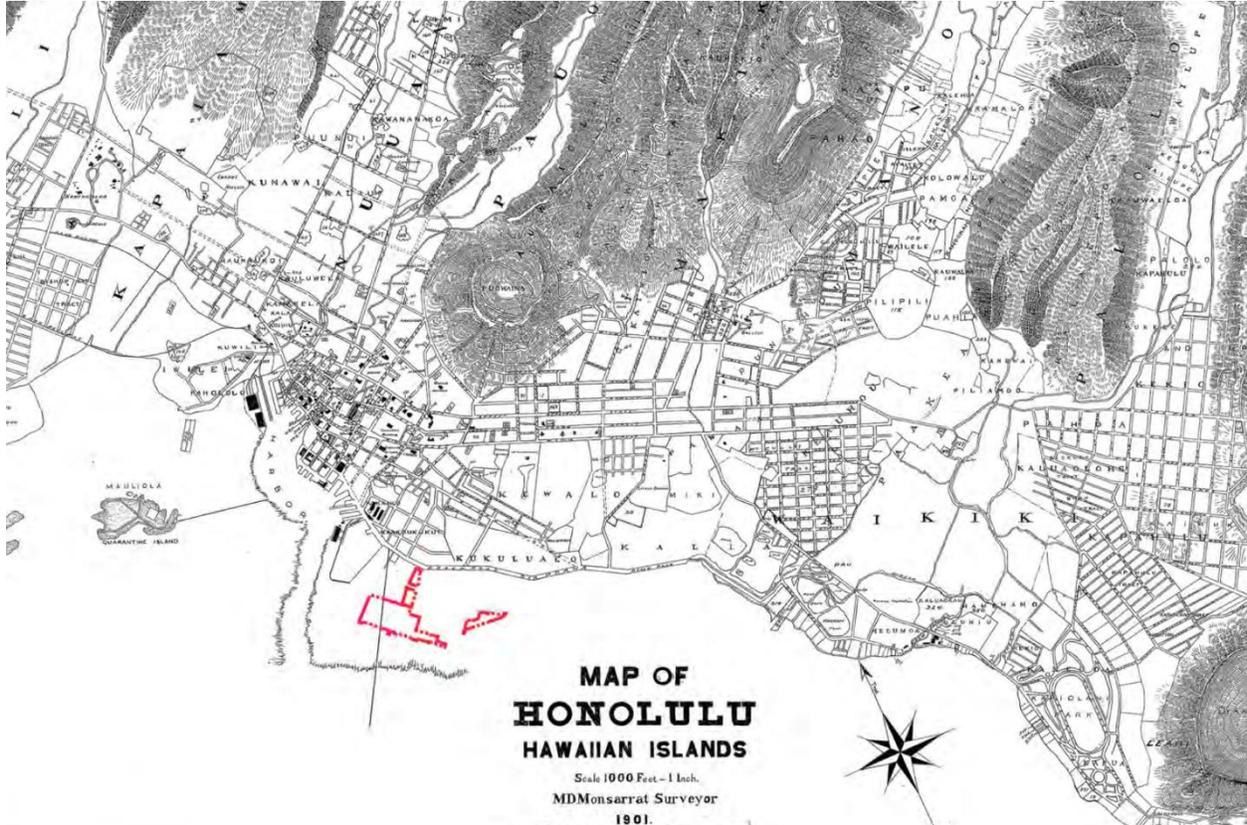
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<sup>1</sup> Ho`okuleana LLC, on line publication, March 7, 2014

<sup>2</sup> Environmental Hazard Management Plan, Kakaako Makai District, by The Limtiaco Consulting Group and EnviroServices & Training Center, LLC, June 2009 (aka, "The Limtiaco Report")

Gateway Park on the map, just left of the map title. Clearly, the entire area makai of the road was submerged at high tide. Please note that the map also depicts the general location of the excavated channel entrance to Honolulu Harbor.

**Figure 2: Map of Honolulu, 1901**



1901 Map of Honolulu

KAKA'AKO WATERFRONT PARK | GATEWAY PARK | KEWALO BASIN PARK | OPEN HOUSE AUGUST 2014



Source: HCDA, 2014

In the 1920s, the government built a new seawall extending east from Honolulu Harbor's entrance so that the mudflats and coral reef extending to the shoreline behind it could be filled. During the 1930's, a portion of the mudflats and reef were dredged to create Kewalo Basin and a channel to it, in order to relocate the tuna fishing fleet from Honolulu Harbor. That dredged material was likely used as fill along the western edge of the new Kewalo Basin, thereby beginning the creation of Kaka`ako Makai.

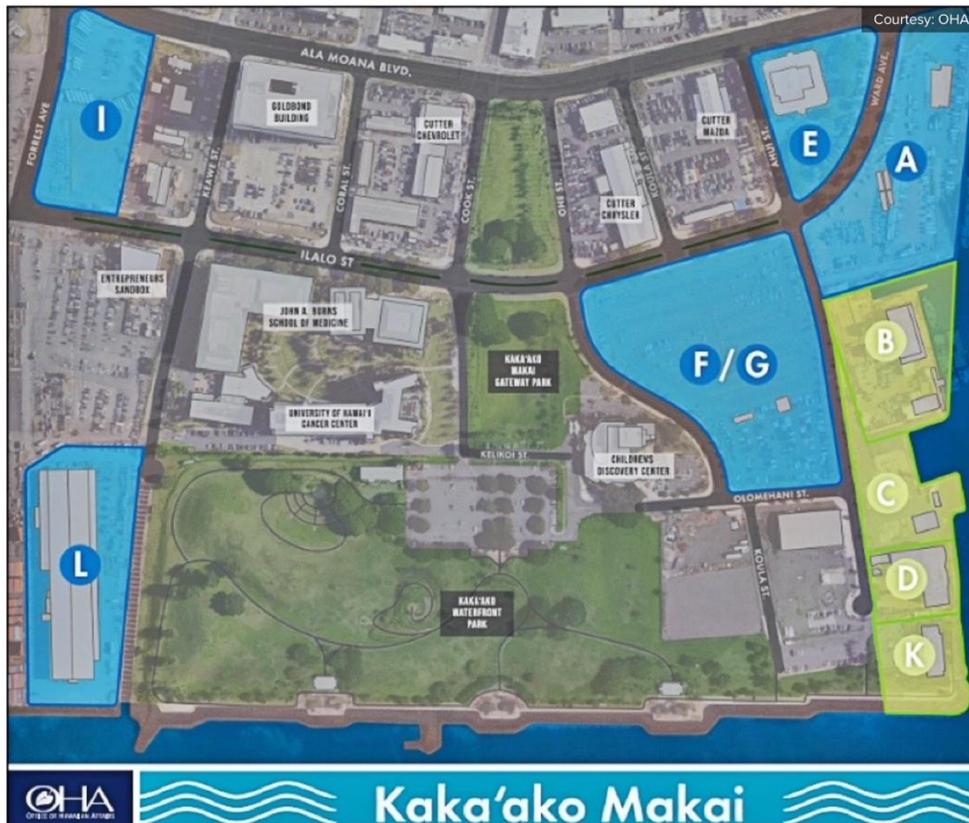
In 1930, Honolulu constructed its first garbage incinerator at 117 Ahui Street near the west side of Kewalo Basin in what has previously been identified by OHA as Parcel B, southeast corner (see Figure 3 below). A year later, the city dedicated the land to the east of Kewalo Basin as Ala Moana Beach Park.

In the 1940s, a second incinerator was added to the Kaka`ako Makai fill area. The original incinerator was removed from service in the late 1940s and became the home of the United Fishing Agency’s fish auction facility. A new incinerator was constructed on Ohe Street (now the Childrens Discovery Center). All the ash created by burning garbage at those incinerators for over 40 years from the 1930s to the 1970s was used as fill to create the remainder of what we now know as Kaka`ako Makai. The large boulders that create the edge of the makai area by Point Panic came from Punchbowl during the construction of the national cemetery. Another seawall was eventually built further seaward to create a larger area where the ash could continue to be dumped, extending Kaka`ako Makai further seaward. And long after the Kaka`ako Makai area we know today was created, dumping continued; a large portion of the makai area was used as a municipal landfill for garbage and ash. That former landfill was eventually covered with soil (“capped”) and is now known as Waterfront Park. (If you look closely, you will see metal vents at the tops of the mounds, which were placed to vent methane from the decomposing garbage below.)

The state finally ordered the city to stop dumping fill at Kakaako Makai in 1971. The last incinerator was shut down in 1977.

In 2012, the State of Hawai`i transferred several parcels of land in Kakaako Makai to OHA. They are identified as parcels A, B, C, D, E, F/G, I, K and L. (see Figure 3)

**Figure 3: Lands Transferred to OHA - 2012**



Source: OHA

It must also be understood that the current elevation of Kakaako Makai is about 5 feet above sea level. The original coral reef shelf was probably 15 -20 feet below sea level. In 1990, groundwater at Kaka`ako Makai was estimated to be about 5 to 8 feet below ground level. (1990 FSEIS<sup>3</sup>). Based on a hydrological study that was prepared by Mink & Lau in 1990<sup>4</sup> as part of the 1990 FSEIS, it was determined that there is a “confined basal aquifer” below the groundwater table that provides drinking water, but the Mink & Lau report does not state how deep it is.

Reflecting upon these geophysical characteristics as well as the history of Kaka`ako Makai, I believe the primary issue requiring investigation before taking legislative action is the composition of the soil and substrata in the entire area extending makai of Ala Moana Boulevard. Based upon the Environmental Hazard Management Plan commissioned by HCDA in 2009 (aka, the Limtiaco Report), it has been determined that Kaka`ako Makai is almost entirely composed of artificial ‘fill’ material generated over a period of 40 years by the systematic disposal of garbage and incinerated ash, as well as material dredged from the ocean and excavated from Punchbowl crater. It is important to note that the Limtiaco Report only studied lands in Kaka`ako Makai that were owned by HCDA at the time the study was conducted. Thus, some of the properties now proposed by OHA for a height limit increase to facilitate future high-rise residential development were not evaluated in 2009 and may have never been investigated.

According to the Limtiaco Report (June 2009), investigators found evidence of petroleum hydrocarbons, pesticides, and heavy metals including lead and mercury at several areas of the original HCDA-owned lands that have now been transferred to OHA, which the report designated as ‘units’ around the old incinerator sites and in areas where the ash was used to fill in behind the seawall discussed above (see Figure 4). Not every contaminant was found at every site they tested. But every site they tested except for what OHA calls parcel E (see Figure 3) is contaminated as summarized in the table from the Limtiaco Report presented in Figure 5.

It should be clearly understood that the hydrocarbons and heavy metals that the study found are considered to be soil contaminants. They are NOT hazardous material as defined by federal regulations. Nevertheless, they pose a threat to human health.

It's not hard to figure out from where the contaminants came...automobiles, lead paint, medicines, and later plastics. We don't know the composition of the first ash that came out of the incinerators. While there were relatively less cars around, plastics hadn't been invented yet, and petrochemicals were not widely available, toxic heavy metals such as lead and mercury were probably more prevalent than they are today. But by the 1950s, 60s, and early 70s, there were likely plenty of car batteries, automobile refuse, and toxic household chemicals in the garbage that ended up in the incinerators and eventually the substrata of Kaka`ako Makai.

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<sup>3</sup> Hawaii Community Development Authority, Kakaako Makai Area Plan Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement, January 1990

<sup>4</sup> In the 1980s and 1990s, John Mink was one of the foremost consulting hydrologists in the State of Hawaii.

Those would account for petroleum products, pesticides, and heavy metals discovered by the Limtiaco investigators in the areas they tested.

But what isn't being discussed to my knowledge is the fact that there is a second Limtiaco Report that was completed in September 2009. That report looked at how to remediate or reuse the areas determined to be contaminated with petrochemicals, pesticides and heavy metals.

The September 2009 report discusses 6 alternatives for remediating the contaminated soil:

- Alternative 1: No Action
- Alternative 2: Gravel Cap (6 inches) with Slope Stabilization
- Alternative 3: Asphalt Cap (2 inches)
- Alternative 4: Geomembrane Layer with Soil Cap (6 inch)
- Alternative 5: Complete Removal
- Alternative 6: Soil Washing

In its discussion of Alternative 5, the second Limtiaco report estimates that removing the soil to a depth of 12 feet, from every unit (the term the report used to define contaminated areas), would yield a volume of 680,000 cubic yards of contaminated soil. (The volume of a standard dump truck is between 10 and 16 cubic yards.). The removal of 680,000 cubic yards of contaminated soil would require 42,500 one-way dump truck trips to remove the contaminated soil and a similar number of trips to bring in clean soil to fill the voids left by contaminated soil removal.

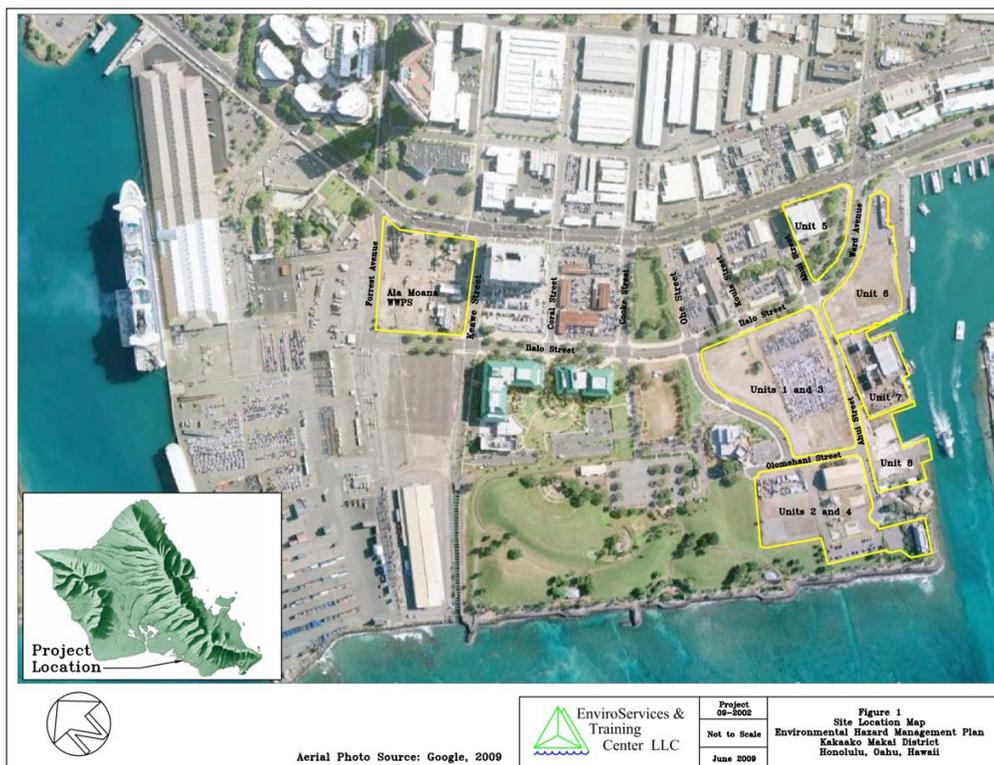
The report estimates that the cost to remove and replace the contaminated soil would be between \$204 million and \$272 million (at \$300-\$400 a cubic yard) in 2009 dollars. The report concludes that Alternative 5 is not feasible because there may not be any landfill available on O`ahu to accept that much contaminated soil and there may be problems finding a source of clean fill material sufficient to replace the contaminated soil. Of course, shipping the contaminated soil out-of-state and importing fill material is an option, but would come at a significant additional cost and might require several EPA related permits.

As a planner, I note the irony that today the citing of a new municipal landfill on O`ahu is probably the foremost issue facing the public aside from issues related to homelessness and housing affordability. Thus, it is incumbent upon any development project to be particularly mindful of its effects upon the generation of not only municipal waste but also construction debris. And while general concerns are focused on the recently proposed landfill in Wahiawa, I remind you that the island's only construction debris landfill, a privately-owned facility in Nanakuli, is scheduled to permanently close in 2028.<sup>5</sup> Thus, by 2028, there will be no place on O`ahu to dispose contaminated soil. And one must wonder if any neighbor island would take it!

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<sup>5</sup> <https://buildingindustryhawaii.com/2024/04/times-up-for-landfills/>

**Figure 4: Limtiaco Testing Areas (Units)**



Source: Limtiaco Report, June 2009

**Figure 5: Summary of Environmental Hazards in Testing Areas**

**Table 4: Summary of Environmental Hazards and COC – Commercial/Industrial**

Area	Matrix	Environmental Hazard	Contaminants of Concern
Units 1 & 3	Surface soil	Direct exposure Leaching to groundwater	Lead TPH-O
	Groundwater	Aquatic ecotoxicity	Selenium
Units 2 & 4	Surface soil	Direct exposure Leaching to groundwater	Arsenic, lead TPH-O, dieldrin
	Subsurface soil	Gross contamination Leaching to groundwater	TPH-D, lead TPH-D, TPH-O, 2-methylnaphthalene, dieldrin
	Groundwater	Aquatic ecotoxicity	TPH-O, anthracene, benzo(a)anthracene, mercury, silver, dioxins/furans
	NA	NA	NA
Unit 6	Groundwater	Aquatic ecotoxicity	TPH-O, benzene, xylenes, 2-methylnaphthalene, naphthalene, arsenic, copper
Unit 7	Surface soil	Direct exposure Gross contamination Leaching to groundwater Terrestrial ecotoxicity**	Arsenic Copper TPH-O Arsenic, copper, lead, mercury, zinc
	Groundwater	Aquatic ecotoxicity	TPH-O, arsenic, copper, mercury, vanadium, zinc
Unit 8	Surface soil	Direct exposure Gross contamination Leaching to groundwater Terrestrial ecotoxicity**	TPH-O, benzo(a)pyrene, dibenzo(a,h)anthracene, lead TPH-O Dieldrin Copper, lead, zinc
	Subsurface soil	Leaching to groundwater	Dieldrin
	Groundwater	Aquatic ecotoxicity	TPH-G, TPH-D, 2-methylnaphthalene, anthracene, fluoranthene, fluorene, phenanthrene, pyrene, copper, zinc, dioxins/furans
	Ala Moana WWSW	Groundwater	Aquatic ecotoxicity

\*\* Terrestrial ecotoxicity concerns associated with runoff of surface soil particles to adjacent surface waters

Source: Limtiaco Report, June 2009

The second Limtiaco report concludes that soil washing (Alternative 6) is also not feasible for cost reasons. Soil washing typically means that excavated soil is flushed with water to remove any contaminants. Because the resulting dewatering effluent would then contain contaminants, it would likely need to be captured and treated or shipped out of state, which would be a permitting and cost nightmare.

Therefore, at a minimum, the development of any contaminated land at Kaka`ako Makai for high density residential land use would require the implementation of either Alternatives 2, 3, or 4 identified in the second Limtiaco report. But all of these are essentially caps, meaning that a contaminated area is simply covered with clean soil, gravel, asphalt, or some form of plastic or geomembrane. But what happens if you then disturb the cap with the construction needed to create a foundation for a very tall building or construct in a contaminated area before capping it? Wouldn't that undermine the intent of the remediation in the first place?

The bottom line is that we simply do not know the extent of the contamination problem. Has any of the contamination identified by Limtiaco migrated over the years? This is not a fanciful question. Climate change is causing sea level rise, which means that the level of ground water at Kaka`ako Makai is higher now (closer to the surface) than it was in the 1970s and before. We do not know if the contamination sites identified by Limtiaco in 2009 have been saturated by rising ground water and if that ground water is allowing contamination to spread.

Further, we do not know if all the land proposed by OHA for eventual high-rise residential development is contaminated, although the historical development of Kaka`ako Makai and the distribution of contamination depicted in Figure 4 and summarized in Figure 5 suggests that it likely is.

To even be contemplating 400-foot tall buildings in the area without first conducting a rigorous environmental analysis is to me as a planner, an environmentalist, and a proponent of indigenous rights, frankly ludicrous.

The tallest building in Kaka`ako Makai is the Gold Bond Building, which was opened in 1969, almost a decade before federal environmental regulations went into effect. The land under it has not been tested. We know that the John A. Burns School of Medicine was constructed in the area in the early 2000s. We also know by reviewing the mandatory environmental assessment required for the project<sup>6</sup>, that

- a) the building foundation did not require pile driving,
- b) there is contaminated soil at the site, and
- c) all the contaminated soil discovered at the site was capped, similar to Alternative 3 discussed in the second Limtiaco Report.

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<sup>6</sup> Wilson Okamoto and Associates. University of Hawaii Health and Wellness Center Final Environmental Assessment. Prepared for the University of Hawaii, John A. Burns School of Medicine. May 2002

And we know that those capped areas now constitute the paved asphalt parking areas surrounding the JABSOM buildings.

The construction of a very tall building on land that is entirely fill material means that piles would likely have to be driven deep enough to support the structure, probably much deeper than the 30 feet needed to reach the subsurface coral that underlies Kaka`ako Makai. Wouldn't driving a pile through a remediation cap and through the contaminated soil beneath it potentially expose the groundwater and possibly the lower-level aquifer to contamination with lead, mercury, hydrocarbons, and pesticides?

It must also be noted that when considering significant changes in land use, we must consider not only short-term construction impacts, but also long-term impacts related to use. A commercial building like Gold Bond or a medical school generate very different user impacts than a residential tower (or 4). Residential towers introduce a population into the area that will have much greater interaction with the physical property and soil around the buildings, especially for young children, who are much more likely to be 'playing in the dirt'.

Simply put, what is needed before taking legislative action is a rigorous and extensive analysis to disclose the information needed before the future of Kakaako Makai can be decided. This can be accomplished by conducting an Environmental Impact Statement based upon a detailed master plan to fully analyze the situation, at the earliest practicable time, to inform decision-makers. I recommended this course of action to this very body two years ago. Had that EIS been undertaken at that time, you would now likely know the answers to many or all the following questions:

Exactly where is the contaminated soil?

How deep does it extend?

Has contamination migrated? If so, why, and if not, why not?

Are any of the privately owned properties not studied in 2009, but now included in SB534 contaminated?

If any contaminated soil extends below the groundwater table, is the groundwater also contaminated? (The table presented in Figure 5 suggests that some already is.)

Are there practical remediation alternatives other than capping it or removing contaminated soil?

What are the potential costs of removing contaminated soil in 2025 and how and where would it be disposed?

What impact will contaminated soil removal from Kaka`ako have upon O`ahu's critical need for a new sanitary landfill and a new construction and debris landfill?

If contaminated areas can be capped, are there limits to how the land above the cap can be used in the short-term and the long-term?

How would the development of subsurface infrastructure (sewer lines, water lines, underground utilities, storm drainage, etc.) impact contaminated areas?

Is the development of subsurface infrastructure compatible with any of the remediation alternatives identified in the second Limtiaco report?

In conclusion, from a planning point-of-view, Kaka`ako Makai is an extremely challenging area for land use development. These challenges must be fully understood before rendering summary judgements. It must be understood that an EIS is not a development permit or an entitlement. It is an information document intended to inform the general public and decision makers. The State Senate can rest assured that OHA must conduct an EIS for the development of the Makai lands pursuant to any master plan it adopts. And the Senate must wait, while resisting claims of urgency, until OHA fulfills its obligations under Chapter 343, HRS and Chapter 25, ROH, so that it can then use the information in that rigorous environmental review to inform its own decision making, should it still feel compelled to engage in the regulation of land uses on State-owned land.

Respectfully submitted on this day, January 27, 2025.

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Lee Sichter

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 12:24:33 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
jaerick Medeiros-garcia	Individual	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

I'm definitely in opposition to this proposal because 1. It is already deemed illegal in detail under county charter that means under county laws it's illegal. Development county codes are in place and the illegal occupying state of hawaii's and its illegal legislature and illegal state entity OHA want to ignore laws. Laws are put in place to protect for a reason.

2. OHA need to start recognizing the hawaiians for who they really are, and not as native Hawaiians. That's straight up discrimination and racism against the Kānaka Mauoli being that a native Hawaiian is anybody in Hawaii with a mailing address.

3. Stop clouding titles and definitions. That means stop lying to the Hawaiian's for the American's. A'ole, A'ole, A'ole to this Hewa proposal.

**LATE**

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 5:07:00 AM  
Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Germaine Meyers	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

My name is Germaine Meyers. I'm a native Hawaiian OHA Beneficiary.

I've been in the workforce since age 15 and for over 40 years.

With workforce housing, OHA can generate revenue to support programs for the betterment of native Hawaiians and Hawaiians.

I support OHA's 201H plans to build 50% plus 1 affordable workforce housing.

Ke Akua pu,

God bless all of you

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/24/2025 8:07:38 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
mailani makainai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by allowing local families and essential workers to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui, thank you for the opportunity to submit your testimony.

*Mailani K. Maka‘ina‘i*

(808) 425-3029

47-718 Alawiki St.

Kaneohe, HI

96744

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 7:15:43 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lois Langham	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii's shoreline is already becoming littered with highrises on prime ocean view properties...for those who can afford to live in them. The very existence of more would destroy the beauty of the island, not to mention the land and its ecosystem.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 10:18:35 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jeanette Gonzalez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii is a land that is made by Hawaiians. Everything that makes this island beautiful is because of the essence the local native community and its culture. Urban Honolulu is an area that many tourist, business, and residents enjoy but it does have a feeling of inauthenticity at times. This area needs to have local people present, not just in areas outside of the metropolitan area. Having an area dedicated to the local community is intergral to keeping Hawai'i HAWAIIAN and not another cut and dry vacant skyrise.

January 25, 2025

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka'ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka'ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai'i's critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai'i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai'i's median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai'i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Malia Kinimaka Freund  
[mkinimaka@gmail.com](mailto:mkinimaka@gmail.com)

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 10:26:09 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Johne Constance Colahan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I approve the proposals for SB354.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 10:37:49 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Solana-Ann Adachi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

*Solana-Ann Adachi*

*(808)336-0664*

*solanaadachi@gmail.com*



**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 10:38:46 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Donna May Kamaile	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 10:49:55 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
ANITA MAE K NAONE	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.

Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.

Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Anita Mae K. Naone

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 10:58:56 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Rebecca Inaba	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, Chang, and members of the Senate Committees,**

I am writing in strong support of SB534, which represents a critical opportunity to honor commitments made to OHA and address Hawai‘i’s growing housing crisis.

In 2012, the State conveyed the Kaka‘ako Makai lands to OHA as a settlement for \$200 million in unpaid revenues, with the understanding that residential development would be possible. However, the current residential use ban prevents OHA from realizing the full potential of these lands. SB534 would repeal this ban, allowing OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands to support vital lāhui services and create a Hawaiian sense of place in the heart of urban Honolulu.

This bill also tackles the pressing need for affordable housing in Hawai‘i by authorizing residential towers along Ala Moana Boulevard up to 400 feet, with more than half of the units reserved for workforce housing. By prioritizing essential workers in health care, hospitality, education, law enforcement, civil service, and construction, SB534 ensures that those who keep our communities running have access to homes they can afford.

Additionally, SB534 provides funding through association fees to maintain existing public infrastructure, including the lei of green promenade, preserving public spaces while supporting responsible development.

Passage of SB534 is a necessary step toward addressing development inequities, fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians, and providing affordable housing for Hawai‘i residents. Mahalo for the opportunity to share my testimony in support of this vital legislation.

Mahalo,

Rebecca "Kawehi" Inaba

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 11:30:02 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Rachelle Chang	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

Thank you for the work you do to serve Hawai'i. I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka'ako Makai. The promise agreed to in the 2012 settlement needs to be fulfilled to OHA and Hawaii residents.
- SB534 will allow OHA to maximize the value of Kaka'ako Makai lands by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard. Revenue will fund programs and services that directly benefit Native Hawaiians, and reduce the burden on government services.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai'i's critical need for affordable and workforce housing. , by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai'i. My son is in his first year of college, and I don't think that he will be able to afford to live in Hawai'i when he graduates.

We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai'i's median income, including recent graduates and immigrants, and this bill does just that.

Please take this critical step forward in creating more affordable housing, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai'i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Sincerely,  
Rachelle Chang

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 11:36:22 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mark Vasconcellos	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Mahalo

Mark vasconcellos

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 11:45:31 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lori Apo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Lori Apo

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 12:02:58 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Alexander Kea	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We are in full support of Bill SB534.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 12:09:41 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Shawn White	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Shawn White

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 12:09:54 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Brenten Kanoa Yamane	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing.

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons,

SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.

Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.

Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Mahalo,

Brenten Kanoa Yamane

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 12:23:21 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
mary drayer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

the need for affordable housing is real - and even more needed is KŪPUNA housing.. the wait times for Maui Hala Mahaolu is up to 5 YEARS - Hopefully OHA will make kūpuna housing a priority. // an the state will also - Kuipuna housing will ease the burden on families that heed extra space, ADA compliant, in their homes to care for their loved ones. and Kupuna housing is simple! no need yard for kids, no need plenty bedrooms etc

Mahalo

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 12:52:34 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jacob Wiencek	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

Housing affordability remains one of the key drivers of people leaving Hawaii. Sustainably developing more housing solutions is crucial to the overall social and economic health of our state. Providing more housing options is the only way forward. I strongly encourage the Committee to advance this legislation.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 1:18:21 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kimber Horsen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 1:28:04 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kimo Kippen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Aloha,

Kimo Kippen

Founder, Aloha Learning Advisors.



**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 2:34:01 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Casey Takayama	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Kakaako Makai needs to be considered as climate mitigation area and not for development for high rise buildings. As raising concerns of Sea Level Rise and Tsunami hazardous zone, public safety needs to be the top priority. Generally, commercial purposes should not lead the way in the society, while climate and environmental concerns are faced imminent.

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 grants OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as envisioned by the 2012 settlement.
- By raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands and generate revenue for programs and services, including loans.
- Finally, SB534's workforce housing provision allows local families and key workers to live, work, and prosper in metropolitan Honolulu, addressing Hawai‘i's significant demand for affordable and workforce housing.

Hawai‘i's housing situation worries me. This bill provides additional affordable housing for residents below 140% of Hawai‘i's median income. The bill also preserves shoreline open space and funds public infrastructure and access, setting the baseline for island developments.

In closing, SB534 would be a critical step forward in generating systemic housing reform, addressing development disparities, and meeting the State of Hawai‘i's pledges to Native Hawaiians. Thank you for the chance to present testimony.

‘O wau,

*Kalani Akana*

Kalani Akana, PhD

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 2:51:44 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
LeaDan Yee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Kakou,

My name is LeaDan Yee, I'm Kanaka Maoli, who is currently returning home to Hawai'i with the hope to return to being an educator and raising my child in the homeland. As it impossible to ignore it you've lived in Hawai'i for over a decade, there's a great deal owed to Native Hawaiians both from the United States, as illegal occupiers who have used Hawai'i and it's resources due to Hawai'i's unique location within the Pacific, and from the State of Hawai'i, who has not returned all ceded lands to the Native Hawaiians. In 2012, the State conveyed the Kaka'ako Makai lands to OHA as settlement of \$200,000,000 in unpaid revenues owed to OHA under the Hawai'i State Constitution and Hawai'i Revised Statues Chapter 10.

As a Native Hawaiian, returning to my homeland after five years, I can testify first hand of the difficulty finding affordable housing for myself and my 'ohana and I know that I'm not alone. Since the most recent census, with over 50% of Native Hawaiians now living outside of our homeland, it has been quite common to meet people in the Pacific Northwest this past year who are now living in diaspora because of the cost of living in Hawai'i. Our housing crisis here needs to be addressed and SB534 will allow OHA to help meet this demand.

Mahalo for your time,

LeaDan Yee

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 3:34:10 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deborah King	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

**I strongly oppose to repeal the ban on high rise residential condos in Kakaako Makai so it can generate income despite capacity, environmental and flight-path concerns and the current work on updating the community-based Kakaako Makai plan with community meetings.**

I have lived in several high rise apartment complexes and I know that only some of the units are occupied while others are owned by people who only visit Hawai'i seasonally. Some of these people rent their apartments through Air BnB and try to avoid paying taxes from this rental income.

I also can say that in the event of a diaster whether manmade or nature made, our current fire, police and other rescue workers are unequipped to handle high rise complexes which would reduce rescuing people stuck on higher floors especially our Kupuna, Keiki and disabled residents. Have you even tried to walk down the stairs with a fractured foot and ankle during a fire alarm? I have and, if it had been a fire that got out-of-hand, I may not have reached the ground floor safety. Think of September 11, 2001 in New York and all those who lost their lives due to high rise apartment complexes and office buildings.

I strongly support putting the lives or our Kupuna, Keiki, Disabled person and residents over making money. I also believe that it will make a negative impact on our bird and wildlife friends who we need to create a harmonious environment.

Mahalo for considering my testimony.

Deborah W. King

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 3:56:42 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Keoki Faria	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony,

Keoki Faria

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 5:21:40 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sasily Uilani Corr-Yorkman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

*Aloha,*

*U‘ilani Corr-Yorkman*

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 6:06:42 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sandra C. Castell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Sandra Castell

Ewa Beach, Hawaii 96706

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 6:22:19 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kaimo Muhlestein	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SB 534

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 6:35:47 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lilinoe De Gruy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Thank you gratefully!

Sincerely,

Lilinoe De Gruy

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 7:22:39 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lori Detwiler	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB534 because it addresses Hawaii's dire need for affordable housing for working people. The concern regarding this need is one very close to my heart. There is very high demand, yet very little supply.

Lori Detwiler

1936 Citron St. #403

Honolulu, HI 96826

808/398-2939

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 7:54:22 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I strongly oppose residential development being built on Kakaako Makai. Kakaako is already filled with tall, luxury condos too expensive for the majority of local people to own or rent. Developing on the Makai side of Kaakako will only consist of even more expensive condos that will run into problems later, in regards to rising sea levels and erosion. Instead of developing on Kakaako Makai, lets leave whats left of the last beautiful open space we have on the south shore. Locals and tourist alike love Hawaii because of the natural beauty this land has to offer. Lets share and leave this open land for visitors and our future generations to enjoy. If we allow this land to be developed we can never get it back.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 8:06:09 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
gordon piianaia	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill for several reasons. 1, it does something with that has sat idle for far too long. 2, it seeks to provide housing for Hawaii's people, not just those of Hawaiian ancestry. 3, the land was given to the OHA as a means to generate the revenue that was owed (this was over 12 years ago already!). 4, it also encompasses restrictions to ensure that these homes aren't used for investment purposes. We need housing and we need it now! None of the properties that are in development are have recently been built in this area have stipulations that prevent outside investment and ownership. This is a significant amount of land that can and should be used as soon as possible for the benefit of as many Hawaii residents as we can.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/25/2025 8:35:51 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Mary P Moriarty	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, Chang, and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing,

I am writing in strong SUPPORT of SB534 for the following reasons:

First, SB534 grants OHA the authority to develop residential housing on designated parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, honoring the historic 2012 settlement between OHA and the legislature regarding past due amounts.

Second, by increasing residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill allows OHA to fully realize the potential of Kaka‘ako Makai lands. This will generate much-needed revenue to support critical programs and services, such as loans and grants, that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.

Additionally, SB534 addresses Hawai‘i’s urgent need for affordable and workforce housing by creating opportunities for local families and essential workers to live and thrive in urban Honolulu, as outlined in its workforce housing provisions.

As someone deeply concerned about Hawai‘i’s housing crisis, I believe we must prioritize affordable housing options for residents earning less than 140% of the state’s median income. This bill strikes a thoughtful balance by addressing that need while preserving open space along the waterfront, dedicating funding for public infrastructure, and enhancing public access—setting a precedent for future developments statewide.

In conclusion, SB534 represents a meaningful step toward systemic housing reform, equitable development, and the fulfillment of commitments made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to provide testimony.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 1:09:25 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ahia Dye	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Ahia Dye

Aloha nō, e Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I humbly urge you to support and pass SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka'ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- SB534 helps address Hawai'i's critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai'i nei.

We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai'i's median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai'i. Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Na'u me ke aloha, na Colin McCubbin.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 8:38:57 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Thomas Iwai Jr.	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

01/29/25

Testimony against SB534

OHA’s proposal to build high rise 200’-400’ residential towers in Kaka’ako Makai and along Kewalo Basin Harbor over known contaminated “brown fields” could have serious environmental and public health impacts to surrounding recreational waters.

In 2006, the State legislature wisely recognized these threats after public outcry and passed HRS Section 206E-315 which currently bans any residential development in Kaka’ako makai. It is important to note that low rise commercial construction is allowed although proper EIS (Environmental Impact Statements) must still be conducted and approved. Therefore, the legislature should not pass SB534 until sufficient environmental analyses has been and appropriately reviewed and presented to the public.

Any EIS requirement would essentially depend on the parcel(s) being proposed for development (residential/commercial) since each parcel may be substantially different from each other in the concentration of “brownfield contaminants” and level of remediation it would require to make it safely habitable.

Three major areas of concern include:

- 1) The impact of multiple deep structural supports (e.g. 150’ or greater to stable bedrock that probably would be required to provide a stable and safe support system for 200’-400’ residential towers over the existing aquifer) will have with the seepage of these brownfield contaminants (e.g. heavy metals, herbicides, pesticides, petroleum by-products, etc.) into nearby recreational waters (e.g. Kewalo Basin, Ala Moana Beach Park, Sand Island, etc.) creating potential public health concerns. Also, occasional “King” tides, heavy rainfall, and the predicted rise in sea level, would seriously exacerbate the leaching of these disrupted contaminants into surrounding waters.
- 2) The toxic waste exposure and health concerns to construction workers, nearby residents and visitors, from aerial (e.g. dust) and rainwater-wastewater exposure. The degree of surface excavation (disruption) for subsurface infrastructure required for water piping, electrical conduits, sewer discharge requirements, fire safety, parking, etc. will also need to be determined.

Safety measures should be in place during excavation-construction that would contain these contaminants in the event of heavy rainfall/flooding for its safe removal and disposal, and

3) If the legislature unwisely grants approval to OHA to build these residential towers over a known contaminated brownfield, OHA should absorb all EIS (and potential liability costs) before, during and after construction. After an honest and thorough EIS analysis has been completed for each selected parcel, it should be made available for public review-comment.

Summary:

The passage of SB534 (and associated bills HB605 & SB211) will create health risks to nearby recreational waters that would be irreparable. Responsible, not reckless development is advised that will help ensure the safety of our ohana, tourists, and future generations. Oahu does not need another 'Red Hill!'

Mahalo nui loa,

Thomas Iwai Jr.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 8:55:46 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
David Kelly	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am testifying in the strongest possible opposition to residential development in Kaka'ako Makai.

The rapid overdevelopment of high-rise buildings in this area is already overwhelming our community, with even more towers planned.

This precious oceanfront land represents the last remaining undeveloped coastal area along Oahu's South shore. We cannot afford to transform it into another congested Waikiki.

While we have already lost much of the Mauka side to development, we still have the opportunity to preserve Kaka'ako Makai.

The current housing crisis should not be used to justify permanently sacrificing this irreplaceable public coastal land.

Our keiki and future generations deserve to inherit open spaces where they can connect with the ocean and experience Hawaii's natural beauty.

Once this land is developed, it can never be restored.

Sincerely

David Kelly

1221 Victoria St 702

Honolulu HI 96814

Tel 808-387-1305

david@hawaiiansouthshore.com

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 8:57:07 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ashley Lee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

This area is also near my medical school, John A. Burns School of Medicine, at which I am currently a fourth year medical student. I will be graduating in in four months as a young physician in a state with one of the highest costs of living. I appreciate the OHA is prioritizing workforce housing for those in healthcare. The cultural center built and "lei of green" can serve as a pivotal space for medical students to learn about their "sense of place," something so vital in UH's current stride to make our campus a Native Hawaiian place of learning.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Ashley Mainani Lee, BS, MS4

John A. Burns School of Medicine, University of Hawai'i

*Email: amlee4@hawaii.edu / Phone: 808-258-9689*

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 9:10:17 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
kristopher mar	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a Hawaiian civil service worker I support this bill to provide affordable housing for 140% and lower AMI, creating a Hawaiian sense of place, and green corridor, so long as housing is offered at fee simple.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 9:42:20 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Candice Napuelua	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing.

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.

The bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 9:55:01 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Julia York	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**I am testifying in strong opposition to have high rises on Kaka'ako Makai. We have too many high rises already in the area and none of them are fully occupied anyway. So why add more? This areas Infrastructure can't carry no more dead weight.**

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 11:51:29 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lehua Stuart	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang, and Members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing,

I am writing to express my **strong support for SB534** for the following reasons:

SB534 grants the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka’ako Makai, as originally envisioned in the historic 2012 settlement between OHA and the Legislature.

By raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill enables OHA to maximize the value of Kaka’ako Makai lands as intended in the 2012 settlement. This, in turn, will generate revenue to expand vital programs and services, including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.

Additionally, SB534 addresses Hawai’i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing. It provides local families and essential workers with opportunities to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

As a resident deeply concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai’i, I believe this bill is a significant step toward creating affordable housing for those earning less than 140% of the state’s median income. At the same time, SB534 protects existing open spaces along the waterfront, allocates funding for public infrastructure, and ensures increased public access—setting a standard for responsible development across the islands.

In summary, the passage of SB534 is essential to addressing housing inequities, delivering on commitments to Native Hawaiians, and creating systemic housing solutions for Hawai’i’s future.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your thoughtful consideration of this vital legislation.

Mahalo,

Lehua K.K. Stuart



Senator Lorraine R. Inouye,  
Chair of the Committee on Water and Land  
Senation Herbert M. "Tim" Richards III,  
Chair of the Committee on Hawaiian Affairs  
Senator Stanley Chang,  
Chair of the Committee on Housing  
And Members of the three Senate Committees

I think it is time we stop kidding ourselves that we can build our way out of our two caste economy in Hawaii. Buildings allowed under SB 534, will have no impact on poor and increasingly poor middle class workers, including the noble service workers the bill identifies.

Basing affordability on median household income sinisterly overlooks that the median household has 3 full time wage earners, probably working a total of 4 or more jobs. Are they going to develop condos for 3 generation families? Can they be expanded for Grandma to move in?

What the development of Kakaako Makai will impact is the last open space in urban Honolulu. We do such a poor job of looking into the future. Our tourism counts exploded when short term rentals and the internet caught the tourism industry unaware. Our future mainland immigration counts could explode in the same way, once a whole lot more oceanside condos are available. That's what this bill is helping to fertilize.

I have lived in Kakaako for 32 years. Recently the noise of people who've removed the mufflers from their cars and motorcycles has made quiet nights and early mornings disappear. The sound reverberates between the buildings. Noise ordinances only apply to areas with residential zoning. Kakaako has no residential zoning.

None of your constituents want Kakaako development to spill across Ala Moana Boulevard. They hate what those tall resident towers represent. Voters of Honolulu will be needing that open space more than ever.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 12:42:12 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
lynne matusow	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

OHA screwed up in 2012 when it agreed to accept the lands. Had it paid attention to the law in effect at the time, it would have known it could not build residential on that property. The public back in 2006 started fighting to keep housing off that land. And won. OHA's claim that building residential housing in Kakaako Makai is a blatant falsehood. It may have been OHA's wish, but was not permitted under the law.

With climate change, new FEMA flood maps, and tsunami zones, this is not the proper place to put housing, period. For anyone. It is a disaster waiting to happen.

Instead, OHA should trade this land for other state parcels which are not at risk.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 12:50:17 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Walter Kawikaka'iulani Aipa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Subject: Support for SB534 - A Personal Appeal from a Priced-Out Native Hawaiian

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing.

I am writing to express my support for SB534 and to share my personal story as a Native Hawaiian who has been priced out of my own home. Like many others (kanaka and non-kanaka), my family and I have been forced to live outside of Hawai'i due to the ever-increasing cost of living and housing. It pains me to be away from my roots, my culture, and the beautiful land of my ancestors. Currently, I live in Aotearoa as it provided me a sense of identity, opportunity and social peace. I want to come home and I want my descendants to have a sustainable option to live and thrive in Hawai'i. There is an active battle of erasure that exists for kanaka - living and yet to be born. You are here today with a powerful choice and we will remember that choice.

As a Native Hawaiian, I deeply resonate with the objectives of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs in advocating for policies that prioritize housing affordability, cultural preservation, and community support. SB534 represents an essential step toward addressing these critical issues.

A simple google search on "Hawai'i cost of living" makes the eyes water. With the median price of a single-family home in Hawai'i over \$1 million, it is one of the least affordable states in the nation. Additionally, many sources report that a family in Hawai'i would need to earn approximately \$36.95 per hour to afford a two-bedroom rental home. A rental, not a mortgage for a home.

The rising costs of housing have created barriers for families like mine, who wish to return to our homeland and raise our children in a community rich in culture and tradition. Access to affordable housing is not just a financial issue; it is a matter of cultural survival for Native Hawaiians. We deserve the opportunity to live in the places that hold our history, our values, and our futures.

As reported by the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Native Hawaiians are more likely to experience housing insecurity, with many Native Hawaiian households living in overcrowded conditions.

In this context, it is crucial to address the actions of prominent figures (the haole 1%, the military, etc) who through fair or foul own and occupy significant parcels of land in Hawai'i. The acquisition and development of these properties can have profound effects on local communities, including disruptions to traditional practices (access rights) and increased pressure on housing availability. It is essential that influential landowners recognize their responsibility to engage with and support the needs of Native Hawaiian communities, ensuring that their actions contribute positively rather than exacerbating existing challenges.

I urge lawmakers to consider the voices of those of us who have been displaced. By supporting SB534, you are not only addressing a legislative issue but also acknowledging the struggles of Native Hawaiians seeking to reclaim their place in the islands. This bill has the potential to create pathways for families to return home, fostering a stronger, more resilient community.

Research shows that stable housing is directly linked to better health outcomes, educational success, and economic stability, which are critical for the well-being of our communities.

Thank you for your commitment to the well-being of Native Hawaiians and for considering the personal impact of this legislation. Together, we can work towards a future where everyone has the opportunity to thrive in their ancestral home.

Mahalo,

W. K. Aipa

Senate Committees on (1) Water and Land (WAL); (2) Hawaiian Affairs (HWN); and (3) Housing (HOU)

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka'ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka'ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai'i's critical need for affordable/low income and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai'i. We need to build more affordable/low income housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai'i's median income and for Hawaiians unable to qualify for Hawaiian Homes Land.

At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai'i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

William L Kapaku Jr

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 2:37:41 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Richard Hai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang, and esteemed members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing,

I am writing to express my strong support for SB534 and elaborate on why I believe this legislation is essential for our community and the State of Hawai'i.

The bill will empower the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to develop residential housing in Kaka'ako Makai, in line with the 2012 settlement agreement with the legislature. This initiative aims to address past obligations and create culturally appropriate, economically viable housing solutions.

Moreover, the proposed increase in residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard is a crucial aspect of this bill. By enhancing the potential for vertical development, OHA can maximize the value of its Kaka'ako Makai lands. This increased value will not only generate substantial revenue. Still, it will also provide funding for vital programs and services, including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians and foster community development.

Additionally, SB534 directly addresses the pressing issue of affordable and workforce housing in Hawai'i. The current housing crisis has created significant barriers for local families and essential workers, making it difficult for them to live and thrive in urban Honolulu. This bill includes a workforce housing mandate that prioritizes the needs of those earning less than 140% of Hawai'i's median income, thus creating more opportunities for individuals and families to secure affordable housing.

I am profoundly worried about the persistent housing crisis impacting many residents in our islands. According to the 2023 U.S. Census reports, 53% of Native Hawaiians have relocated out of state due to the exorbitant cost of living and the lack of affordable housing in our homeland. There is a critical need for more affordable housing options, and SB534 directly contributes to this goal. The bill also ensures the preservation of existing open space along the waterfront, which is vital for maintaining the aesthetic and recreational value of our public spaces. In conjunction with this, it designates funding for necessary public infrastructure improvements and better public access, setting a new standard for future developments across the islands.

The passage of SB534 would mark a significant change in our housing landscape, addressing longstanding inequities in development and honoring commitments to Native Hawaiians. Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony. Your leadership in ensuring the well-being of our communities is greatly appreciated.

Mahalo nui.

Millie Ho

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 3:46:12 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
sandra moneymaker	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am strongly opposed to allowing any residential development in Kakaako Makai. I believe it is foolish to think condos Makai will be affordable by locals working multiple jobs. Furthermore; initial suggested unit size is very small and hardly usable for families. The Skyline rail is supposed to serve the workforce living in more affordable areas of the island. That is where OHA should build the desired housing. Housing with rail access would promote ridership of the boondoggle built for that very purpose. The Makai area is designated as a tsunami zone so I ask why would we knowingly put residents in such a hazardous zone? It's already a garbage dump and known to be toxic so it makes no sense to put "affordable" housing there. The suggestion by OHA that tsunamis can be mitigated is laughable, may I remind you of Fukushima Japan! If mitigation was the answer, tsunamis wouldn't be the topic and if mitigation is a great solution then whatever that plan might be, it should be deployed statewide before more development allowed in an uninsurable zone.

Kakaako Makai is the last piece of oceanfront land on the south shore and should not become another Waikiki. These lands should be protected as open spaces for future generations with free access to all locals and visitors.

Me Ka Mahalo Nui,

Sandy Moneymaker

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 3:58:09 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Channey Tang-Ho	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha my name is Channey and I am a proud local, born and raised in Honolulu, Hawaii. I believe Hawaii is one of the best places in the world. I am voting to oppose SB 534. Building residential on Kaka'ako Makai is unnecessary and reckless. The prices will not be affordable and it is going to be for outsiders and the 1% wealthy of the world. 20 years ago, they said Kaka'ako was supposed to be for workforce and it never ended up that way. How is this going to be any different? Not to mention, a lot of Kaka'ako Makai used to be a landfill so building any where near or on top of that would be reckless. I am for protecting open spaces for my children and future generations. We already have many high rises in Kaka'ako and a very small percentage of locals live there. I don't believe it will be for the people of Hawai'i. Kaka'ako Makai is the last oceanfront land in the south shore of Honolulu and we need to protect it.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 4:21:27 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sasha Kahele-Manners	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 4:35:25 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Marjorie Gifford	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The negotiations between OHA and the State of Hawaii were conducted in good faith that the lands would be zoned residential and allow multiple housing. If this bill is not passed, then the State of Hawaii did not negotiate in good faith AND OHA has the right to sue for the full amount of the value of the property as negotiated. It is in the interests of housing for low income individuals and for Kanaka Maoli that this property be zoned so that housing can be built.

Further, there seem to be more native Hawaiians living in Las Vegas than on our islands. This is caused by the lack of affordable housing in Hawaii AND the fact that the Hawaiian government and the US government stole our lands in the first place. Hawaiians have been given the shaft in their native sovereign country. The least you can do is help to provide them with housing.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 4:58:03 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
jmi asam	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

*Jmi Lilinoe Bassett Asam*

*4211 Waialae Ave Ste 102*

*Honolulu, Hawaii 96816*



**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 5:10:46 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jason Sakai	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Committee Members,

I oppose allowing OHA to change the "no residential law" because:

-20 years ago the people were against

-OHA has repeatedly tried to change the law, the people were still against it

-The condos built will not be for the Hawaiian People, "Affordable", "Workforce" Housing is a lie. \$700k for a 2 bedroom? Even the "gap group" cannot afford it!

-Eliminating the residential law will also allow Kamehameha Schools to also develop on 3 parcels along Ala Moana Blvd

-We should not build on "brownfields", the land is contaminated and an in depth EIS is needed. Raising the height limit to 400' will require even deeper pilings.

-We don't need another congested concrete jungle like Waikiki, there's already enough development on the Mauka side. I like OPEN SPACES!

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 5:21:25 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Yvonne Geesey	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please uphold height restrictions. Mahalo

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 6:45:51 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Travis	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

It seems ABSURD to even consider this development.

when so much of the beach in Honolulu is dedicated to tourists, Kaka'ako is a place for locals too. I live in the neighborhood and this is my personal go-to beach and water front. I'd love to see more affordable and sustainable housing on Oahu, but this is ridiculous. Obstructing the view, clogging up our neighborhood with MORE construction and for what? There is no way blood sucking developers will just allow this to be waterfront affordable housing in paradise. Time and again, we see every loop hole exploited to create more luxury playgrounds for the rich. There so many other spaces on island where we can fit affordable housing. Why not knock down a walmart or other big box store and put houseing there? How many malls do we really need? Surely thwre is another option.

i'm not a native Hawaiian myself, and i am working class. But personally, i don't think Oahu needs any more housing developments unless they are *Guaranteed* to be affordable and priority given to native hawaiiians. I don'r know what yall are up to all day downtown, but this plan is just DEEPLY out of touch.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 7:07:38 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Joe Awong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

I am writing in strong support of SB534. As a Native Hawaiian, I have witnessed firsthand how our community has struggled with the impacts of historical injustices and broken promises. The 2012 settlement that conveyed the Kaka‘ako Makai lands to OHA was meant to begin addressing the \$200 million in unpaid revenues owed to Native Hawaiians. However, the current residential ban has prevented OHA from realizing the full value of these lands as originally intended.

SB534 represents an opportunity to finally make this right. By allowing residential development up to 400 feet along Ala Moana Boulevard, with half of the units reserved for affordable workforce housing, this bill would not only help OHA fulfill its mission to better the conditions of Native Hawaiians but also address our state's critical housing needs. I am particularly encouraged by the priority given to essential workers in healthcare, education, law enforcement, and other vital sectors.

This bill would enable OHA to generate the revenue needed to expand critical services for the lāhui while creating a vibrant Hawaiian sense of place in urban Honolulu. The maintenance of public spaces through association fees would ensure these developments benefit the entire community.

I urge you to pass SB534 and take this important step toward fulfilling the state's constitutional and moral obligations to the Native Hawaiian people while helping address our housing crisis.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Joe Awong Jr.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 7:27:15 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Seth Kamemoto	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm concerned that this bill, while it might generate more revenue for an agency that is tasked with helping Native Hawaiians with housing, might not actually create direct housing benefit for said recipients. There just isn't enough here to restrict the actual residential use to support the lives of Native Hawaiians. I'd much rather have restrictions that require building residential complexes that directly support the actual housing and lives of Native Hawaiians, not just building anything that can generate the most money that will then be funneled into an agency that might possibly be able to use that money effectively to provide valuable housing services to Native Hawaiians. It just seems too indirect and roundabout.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 7:48:46 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Stephen T Hazam	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please OPPOSE SB534 and protect our AINA

In 2006, the Hawaii State Legislature prohibited residential development in Kakaako Makai. This was largely in response to plan, by Alexander & Baldwin, for a luxury condominium project. The condo plan was fiercely opposed by the community and the ban had near-unanimous support in the legislature.

The community wanted to preserve open spaces for public use, and ensure that it would be available for recreational, community and cultural uses. It is the last remaining open shoreline in urban Honolulu and must be protected.

The community also feared that high rise residential development would place a severe strain on the underlying infrastructure, resulting in significant issues for water, sewer, traffic and parking.

Because of its industrial past there is toxic waste that must be considered. Its location next to the shore means that it is at risk from flooding and sea-level rise.

Six years later, in 2012, with the prohibition still in place, OHA accepted a conveyance of these lands as part of a settlement for the State of Hawaii's \$200 million past-due Public Land Trust revenue debt. Contrary to a current characterization by OHA that at the time of the settlement between OHA and the legislature that it was envisioned that OHA would be given the authority to develop residential housing, there is nothing in the local media or the legislative record to

support this statement. If this vision was merely the design of OHA, then it demonstrates that they did not act in good faith.

The fears of the community in 2006 not only remain, but are exacerbated by the development since 2006 in Kakaako Mauka. OHA has demonstrated that it cannot be trusted to be a better steward of the aina than those it has often criticized.

Please OPPOSE SB534 and protect our AINA.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 8:08:40 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Patrick Ogawa	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please NO high rise residential buildings on Kaka'ako makai!!

Aloha

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 8:09:21 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Martha Evans	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, (OHA) the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by providing local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. Given the current landscape, I know that my children and grandchildren will never be able to afford a home in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, your support will ensure passage of SB534, a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony,

Martha Evans

**Bruce Lum**  
**99-546 Iwaiwa Street**  
**Aiea, Hawaii 96701**

January 26, 2025

THE SENATE, KA AHA KENEKOA  
Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, Housing  
The Thirty-Third Legislature  
Regular Session of 2025

Aloha kākou committee chairs and members,

I am testifying in **full support of SB 534**, because it is very clear that the position of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs wanting to move forward with their proposal for the two of nine parcels that the office was conveyed by Act 15 of the 2012 sessions laws is justified, fair and pono.

Nine parcels were conveyed to OHA, to settle certain claims against the State, regarding the Office of Hawaiian Affairs' longstanding claims to income and proceeds from ceded lands (1978-2012).

Much of the opposition to this bill has revolved around threats and issues that have been satisfied, or are solely anecdotal in nature, prejudicial, arbitrary or issues that will be properly and systematically vetted in the mechanisms and standards of the HCDA's development application process and procedures.

Furthermore, ACT 15 (2012) requires "The Properties are and shall remain (even after conveyance to the office) under the jurisdiction and authority of the Hawaii Community Development Authority, with respect to zoning, land use conditions and all other matters over which the authority has jurisdiction and authority to act." This indicates that the proper controls have been put in place ahead of application by OHA to develop its proposal and plans.

Threats to Kewalo Basin Park, Kaka'ako Park, Kewalos surf break and Point Panic surf breaks, and public access of the shoreline between Kewalo Basin Park to the ewa boarder of Kaka'ako park have melted away. Kaka'ako park provides a public access easement at and along the park's ocean line. With the transfer of Kaka'ako park to the city, clear ocean access will be preserved in perpetuity for generations to come.

Opposition has also been voiced in terms of contaminated soil, sea level rise, tsunami inundation zone, etc. Any developer would have to pass the rigors of HCDA and meet the bundle of standards and quality control requirements put in place by the state and city. These are future to-do items in a long list of pre and post development requirements that all developers must satisfy. It has been stated in various climate change reports that the elevation of the Kaka'ako mauka areas are of greater inundation risk than the makai side of Ala Moana Blvd.

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**99-546 Iwaiwa Street**  
**Aiea, Hawaii 96701**

Until any developer actually applies to the HCDA to seek approval for development, the real vs imagined concerns are just that... imagined and yet to be verified. Opposing SB 534 on the basis of imagined concerns is not fair or logical. Even the 400ft height variance and residential design in OHA's master plan will be subject to two public engagements for review... one at the inception and one at the point of final decision making which requires a separate hearing. By amendments, ACT 15 §206E- (2012) mandates this of the Hawaii Community Development Authority.

It has been said that the nine parcels that OHA owns on the makai side of Ala Moana Blvd. are public lands. Well, that is simply not true. The title to those nine parcels have been conveyed to OHA in lieu of hard cold cash. Basically, the equity in those nine parcels is the real measure for the trade made to OHA. The titled parcels are owned by OHA not the public. In essence, ownership of the land is now in the hands of the original and rightful owners... native Hawaiians whom the US Congress, the state and the Hawaii State Constitution have codified in their laws as part beneficiaries of the Public Land Trust. PLEASE REFER TO THE ATTACHED, "*A Brief historical record of The Hawaiian Commissions Home Act 1920, Hawaii Statehood 1959, Hawaii State Constitution (1978 amended), and the HRS Chapter 10 that codified the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.*

My opinion is that granting OHA the ability to carry out its purpose is an expression of legislative policy to satisfy the State's constitutional obligations to native Hawaiians under article XII, sections 4 and 6 of the Constitution. Furthermore, adopting SB 534 would be an affirmation of the statehood compact that the Territory of Hawaii promised to keep with the United States of America, USCODE 48C3 Sec. 4 [Compact with the United States]. The purpose of the compact was, "...for the betterment of the conditions of native Hawaiians, as defined in the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, 1920".

I attended OHA's January 8, 2025 new Kaka'ako plan presentation at the KUPU Kewalos facility and was energized by OHA's focus on developing truly affordable housing for resident occupants at the heart of its proposal. The following are key points that also resonated with me:

- OHA feels it can transform Kaka'ako Makai into a place that addresses the states most pressing needs while reserving the cultural and rich history of Hawai'i and the Hawaiian people that all people in Hawai'i will benefit from.
- OHA is committed to responsible development.
- OHA is committed to open parks, open spaces and public access.
- OHA is committed to creating a cultural gathering place for all the people of Hawai'i that balances culture and commerce while preseving the Kaka'ako Makai area so local residents can play, surf, fish and continue to experience the ocean recreation activities that make Hawai'i special.

**Bruce Lum**  
**99-546 Iwaiwa Street**  
**Aiea, Hawaii 96701**

Please pass SB 534 to help propel Oahu into affordable housing and out of our unaffordable housing crisis. OHA's proposal looks like a worthwhile shot at jump-starting us out of the unaffordable housing crisis that we have been suffering for decades.

Mahalo nui loa,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bruce Lum". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Bruce Lum  
brlum@mac.com

Attached: *"A Brief historical record of..."*

**Bruce Lum**  
**99-546 Iwaiwa Street**  
**Aiea, Hawaii 96701**

*A Brief historical record of The Hawaiian Commissions Home Act 1920, Hawaii Statehood 1959, Hawaii State Constitution (1978 amended), and HRS Chapter 10 that codified the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.*

## **HAWAII DECLARED A STATE**

USCODE 48C3 Pub. L. 86-3, Mar. 18, 1959, 73 Stat. 4 (August 21, 1959)

### **A few conditions of statehood**

USCODE 48C3 Sec. 1. [Declaration of acceptance, ratification, and confirmation of Constitution.]

That, subject to the provisions of this Act, and upon issuance of the proclamation required by section 7(c) of this Act, the State of Hawaii is hereby declared to be a State of the United States of America, is declared admitted into the Union on an equal footing with the other States in all respects whatever, and the constitution formed pursuant to the provisions of the Act of the Territorial Legislature of Hawaii entitled 'An Act to provide for a constitutional convention,...

USCODE 48C3 Sec. 3. [Constitution.]

The constitution of the State of Hawaii shall always be republican in form and shall not be repugnant to the Constitution of the United States and the principles of the Declaration of Independence...

...the adoption of a State constitution, and the forwarding of the same to the Congress of the United States, and appropriating money therefore, approved May 20, 1949 (Act 334, Session Laws of Hawaii, 1949), and adopted by a vote of the people of Hawaii in the election held on November 7, 1950, is hereby found to be republican in form and in conformity with the Constitution of the United States and the principles of the Declaration of Independence, and is hereby accepted, ratified, and confirmed.

USCODE 48C3 Sec. 4. [Compact with United States.]

As a compact with the United States relating to the management and disposition of the Hawaiian home lands, the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, 1920, as amended, shall be adopted as a provision of the Constitution of said State, as provided in section 7, subsection (b) of this Act, subject to amendment or repeal only with the consent of the United States, and in no other manner:...

**Bruce Lum**  
**99-546 Iwaiwa Street**  
**Aiea, Hawaii 96701**

## **PUBLIC LAND TRUST**

USCODE 48C3 "Sec. 5. [Title to property; land grants; reservation of lands; public school support; submerged lands.]"

(f) The lands granted to the State of Hawaii by subsection (b) of this section and public lands retained by the United States under subsections (c) and (d) and later conveyed to the State under subsection (e), together with the proceeds from the sale or other disposition of any such lands and the income therefrom, shall be held by said State as a public trust for the support of the public schools and other public educational institutions, for the betterment of the conditions of native Hawaiians, as defined in the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, 1920,

## **THE HAWAII STATE CONSTITUTION 1978,**

ARTICLE XII HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS, THE HAWAIIAN COMMISSIONS HOME ACT

([https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/hrscurrent/Vol01\\_Ch0001-0042F/05-Const/CONST\\_0012-0001.htm](https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/hrscurrent/Vol01_Ch0001-0042F/05-Const/CONST_0012-0001.htm))

**Section 1.** ...the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, 1920, enacted by the Congress, was adopted as a law of the State, subject to amendment or repeal by the legislature; provided that if and to the extent that the United States shall so require, such law shall be subject to amendment or repeal only with the consent of the United States and in no other manner; (from the Hawaii State Constitution of 1978)

**Section 2.** The State and its people do hereby accept, as a compact with the United States, or as conditions or trust provisions imposed by the United States, relating to the management and disposition of the Hawaiian home lands, the requirement that section 1 hereof be included in this constitution, in whole or in part, it being intended that the Act or acts of the Congress pertaining thereto shall be definitive of the extent and nature of such compact, conditions or trust provisions, as the case may be. The State and its people do further agree and declare that the spirit of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act looking to the continuance of the Hawaiian homes projects for the further rehabilitation of the Hawaiian race shall be faithfully carried out. [Ren and am Const Con 1978 and election Nov 7, 1978]

**Section 4.** The lands granted to the State of Hawaii by Section 5(b) of the Admission Act and pursuant to Article XVI, Section 7, of the State Constitution, excluding therefrom lands defined as "available lands" by Section 203 of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, 1920, as amended, shall be held by the State as a public trust for native Hawaiians and the general public.

**Section 5.** There is hereby established an Office of Hawaiian Affairs. The Office of Hawaiian Affairs shall hold title to all the real and personal property now or hereafter set

**Bruce Lum**  
**99-546 Iwaiwa Street**  
**Aiea, Hawaii 96701**

aside or conveyed to it which shall be held in trust for native Hawaiians and Hawaiians...

## **OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS**

codified by Hawaii State Legislature in 1980;

( [https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/hrscurrent/Vol01\\_Ch0001-0042F/HRS0010/HRS\\_0010-0013\\_0005.htm](https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/hrscurrent/Vol01_Ch0001-0042F/HRS0010/HRS_0010-0013_0005.htm))

### **HRS [§10-1] Declaration of purpose.**

(a) The people of the State of Hawaii and the United States of America as set forth and approved in the Admission Act, established a public trust which includes among other responsibilities, betterment of conditions for native Hawaiians. The people of the State of Hawaii reaffirmed their solemn trust obligation and responsibility to native Hawaiians and furthermore declared in the state constitution that there be an office of Hawaiian affairs to address the needs of the aboriginal class of people of Hawaii.

(b) It shall be the duty and responsibility of all state departments and instrumentalities of state government providing services and programs which affect native Hawaiians and Hawaiians to actively work toward the goals of this chapter and to cooperate with and assist wherever possible the office of Hawaiian affairs. [L 1979, c 196, pt of §2]

### **HRS §10-3 Purpose of the office.**

The purposes of the office of Hawaiian affairs include:

(1) The betterment of conditions of native Hawaiians. A pro rata portion of all funds derived from the public land trust shall be funded in an amount to be determined by the legislature for this purpose, and shall be held and used solely as a public trust for the betterment of the conditions of native Hawaiians. For the purpose of this chapter, the public land trust shall be all proceeds and income from the sale, lease, or other disposition of lands ceded to the United States by the Republic of Hawaii under the joint resolution of annexation, approved July 7, 1898 (30 Stat. 750), or acquired in exchange for lands so ceded, and conveyed to the State of Hawaii by virtue of section 5(b) of the

Act of March 18, 1959 (73 Stat. 4, the Admissions Act), (excluding therefrom lands and all proceeds and income from the sale, lease, or disposition of lands defined as "available lands" by section 203 of the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, 1920, as amended), and all proceeds and income from the sale, lease, or other disposition of lands retained by the United States under sections 5(c) and 5(d) of the Act of March 18, 1959, later conveyed to the State under section 5(e);

(2) The betterment of conditions of Hawaiians;

**Bruce Lum**  
**99-546 Iwaiwa Street**  
**Aiea, Hawaii 96701**

(3) Serving as the principal public agency in this State responsible for the performance, development, and coordination of programs and activities relating to native Hawaiians and Hawaiians; except that the Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, 1920, as amended, shall be administered by the Hawaiian homes commission;

(4) Assessing the policies and practices of other agencies impacting on native Hawaiians and Hawaiians, and conducting advocacy efforts for native Hawaiians and Hawaiians;

(5) Applying for, receiving, and disbursing, grants and donations from all sources for native Hawaiian and Hawaiian programs and services; and

(6) Serving as a receptacle for reparations. [L 1979, c 196, pt of §2; am L 1990, c 304, §§4, 16]

**Use of public land trust proceeds.**

HRS Chapter 10 §10-13.5; Twenty per cent of all funds derived from the public land trust, described in section 10-3, shall be expended by the office, as defined in section 10-2, for the purposes of this chapter. [L 1980, c 273, §1; am L 1990, c 304, §§7, 16]

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 10:10:06 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Bernard Nunies	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a resident of Kaka'ako, I am testifying in **STORNG OPPOSITION** to have residential development on Kaka'ako Makai. HCDA and prior legislators already supported **NO** residential development in the Makai area as we already have too many high rises in the area and more are on its way. It is already too late for the Mauka side where I live, but it is not too late for Kaka'ako Makai. For any development on Kaka'ako Makai, I am also requesting an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) be performed to ensure any construction on the Makai side is being responsibly and safely constructed.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 10:51:15 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Scott Amona	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

*Scott W. Kekama Amona*

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 11:22:14 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Alapake Heanu Jr	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richardson, & Chang & members of the Senate Committees on Water & Land, Hawaiian Affairs & Housing.

I STRONGLY SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka'ako Makai as originally envisioned when OHA & the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.

Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka'ako Makai Lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, & generate revenue to expand programs & services including loans & grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.

Finally, SB534 helps address Hawaii's critical need for affordable & workforce housing by giving local families & essential workers the opportunity to live, work, & thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce Housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawaii. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawaii's median income & this bill does just that. At the same time, the bill maintains existing opens space along the waterfront & dedicates funding for public infrastructure & more public access.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities & fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawaii.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Alapake Heanu Jr

alapakeheanu@yahoo.com

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/26/2025 11:52:18 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Todd Yoshizawa	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose bil SB534

I continue to oppose the building of large 400ft buildings on the makai side of Ala Moana blvd. Why would we want to add to a concrete jungle and encroach on our last piece of beautiful seaside in Honolulu. Please just follow the building restrictions. We all need to follow the law protecting our Hawai'i and stop looking for ways to circumvent the system. We have put a lot of thought and effort into the rules and regulations to protect our Hawai'i. We do not enough sewer, power, parking, or roads to support the mass amount of people to live in this small limited area we know as kakaako makai.

Aloha,

Todd Yoshizawa

Kaneohe, Hawaii

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 1:10:24 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Wayne Tanaka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in support of SB534 to help address our housing needs while also providing long-needed funds for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 1:24:22 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
RANDAL LUI-KWAN	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am opposed to the selling of public lands to private entities. Changing the zoning to residential would mean the selling of these properties to individual owners, mostly wealthy and often times foreign buyers.

I am also against the raising of height limits in Kakaako Makai as that would create a wall of high rises on both sides of Ala Moana Blvd, much like driving up and down Bishop and Alakea Street.

Providing gathering and culture enriching spaces, much like the Kakaako Master Plan that all stakeholders including OHA approved of, prior to the land transfer would be more desirable in one of the last oceanfront properties in urban Oahu.

I have concerns about the impact of drilling down through brown lands, into the water table causing water quality issues and negative impacts to the coral reefs and aquatic ecosystem.

I understand the need that landowners want to be pono, to do the right thing. There are multiple ways this can be accomplished. Generating revenue is off public land by selling condos off to the wealthy is not pono. Stewarding of these valuable public spaces for the benefit of all Hawaii is much more righteous.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 6:52:52 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
P Hauoli'ipo Wright	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka'ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka'ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai'i's critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai'i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai'i's median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai'i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

- P Hau'oli ipo Wright

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 8:06:32 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Richelle Kim	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

*Richelle Kim*

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 8:20:16 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
N. Uilani Barrett-Tau	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Noel U‘ilani Barrett-Tau

uilanibt@gmail.com

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 8:20:19 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
James Long	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Senators,

I am submitting testimony in support of SB534 and ask that you support and pass this critical legislation.

Mahalo,

James Long

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 8:35:38 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
SEAN SPENCER	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB 534. Nuff said!!

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 8:48:49 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
John Montgomery	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

John Montgomery

75 Kihapai, #10

Kailua, HI 96734

360-774-3134



Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing  
Tuesday, January 28, 2024 at 9:00 a.m.

By  
Charles “Chip” Fletcher, PhD  
Interim Dean  
School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology  
University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa

SB 534 – RELATING TO THE RELATING TO THE HAWAII COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
AUTHORITY.

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing,

My name is Dr. Chip Fletcher, and I am currently the Interim Dean of the School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa but I am testifying in my personal capacity as a private individual **IN SUPPORT of SB534** for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.
- According to our sea level rise models, it is more probable than not that OHA’s parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai. will experience flooding due to sea level rise in the form of storm drain backflow, compound flooding (rain at high tide), and groundwater inundation by the end of the century.
- However, our models indicate the level of flooding does not threaten transportation corridors unless under extraordinary precipitation conditions (e.g., tropical cyclone, kona storm).
- Our models also indicate that Kaka‘ako Makai is no more vulnerable to flooding than for the thousands of parcels across the full extent of Kaka‘ako/Waikiki and Iwilei.
- Flooding related to sea level rise can be mitigated with podium construction, road raising, and pumped drainage; similar to that used in Miami Beach today. OHA has an opportunity to demonstrate appropriate development in a sea level rise hazard zone.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai'i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai'i's median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai'i.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to provide testimony.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 8:53:27 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Craig Jerome	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I write in strong opposition to the proposed bill. The restrictions on residential use existed when OHA accepted these lands in settlement of their claims. They cannot now claim buyer's remorse as an excuse to override the will of the people, who wish to keep these lands for the use of the public. I hope that the legislature will see this bill as what it is -- an attempt to profit off of public lands disguised as something else.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 8:59:52 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Tiare Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Tiare Smith

email: Lahela79@yahoo.com

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 9:01:48 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Davielynn Briones	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. When OHA received the Kakaako land it was presented with the valuation for residential properties. Therefore it is unclear as to WHY OHA has received no support from the Board to move forward with building residential properties. It is time to make it right and to allow OHA the capability to provide for our people. Allowing for residential units should also not be limited in height just to appease the developers/owners on the mauka side who have capitalized on the location and built multi-million dollar units for NON-HAWAII RESIDENTS. It is time to start prioritizing Native Hawaiians and Hawaii residents! Please do what is pono. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.



**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 9:10:00 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
James E Raymond	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support OHA

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 9:17:53 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Stephen E Barnes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Steve Barnes, Jr.

2712 Kaaha Street

Honolulu, HI 96826

SBarnes808@yahoo.com

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 9:15:57 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Davianna McGregor	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing.

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012. **THIS IS LONG OVERDUE.**
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians. **THE LEGISLATURE AND GOVERNOR NEEDS TO PASS THIS BILL TO FULFILL ITS OUTSTANDING OBLIGATION FOR BACK OWED MONIES TO KANAKA ‘ŌIWI.**
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate. **THIS WILL HELP TO PROVIDE A BALANCE IN SOCIAL CLASSES IN KAKAAKO.**
- In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

ALOHA.

- Davianna McGregor
- davianna.mcgregor@gmail.com
- 1942 Naio St.
- Honolulu, HI 96817

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 9:24:03 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jeffrey K. Vigilla	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Respectfully,

Jeffrey Vigilla

808.753.5705

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 9:29:47 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Tristie Licoan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Tristie Licoan fully support this bill as the labor workforce is in high demand and highly impacted by housing availability in both rural & metro areas of our islands, not only on Oahu, but statewide. It is with good hopes that respectful developers can work cohesive with our communities, state, county agencies to help Hawaii's economy & residents, Kama'aina stay home in the islands and not have to worry about housing, its criteria to attain a place to live, through an achievable qualification program.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 9:31:50 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
William Speed	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

27 Jan 2024

Haisai and Aloha,

I support SB 534 !

A. L.O. H. A.

all the best, w speed

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 9:36:30 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Cheryl Bellamy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 9:42:34 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Aurene Padilla	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

ALOHA e, o Aurene ko'u inoa. I am strongly opposed to SB 534. OHA should NOT be allowed to overturn the law restricting residential development in Kakaalo Makai nor should they be able to double the height restriction from 200 feet to 400 feet.

I am born and raised in Hawaii and spent my early summers playing in the Ala Moana area. In my teens and early 20s I spent a lot of time in the Ward and Kaka'ako area. In my 30s and 40s I brought my family to the area. I am now in my 50s and I surf at Kaka'ako. Sadly, the area no longer looks like home, and as I gaze up at the highrises that obstruct the sky, I wonder if any locals inhabit these monstrosities. Home no longer looks like home, and we must put an END to the over development and pimping of our 'aina. A'ole more development!!!

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 9:56:30 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Gordon B. Lindsey	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in favor of SB534 because there is a shortage in providing funding and homes for native Hawaiians. This development in Kaka'ako is necessary and will not have any environmental impact to our aia. Private developers are already building multiple 43 story buildings just a few yards away from this proposed site. Lets stop the chatter and allow the Hawaiians to move forward and proceed with this project. Mahalo.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 9:58:50 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kai Jacobs	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Aloha Senator Inouye, Richards, Chang, and committee members,**

***I am testifying in strong opposition to have residential on Kaka'ako Makai. We have too many high rises already in the area and more are on its way. We need to protect this special land, the last oceanfront land on the South shore of Oahu from becoming another Waikiki. It is already too late for Mauka side of Kaka'ako but it is not too late for Kaka'ako Makai. Let's protect these open spaces for our children and our children's children.***

***Mahalo***

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 10:00:10 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
James Rodrigues	Testifying for RODRIGUES OHANA	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

ACCESS TO HAWAIIAN LANDS HAVE BEEN DENIED TOO LONG. HOUSING IS KEY FOR HAWAIIAN FAMILIES. MAKE THESE AFFORDABLE ACCESSABLE NOW!

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 10:08:10 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Heather McVay	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 10:15:16 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Regina Gregory	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support OHA's ability to build housing at Kaka'ako Makai, but:

1. The definition of "affordable" as 140% of AMI is far too high.
2. 40-story buildings is too tall.
3. Rental housing is not mentioned at all.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 10:16:13 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Hi'ilani Luke	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka'ako Makai, as mutually agreed in 2012.
- Through raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, OHA will have the ability to maximize the value of Kaka'ako Makai lands and generate funds to expand programs and services that directly benefit Kanaka Maoli.
- Sb534 addresses Hawai'i's critical need for affordable and workforce housing in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about our housing crisis here in Hawai'i. We need to build more affordable housing for the people of Hawai'i. This bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and increase in public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai'i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 10:17:21 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Libby Tomar	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This supports SB 534. We need more housing for our Hawaiians and there shouldn't be any barriers to building where the land is owned by OHA. There are high rise condos across the street to it's all part of the landscape. Just because the other highrises are Howard Hughes and owned by the super rich should not give them the right to stop high rises within their view planes.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 10:20:41 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jennifer Pang	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose the development of residential housing in Kaka'ako Makai. The area already has an overabundance of high-rises, with more planned for the future. We must preserve this unique and precious oceanfront land—the last of its kind on Oahu's South Shore—from turning into another Waikiki. While the Mauka side of Kaka'ako has already been heavily developed, it's not too late to protect Kaka'ako Makai. Let's safeguard these open spaces for the well-being of our children and future generations.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 10:39:15 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Travis pang	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:


**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 10:46:17 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Byron Holmes	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Opposed to any development outside the existing limits set by the city and HCDA currently. The importance of preserving the shoreline in Kaka'ako for the people is of paramount importance given the little shoreline left on the south shore. The mistakes made in Waikiki should not be repeated in Kaka'ako where we have the ability to lower high and density Makai of Ala Moana Blvd.

Furthermore, OHA agreed to take land in trade for debt the State owed and knew full well the restrictions and valuation of the land in question. To now declare something else outside of the settlement, is not only a violation of those terms, but an admission by the trustees that they failed on their due diligence to the people they represented. This in itself, is the true issue, not OHA's push to have land use restrictions changed after the fact. The only thing that should be evaluated is the settlement agreement and what can be done to improve the land to improve future generations.

In conclusion, there are many options that OHA can pursue presently that will help fulfill it's obligation, which should be the focus. Attempting to back door an agreed upon deal is kniving, underhanded and reckless. It does not represent the Hawaiian community well and further tarnishes the reputation of OHA as an entity.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 10:47:38 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Greg Crawford	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm am submitting testimony **in support of SB534.**

**It only makes common sense to provide essential housing to the essential workers who are being priced out of affordable living spaces in Honolulu. Please support this Bill.**

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 10:49:18 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
SHARON AKO	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I am in support of SB534. Passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai'i. I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai'i for Hawaiians. We need to build more affordable housing for Hawaiian residents making less than 140% of Hawai'i's median income. This bill will do just that.

Bill SB534 will help address Hawai'i's critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving Hawaiian families and essential local workers the opportunity to live, work and thrive through its workforce housing mandate.

Mahalo, Sharon Ako

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 10:50:11 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
susan hassett	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I believe that SB534 is a good bill. Here are my concerns.

OHA is often considered the ugly stepchild of Hawaii and yet it is one of the most important legislative branches of the state. I think it is terrible that the OHA has to go through so much trouble to get anything done.

That said here are my strong recommendations-

You say the development goes to the makai, shoreline; what is the setback because of disappearing/changing shorelines/climate? I believe there should be a park area in the front as a protection buffer zone and it should be at least 500-700 ft deep.

NO EXCEPTIONS for setback/open space.

You say the building can be 400 ft tall. That is approximately 30-35 stories. This is entirely too tall for this particular area. Most "local native Hawaiians" will not want to live in a steel box. I believe that the density is too much, and that it should be less than 10 stories tall which is approximately 120 ft. Commercial stories are approximately 12 ft and residential stories are approximately 10 ft FYI.

You use the term owner occupant. What does this really mean in the 21st century? I believe that owner occupant should be a minimum of 5 years. I also believe that Habitat for Humanity could be involved in the building of this structure because it gives people pride in ownership. They put in sweat equity and therefore learn a skill and also appreciate their space. We have a very strong Habitat for Humanity foundation here in the state. Perhaps looking at some of the designs considered in Maui at this point would also be good to integrate.

You also mention annual income... I see a nebulous figure of 140%? I believe that the annual income should be stated as less than combined of \$200,000 / year, by the time this structure is ready for occupancy, and no more than a 2% increase of annual income requirements. If you are using less than that I am also okay with that but I absolutely believe that it should not be more than that. 2025, Teachers make \$30,000 - \$50,000, for example. Health workers probably make about the same unless they have a 5-6-7 year degree.

The project overall sounds good, I am hoping that it will have spacious spaces and not just little boxes for living in, does anyone have a picture of the internal structure itself and are there park, walking, play and bike areas incorporated into the plan? After all, isn't this supposed to be for local, native Hawaiians who love the outdoors and would definitely appreciate it.

Mahalo nui loa for your hard dedication and work.

Susan

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 10:56:22 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nanea Lo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

me ke aloha ‘āina,

Nanea Lo, Mō‘ili‘ili, HI 96826

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 11:28:40 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Eileen McKee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly support SB534 relating to much needed affordable housing for our island communities.

Mahalo for considering my testimony.

Eileen McKee, Kihei

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 11:33:16 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dean Nakamaru	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

***I am testifying in strong opposition to have residential on Kaka'ako Makai. We have too many high rises already in the area and more are on its way. We need to protect this special land, the last oceanfront land on the South shore of Oahu from becoming another Waikiki. It is already too late for Mauka side of Kaka'ako but it is not too late for Kaka'ako Makai. Let's protect these open spaces for our children and our children's children.***

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 11:35:38 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Makana Hicks-Goo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Senators,

We have a dire need to provide housing suitable for local families. Allowing OHA to build here is perhaps one small step towards solving that issue.

I urge you to pass this bill and to consider amendments to it such that the workforce housing created by it remain affordable in perpetuity by requiring it be sold with a deeded restriction or held in trust.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 11:59:34 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Napua Froman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This seems a positive effort to provide affordable housing to people living and working in the area.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 12:03:33 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Wayne Kaiwi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha

My name is Wayne Kaiwi, Native Hawaiian Community Advocate, writing in favor and with strong support of Senate Bill 534 which aims to establish affordable workforce housing at Kaka'ako Makai. As a kanaka resident of Hawai'i, I am acutely aware of the housing crisis that our community faces. This legislation is not only timely but essential for the well being of our local families and the sustainability of our economy. The importance of affordable housing cannot be overstated, especially for our essential workers, educators, healthcare professionals, first responders and others who make up the backbone of our society. These individuals work tirelessly to insure the safety, education and health of our communities, yet many are being priced out of the very neighborhoods they serve. By supporting SB534, we are taking a vital step towards providing these essential workers with the housing they need to live and thrive in our beloved State of Hawai'i.

Furthermore, I am particularly encouraged by the cultural integrity aspect of this bill. The provision to fund a Hawaiian cultural center will create a space for education and community engagement, allowing us to preserve and promote our rich cultural heritage. This center will not only benefit native Hawaiians but will also enhance the cultural fabric of our entire community.

Additionally, the focus on owner occupied housing aligns with our local values and insures the neighborhoods we build reflect our identity and aspirations. It is crucial that we create a thriving community that supports our local working families and fosters a sense of belonging, not just for today but for generations to follow.

In closing, I strongly urge you to support Senate Bill 534. This legislation is undoubtedly a true pathway to a better future for ALL of us in Hawai'i, particularly for the Native Hawaiian community. Together, OHA and the community can secure a future for our local people to have the opportunity to live, work and thrive in the place they were born and raised. For those bold enough to support sincere and meaningful change that affect the daily lives of Native Hawaiians, this is it!

Me ke aloha pumehana,

Wayne Kaiwi, Native Hawaiian & Community Advocate

91-1591 Ulaula Loop Ewa Beach, HI 96706 (808) 861-  
2076 kaiwientertainment@yahoo.com

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 12:09:43 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
jayson fukumoto	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill is attempting to prematurely amend current law without any evidence to support. It masks its true intentions as a quick money grab that has been in contention since 2012. For the past 13 years, OHA has done nothing with this land and continues to lobby year after year. During this period, there has been no EPA testing, no plan B outside a 400' tower, and continuously ignores comments by local residents and local users of parks and open recreational space. They continue to seek empathy by eluding to "blocking rich people's view" which many locals like myself could care less if "rich people's view" are blocked. What locals care about are TRUE affordable housing, access to open space in an already congested downtown, and clean ocean waters.

OHA is using any other developer model to get the most bang for their buck. I would support this bill if EPA testing had been passed and OHA subsidized part of Hawaiian's cost. For example, OHA did not provide any data of how many Hawaiians and locals qualify for loan, such as meeting the bank's Debt-to-income ratio. OHA in this arena is simply another developing company masked as an entity to support Hawaiians and locals. Mr. Kahele even claimed this would benefit Civil Servants AKA Government workers to garner public Union support to sway the House to agree with the Senate. Applaud to Mr. Kahele as I do not see any wrongdoing in this action as this may be true, but a stretch of the truth at best.

I support Hawaiians and their agenda and hope nothing but the best. We all have friends that are Hawaiian and respect their culture and history. However, this Bill is not the way. This Bill should not represent OHA and Hawaiian advancement. This Bill smells like Capitalism at its finest camouflaged as supporting Hawai'i's housing market fiasco. 50% of this Bill will not benefit locals, rather transplants and foreign investors. Low-income Hawaiians and locals receive the shaft once again in the insatiable quest for

Reasons I oppose this bill:

1. Built on a landfill. Does not currently pass an EPA standards and review. No review completed in past 17 years according to their town hall earlier this year.
2. Benefits do not truly serve Hawaiians and locals. There is ZERO subsidizing for Hawaiians by OHA such as loan forgiveness or discounted home prices for Hawaiians paid for by OHA. If this is restricted by law, there was no information at the town hall regarding this.

3. 50% of housing can be bought by Transplants and foreign investors. As a local who has been here for four generations, many are not pleased with the number of transplants in the Kakaako/Honolulu area. They come and go and do not pay State income tax and do not provide community service to the areas they use. Typical stuff, all take and here for the clout of social media. Obviously not all but enough to reinforce the stereotype.

4. 17 years of nothing on these parcels of land. I am not Hawaiian and benefit nothing from OHA and DHHL. The advancement of Hawaiians using taxpayer monies that have accounted to nothing but lobbying and promoting victim mentalities. It is time for OHA to build something rather than waste their time lobbying the Leg year after year with the same result while seeking empathy from non-Hawaiians for their support. It's time to move on to Plan B.

5. Power struggle. OHA stated at the town hall earlier this year that their plan is to control the Leg. While I respect and agree that going through the Leg is the most effective way to push your agenda, this is not the Hawai'i way. This is capitalism masked as community cohesiveness. There is no Aloha in this bill, only Capitalism. This benefits only a select few at the expense of many. If this was a Haole or Asian agency pushing this Bill, locals and Hawaiians would be up in arms. No difference here strictly regarding this Bill.

6. Too many important details not addressed. I did not get a good feeling this plan will be executed in good faith to benefit Hawaiians and locals. Not enough information is being provided to questions asked. No contingency plans, no willingness to compromise by OHA. This plan appears flimsy and changing state law on a flimsy plan does not equate effectiveness.

Mahalo,

- Local surfer and current resident outside Kakaako area.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 12:16:47 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kevin Fung	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

***I am testifying in strong opposition to have residential on Kaka'ako Makai. We have too many high rises already in the area and more are on its way. We need to protect this special land, the last oceanfront land on the South shore of Oahu from becoming another Waikiki. It is already too late for Mauka side of Kaka'ako but it is not too late for Kaka'ako Makai. Let's protect these open spaces for our children and our children's children***

Douglas Meller  
2615 Aaliamanu Place  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813  
douglasmeller@gmail.com

**Testimony Opposing SB 534 Relating to the Hawaii Community Development Authority**

Submitted to Senate Committee on Water and Land

Senate Committee on Hawaiian Affairs and

Senate Committee on Housing

Wednesday, 1 PM, January 29, 2025, State Capitol Auditorium & Videoconference Hearing

I oppose SB 534 but support appropriation of public funds owed to OHA. The State should do what it promised. SB 534 is a misguided attempt to remedy OHA's mistake of accepting property in lieu of funds owed to OHA. I think the politicians who run OHA made an enormous mistake when they accepted property in lieu of funds owed to OHA. For the same reasons that the State rarely realizes the so-called "fair market value" of public lands under BLNR jurisdiction, it seems unlikely that OHA will realize the alleged "fair market value" of property under OHA jurisdiction.

If SB 354 passes I predict that someone will file a lawsuit which alleges that legislation which establishes specific requirements for specified parcels of OHA property is a "special law". Article XI, Section 5 of the Hawaii Constitution prohibits enactment of a "special" law which only applies to public lands at one specific location and nowhere else in the State. This Constitutional requirement is explained in the Attorney General's February 1, 2022 testimony on HB 1788.

I also oppose SB 534 because it would be economically infeasible to develop "affordable" housing on property contaminated by leaking county fuel tanks or landfills. Although I oppose SB 534, I support appropriation of public funds to subsidize development and price/rent controls for "affordable" housing at appropriate (i.e. non-contaminated) locations. As long as there is a housing shortage, unregulated market-priced housing inevitably will become "unaffordable" for most Hawaii residents.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 12:59:55 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sherry Broder	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

## Comments:

Aloha Chairs and Committee Members, I strongly support this bill. OHA has demonstrated that it has an excellent plan to provide housing for Native Hawaiians and other working people in our community and to develop the properties to be environmentally conscious and aesthetically pleasing. Kaka`ako today is full of numerous high rises and it almost seems like a new one is breaking ground every day! It would be fair and just to allow OHA to do the same, especially since none of the other projects can match OHA's excellent plans. You have the opportunity to pass this legislation which will greatly improve the Honolulu waterfront and provide housing for those who are priced out of the market today. Mahalo!

Jan 27, 2025

Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, Housing  
415 Beretania Street  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka'ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka'ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai'i's critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

No one can deny there is a housing crisis in the Pae 'Aina. There hasn't been an election cycle that didn't talk about building more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai'i's median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands. Considering all of Kakaako housing is unaffordable, there are no neighbors or communities with all the investment properties around the urban core this bill seeks to create neighbors and housing secure communities for people that live and work here.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai'i.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Line-Noue Memea Kruse  
[line.kruse@gmail.com](mailto:line.kruse@gmail.com)  
Hilo, Hawai'i

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 1:21:19 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Brenner Danielson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs and Members of the Committees,

I strongly support this bill as it addresses critical needs for affordable housing in Kaka‘ako. This measure provides a clear path to alleviating housing shortages, particularly for our essential workforce who are vital to sustaining our community.

Currently, the land in Kaka‘ako Makai is dominated by dirt lots, private commercial parking, and industrial blight, contributing nothing to the community and leaving the area uninviting and underutilized. Redevelopment presents an opportunity to transform this neglected space into a vibrant, inclusive area with housing, amenities, and green spaces for everyone to enjoy.

By balancing development with affordability and community-focused priorities, this legislation represents a thoughtful and forward-looking approach to urban planning. I urge you to support this measure for the long-term benefit of Hawai‘i’s residents and future generations.

Mahalo for your consideration.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 1:27:04 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Rev. Dr. Robert W. Nelson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a close friend of a teacher here on Maui who is forced to live in inadequate quarters due to extremely high rent and poor salary, I strongly urge the passage of SB534.

## **Written Testimony in Opposition to S.B. NO. 534**

Relating to **Residential Development in Kakaako Makai**

Monday, January 27, 2025

**To:** Senator Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Chair, Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee

**From:** Ronnie Inagaki

**Subject:** **Opposition to S.B. NO. 534 – Residential Development in Kakaako Makai**

I am submitting this testimony in strong opposition to S.B. NO. 534, which proposes to allow residential development in the Kakaako Makai area, raises the height limit for buildings to 400 feet, and prioritizes workforce housing for essential workers. While the bill aims to address Hawaii's severe housing crisis and generate revenue for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA), it raises significant concerns regarding cultural preservation, environmental impacts, and the long-term well-being of Native Hawaiians and the greater community.

---

### **Key Reasons for Opposition**

#### **1. Cultural and Historical Concerns**

Kakaako Makai holds immense cultural and historical significance for Native Hawaiians as a coastal area deeply tied to traditional Hawaiian practices and values. The proposed residential high-rise developments are incompatible with these values, as they prioritize economic and density considerations over cultural preservation. Development of high-rise buildings in such a sacred area would further alienate Native Hawaiians from their ancestral lands, undermining the very purpose of OHA's mission to "better the conditions of Native Hawaiians."

#### **2. Environmental and Visual Impacts**

The proposed 400-foot building height limit for residential developments would drastically alter the character of Kakaako Makai. High-rise developments in this area would:

- Obstruct ocean and mountain views cherished by residents and visitors alike.
- Increase the strain on infrastructure, including water, sewage, and roads.
- Potentially degrade coastal ecosystems through construction, runoff, and pollution.

This urbanization could diminish Kakaako Makai's role as a recreational and scenic area, which is currently enjoyed by the public.

#### **3. Native Hawaiian Needs Are Not Fully Addressed**

Native Hawaiians are the most disproportionately affected group in Hawaii's housing crisis, facing higher rates of poverty, homelessness, and overcrowding. While S.B. NO. 534 requires that 50% plus one of the residential units be reserved for households earning 140% of the area median income (AMI) or less, this threshold does not adequately serve the needs of low-income Native

Hawaiian families. Many Native Hawaiians fall far below this income level and would likely be excluded from these housing opportunities. A more targeted approach, such as prioritizing single-family homes or townhomes specifically for low-income Native Hawaiian families, would better align with the constitutional mandate to serve Native Hawaiians.

#### **4. Community Opposition to High-Rises**

High-rise developments are often met with strong opposition from the community, especially in areas like Kakaako Makai, which have been designated for public use, recreation, and open spaces. Allowing residential high-rises would set a dangerous precedent for future overdevelopment, eroding public trust and access to cherished coastal spaces.

#### **5. Alternative Development: Clusters of Single-Family Homes or Townhomes**

Rather than allowing high-rise residential development in Kakaako Makai, I propose an alternative development model consisting of clusters of single-family homes or townhomes. This approach offers the following advantages:

- **Cultural Appropriateness:** Single-family homes or townhomes better align with Native Hawaiian values, fostering a deeper connection to the land (aina) and allowing for multi-generational living, which is central to Hawaiian culture.
- **Community Building:** A clustered community of homes can include shared spaces such as parks, gardens, and cultural centers, fostering a sense of belonging and prioritizing community well-being over density.
- **Environmental and Visual Considerations:** A lower-density development would preserve the visual and environmental integrity of Kakaako Makai, avoiding the aesthetic and ecological disruptions caused by high-rises.
- **Native Hawaiian Housing Needs:** Clustered housing developments can specifically target low-income Native Hawaiian families, providing stable housing solutions that are affordable and culturally appropriate.

While this alternative model would result in lower housing unit density compared to high-rises, it would better fulfill OHA's mission to serve Native Hawaiians while respecting the community and environment of Kakaako Makai.

#### **6. Revenue Generation vs. Public Benefit**

One of the primary motivations behind S.B. NO. 534 is to maximize revenue for OHA by allowing high-density, high-rise residential developments. However, this focus on revenue generation risks overshadowing the broader public interest, including cultural preservation, environmental sustainability, and equitable access to affordable housing. A clustered housing model could still generate revenue for OHA through long-term leaseholds or targeted sales while prioritizing the needs of Native Hawaiians and the community.

#### **7. Legal and Constitutional Concerns**

Act 15 (2012) conveyed the Kakaako Makai lands to OHA to fulfill the State's constitutional obligations to Native Hawaiians. However, the act maintained specific zoning restrictions prohibiting residential development on these parcels. Lifting these restrictions for high-rise developments could face legal challenges, as it may be seen as inconsistent with the original intent of Act 15 and the public trust doctrine.

---

### **Proposed Recommendations**

If the committee moves forward with S.B. NO. 534, I respectfully request that the bill be amended to include the following considerations:

1. **Lower-Density Housing:** Replace high-rise developments with a mix of clustered single-family homes, townhomes, and low-rise multi-family units targeted specifically for Native Hawaiians and low-income families.
  2. **Preservation of Public Spaces:** Ensure that sufficient open spaces, parks, and recreational areas remain accessible to the public and are not compromised by residential development.
  3. **Affordability Adjustments:** Lower the affordability threshold to include families earning below 100% of the AMI, with specific allocations for Native Hawaiians.
  4. **Community Engagement:** Require meaningful and inclusive community engagement throughout the planning and development process to ensure that community voices are heard and incorporated into the final plans.
  5. **Cultural and Environmental Protections:** Mandate that all developments adhere to strict cultural and environmental impact assessments, with input from Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners and environmental experts.
- 

### **Conclusion**

While I recognize the importance of addressing Hawaii's housing crisis and providing OHA with resources to support Native Hawaiians, S.B. NO. 534 in its current form prioritizes economic development and high-density urbanization over cultural preservation, community well-being, and environmental sustainability. By pursuing an alternative model of clustered single-family homes or townhomes, we can better balance these competing interests and create a development that truly serves Native Hawaiians and the broader community. I urge you to oppose S.B. NO. 534 in its current form and to consider alternative approaches that align with the long-term interests of Native Hawaiians, the environment, and the community.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Ronnie Inagaki

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 1:52:55 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Bobby Camara	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I write in general Support of development at Ka‘ākaukukui, adjacent to Kewalo Basin.

I urge mindfulness and information shared with The Public concerning sea level rise, the impacts of salt water on building foundations, and toxins contained in the soil from materials that were dumped to create the land.

Too, please use plain language to inform us about "affordable housing", "workforce housing", and income requirements needed for purchase. Tell us about actual monthly HOA fees. Tell us plainly.

I urge thoughtful, creative design, so windows can be opened, so deep shade can be created, so buildings and units don't end up as cheap, stacked boxes.

Mahalo.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 1:54:09 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Avalon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support SB534 because it will provide OHA with the authority to develop residential housing, which will help create a more affordable workforce housing situation. Affordable housing is crucial to allow folks who are Kanaka 'Ōiwi or local to work and remain within the islands.

Mahalo,

Avalon Paradea

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 2:01:33 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Riley Bond	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support SB534 because it recognizes the importance of prioritizing local residents who are of this land and who keep our community functioning. The days of catering to outsiders and tourists, who extract from our land without giving back, must end. With the Native Hawaiian diaspora growing, we need to take swift action to protect our people and land. Kakaako is now overrun with luxury developments and part-time homes, leaving locals without dignified housing. It is essential that we provide affordable housing for those who work here and who deserve to live in the places they help sustain. SB534 takes a critical step toward correcting this imbalance and ensuring that our communities thrive.

Mahalo,

Riley Bond

Lahiana, Maui

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 2:43:51 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
catherine iwami	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am doing this testimony for public hearing SB534.

There are enough buildings in Kakaako! How much more of paradise in Hawaii needs to be shamefully destroyed? When is enough - enough?

I totally agree an environmental study of the property being considered for housing development especially a high rise should be done - regardless of what is going to be built there for the health and protection of the aina, people and the ocean.

Any more housing should be no more than 10 stories and affordable housing. How many of those condos in the Kakaako area are for the local residents and affordable?

Consider the infrastructure of electricity and plumbing. What about rising sea levels in 10-20 years? Where will these residents do their grocery shopping and send their keiki to school?

Is this truly a neighborhood community?

I truly hope you consider this in saving another piece of landmark land.

Be true to your aina, Catherine Iwami

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 3:14:25 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I am testifying in strong opposition to have residential in Kakaako Makai.

This bill is in the guise of affordable housing, but it clearly dictates that only a certain percentage will be allocated to households at a certain income level. It does not clearly define what would happen to the remaining units. Will it be solely for locals? What is the criteria when selling/leasing the other units? Is it not possible for the entire development to be affordable housing as opposed to just 50% plus one?

This proposes a Kakaako Makai Association Fee charge from all residential developments but does not clearly define the amount and if there are restrictions of increasing this fee in the future and if the residents have a voice in the matter of what project/service is justified by the fee. The same goes for the lease, these is no definitive amount and regulation about the possibility of increase. What is marketed as affordable now can easily change in the future.

More importantly, the area used to be a landfill. It's concerning that OHA has not provided an Environmental Impact Statement about how they propose to construct these residential developments in a safe manner. This is an oceanfront, dumping all that waste to the ocean will have a lasting irreversible effect.

This sounds too good to be true and sadly it does. There's too much ambiguity and little concern for the environmental impact this will cause. Currently OHA stands to profit from this with little regard and plan of how it will benefit the locals and the environment.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 3:28:26 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Dawn Yoshimura	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I do NOT support this proposed change of the conditions that OHA received these lands. You cannot just 'change the rules' when it doesn't suit your interests. If there were already concerns with Kakaako mauka development's stress on our infrastructure of waste, water, electricity, traffic, etc why would this change make things BETTER? Also, this land along the waterfront was given with the understanding that they would STILL MAKE MONEY by renting to the University Medical school, creating open space and community space for those to enjoy the waterfront. Surfers, picnickers, etc. I would say the Kakaako development should work more with OHA to create affordable housing within that area...and not a playground for foreign owners.

I do not support this change but I DO support OHA receiving support for more cooperation with the developers of the area to build more kupuna housing, working class housing and public assistance housing.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 3:40:29 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Eduardo Manglallan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Given the serious shortage of housing in our State, I am testifying in support of SB534.

Thank you,

Eduardo Manglallan

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 4:11:54 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ella Aki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly support SB534. Thank you for considering my testimony.

Mahalo piha,

Ella H. Aki

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 4:51:26 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Felipe Anguiano	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I Support SB534 for the following reasons

1. SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka'ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
2. Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka'ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
3. Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai'i's critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai'i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawaii's median income, and this bill does just that. At the same time, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systematic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to native Hawaiians by the state of Hawai'i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Felipe D. Anguiano

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 5:14:35 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Alex Kagawa	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

1. OHA deserves “real” land not filled land. This exchange should never have happened, it was a bad deal from the start. Study the history on how this land was used prior to the city taking it over and prior to the railway that cut off the water, maybe you'll see that building condos in this area isn't the best use. Is it possible for OHA to trade Kakaako makai lands for better lands? The same kind of lands being sold to the rich outsiders with beautiful views, lush greenery, and fertile soil where cultural practices can be revived. Living in a condo would make it difficult to connect with the aina. Without aina, there’s no culture.
2. Study the significant historical cultural purposes and uses of the Kakaako makai lands before building anything over it. This part of the ahupuaa contributed to the Hawaiian’s successful system of self sufficiency and sustainability without damaging the environment. Do we really want to bury all of this under concrete condominiums ? Kakaako mauka lands had many artifacts and infrastructure (auwai) that got covered by the luxury condominiums, is this any different from the days where the Hawaiian culture, practices, and the language were methodically erased ?
3. Don't let greed blind us from protecting the Hawaiian culture that makes Hawai'i a special place. Give Hawaiians real land to build real homes. Don't bury the culture, revive it.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 5:21:52 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lorna Aratani, Tracy Caires, Vida Cho, May & Carole Chong, Darlene Nakago	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We oppose S.B. No. 534 because this bill creates an exception to the statutory prohibition against residential development in Kakaako Makai. The prohibition against residential development is codified in section 206E-31.5, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, and was established to preserve this valuable waterfront location for the benefit of all Hawai'i's residents.

In 2006, the 23rd Hawai'i State Legislature passed H.B. No. 2555 that included this statutory prohibition. The Legislature did so because it listened to the voices of Hawai'i's majority of residents rallying against the building of high density housing in Kakaako Makai, at a time when such housing was already being erected in Kakaako Mauka.

As the legislative history behind H.B. No. 2555 reflects, the Legislature was acutely aware of the compelling public interest in protecting Kakaako Makai from residential development when it passed this statutory prohibition. First, the House Committee on Water, Land and Ocean Resources (WLO) passed out the first House draft of the bill after noting that it was "Concerned over the tremendous public response to the contemplated action of HCDA to use the public lands in Kakaako Makai for residential purposes" and discussing its findings regarding the public's differing interests in Kakaako Makai and Mauka. H. Stand. Comm. No. 572-06, 23rd Leg., 2006 Reg. Sess., [www.capitol.hawaii.gov](http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov). Please see at the end of this testimony the excerpt of WLO's committee report discussing its findings. Later, the Senate Committee on Ways and Means (WAM) added the residential development prohibition to the bill after finding that "[public] opposition extends to the development of any residential development [sic] in the district makai of Ala Moana Boulevard." S. Stand. Comm. Rep. No. 3524, 23rd Leg, 2006 Reg. Sess., [www.capitol.hawaii.gov](http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov).

In conclusion, as the Legislature recognized back in 2006 when it passed H.B. No. 2555, there is a great public interest in protecting Kakaako Makai from residential development and preserving this precious waterfront location for the residents of Hawai'i to use for recreation and learning. We respectfully ask your Committees to continue to protect Kakaako Makai from residential development by holding this bill.

Submitted by:

Lorna Aratani, Manoa

Tracy Caires, Palolo

Vida Cho, Waikiki

May & Carole Chong, Kaimuki

Darlene Nakago, Manoa

WLO's Committee Report on H.B. No. 2555 (2006):

*. . . Your Committee further finds that protecting and enhancing our scarce natural resources, including our shoreline, open space, and scenic resources are important public goals. Your Committee recognizes that open public space is scarce and of imperative priority in the densely populated urban core of Honolulu.*

*With these considerations in mind, your Committee discussed the appropriateness of allowing residential projects in Kakaako Makai.*

*Your Committee recognizes the importance of proper planning and development of the District. Reviewing the historical development of the District, your Committee understands the perception that Kakaako Makai and Kakaako Mauka are separate areas; however, they are not separate, but make up the entirety of the District where people work, live, learn and play. Kakaako Mauka with its existing highrise residential projects was designed to be the residential portion of the District, and Kakaako Makai was designed to be the learning and playing area of the District with open space and learning facilities, like parks and the University of Hawai'i medical school.*

H. Stand. Comm. No. 572-06, 23rd Leg., 2006 Reg. Sess., [www.capitol.hawaii.gov](http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov). Notably, in its committee report, WLO also discussed the need for additional housing as well.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 5:53:01 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Alana D'Aleo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang, and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB534, which would repeal the residential use ban in Kaka‘ako Makai. This area presents serious environmental, safety, and financial risks that make it unsuitable for housing.

As a local resident and project manager who works closely with scientists studying the effects of chemicals on reproduction, child development, and across the lifespan, I am deeply concerned about exposing families to a historically contaminated area. Exposure to hazardous substances in soil and groundwater (such as petroleum hydrocarbons and heavy metals that have been identified in the area) can have long-term health consequences, particularly for pregnant individuals, children, and other vulnerable populations. These contaminants pose long-term environmental risks and can complicate and increase the costs of any development efforts.

Furthermore, historically, marginalized communities have been forced to live on toxic sites, suffering severe health and economic consequences. By encouraging affordable housing in Kaka‘ako Makai—an area known for contamination—we are perpetuating the very injustices that have disproportionately harmed vulnerable populations worldwide. Our city’s most needed workforce should not be asked to shoulder this burden in the name of affordability.

Due to its coastal location, Kaka‘ako Makai is susceptible to sea-level rise, hurricanes, and tsunamis. A hazard assessment highlighted these vulnerabilities, emphasizing the potential dangers to both residents and infrastructure.

In addition, as climate risks intensify, securing and maintaining insurance in high-risk coastal areas is becoming increasingly difficult and expensive. This drives up the overall cost of homeownership and rent, disproportionately impacting local residents. Instead of providing truly affordable housing, this proposal could push families into financial instability as they face rising insurance premiums—or worse, find themselves unable to obtain coverage at all.

For over a decade, OHA has allowed this land to sit undeveloped while pushing for high-rise residential use as the only solution. Rather than seeking alternative ways to generate revenue or create a community-driven plan that benefits Native Hawaiians and the broader public, OHA has continuously lobbied to overturn existing protections. This unwillingness to explore solutions contradicts the mission of serving the Hawaiian people and ensuring responsible stewardship of these lands.

The contamination, safety hazards, financial risks, and community opposition make Kaka‘ako Makai unsuitable for residential development. Instead of placing our essential workforce in harm’s way, we should seek truly safe and sustainable solutions for local housing. I urge you to uphold the current residential use ban and oppose SB534 to protect both the environment and public health and to preserve the coastline for future generations.

Mahalo for considering my testimony.

Sincerely,

Alana D’Aleo

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 6:10:39 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jesi Bautista	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose SB534. According to OHA's presentation on January 8, 2025, the last environmental analysis was conducted in 2009 and 2012. An updated analysis and community planning meetings are needed for further discussion and to collect public input. Without such analysis and community outreach, it is difficult to assess the potential impacts to both the environment and community well-being.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 6:13:49 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Robert S.K. Lee III	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am humbly submitting written testimony in support of SB534, relating to the Hawaii Community Development Authority that stipulates affordable housing options, specifically for essential workers who are being priced out of our communities. This essential workforce includes education, healthcare, construction, hospitality, law enforcement, and civil service.

Revenue from this project will help fund a Hawaiian cultural center, a vibrant hub for education and community engagement. The bill sets the stage for OHA to responsibly plan a thriving neighborhood for our local working families by stipulating owner-occupied housing — a testament to our local values and identity. The bill would unlock a new potential for OHA to advance its mission of improving the lives of Native Hawaiians.

Mahalo piha for this opportunity,

Rob Lee

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 6:15:21 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kimo Keliikikupa Ho	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Kimo Keliikikupa Ho

chopyramid@gmail.com

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 6:28:30 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Bucky Goo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I again oppose residential buildings on the area know as Kakaako Makai. I recommend a land exchange between OHA and the State at fair market value where OHA can meet their fiduciary responsibilities to the Hawaiian people. Suggestion; Barbers Point.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 6:51:47 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Bobbi Olmos Arnold	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Lack of housing always a major problem for the indigenous people of Hawaii starting from western intrusion upon the native Hawaiian population in what was and still is considered appropriate living conditions for all Hawaiian peoples. We are people of the aina but no longer allowed by society to live on the aina legally. So provide kanaka maoli the rights to build and occupy housing built on the aina that we own but aren't given authority to use in benefit for our greater good. Remove any prohibition to build affordable housing on aina Hawaiian lahui own. With housing comes stability good jobs education healthcare and making a dent in the outrageous and shameful practice of allowing Hawaiian homelessness in Hawaii. I moved away unable to find affordable safe housing in Hawaii. My iwi will not rest in my beloved aina but in a strange place because I can't go home again. Uwe

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 7:03:42 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Gerald Tariao Montano	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

*Gerald Montano*

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 7:09:19 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
John Kobelansky Jr.	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

One Simple request -

Keep all Makai Lands FREE of further development. Period! We don't need anymore disruption to our island lifestyle which is fast deteriorating into an overloaded explosion of Traffic, Trash, Condos and Tourist Traps. "Paradise" has to remain Paradise and not be a sellout to money grubbing selfish outside and inside interests. This is the last and most bitter battleground for the Hawaiian nation. The land is still "sacred" and will remain so if you do your part.

Why don't you get this?

Please be respectful of what little WE have left....

Ua Mau ke ea, ika Aina i Ka Pono!

Malama da Aina....FOREVER!!!!

JJ (Resident of Kaka'ako)

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 7:19:17 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Julia Estigoy-Kahoonei	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bil and ask you do the same as it will allow for much needed affordable housing for our local residents.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 7:20:22 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Terrence Kealoha	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Chang, Inouye, and Richards, and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

*Terrence Kealoha*

*(808)940-3540*

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 7:47:35 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Christine L. Andrews, J.D.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Christine L. Andrews, J.D.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 7:50:35 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
missy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill for the people and workers of Hawaii.

[COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND](#)

Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair  
Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair

[COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS](#)

Senator Herbert M. "Tim" Richards, III, Chair  
Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Vice Chair

[COMMITTEE ON HOUSING](#)

Senator Stanley Chang, Chair  
Senator Troy N. Hashimoto, Vice Chair

Dear Chairs and Vice Chairs of the above-named Committees,

I am writing in **STRONG OPPOSITION** to SB534. This bill is not in the best interest of Hawaii. HCDA is currently receiving community input on a new plan for Kakaako Makai; as such, this bill is premature.

Kakaako Makai is the last public shoreline in urban Honolulu -- OHA's plan to build 400 foot residential towers for the "highest and best use" on Kakaako Makai (the shoreline on the makai side of Ala Moana Blvd) is dangerous to the health of our land, coral, ocean and people not to mention the impact on our shoreline and Makai public parks for generations to come.

OHA's land is a brownfield --built on a toxic landfill of lead, arsenic, asbestos, PCB and more-- so any building must first clear an environmental review of the land, social and cultural and other issues. But OHA is **AGAIN** asking legislators to pass a bill—SB534-- to lift the long-standing prohibition against building residential; allowing OHA to build 400 foot towers (when the zoning maximum allowable is 200 feet) and create a heavy burden on the land (and toxic materials below) with 6.0 floor area ratio (FAR) when the current maximum allowable is 2.5 FAR -- all this without first doing serious study of the impacts and costs of their building on our treasured last public shoreline in urban Honolulu.

This will drastically impact view planes, shows no regard for the impact of sea-level rise, and will endanger sea-life and the health and purity of our ocean waters.

This is the third time in as many Legislative Sessions that OHA has asked that they be made exempt from rules designed to protect our fragile environment. Each time their marketing and "vision" puts a different shade of lipstick on the same pig. Whether it's "creating a cultural oasis" or "affordable workforce housing", what is clear is that the financial benefit to OHA outweighs any concern the community has. Please vote no on SB534.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 8:10:15 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ken Barrow	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**I am testifying that I am completely opposed to any residential building on Kaka'ako Makai. There are to many high rises with many more in the works. Built by people who seem only concerned with profit and not building more schools or improving infrastructure. This is the last oceanfront land that has been set aside for all people of Hawaii to enjoy. Not to become another densely populated area and or another Waikiki. We need to save and protect these last open spaces on the South Shore for our Keiki and our Keiki's Keiki. Please don't allow this step of building taller buildings be the catalyst for OHA to build tall residential building on land that was promised to share with the people of Hawaii.**

**Mahalo,**

**Ken Barrow**

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 8:14:05 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Catherine Kawada	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose any building of residential units on the makai side or Ala Moana Blvd or Kaka'ako Makai. The ocean and beach access should remain accessible to the general public, When OHA was given this parcel of land they agreed NOT to use it for commercial purposes. This land was supposed to be FOR THE PEOPLE. Every year OHA tries to go back on their word so they can line their pockets. Must we go over this AGAIN?! Enough is enough. OHA, keep your promise and leave this land for those it was meant to be kept for.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 8:37:22 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Marvin Heskett	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairperson of the Water & Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing Committees,

I am testifying in strong opposition to have residential development on Kaka'ako Makai. Our community worked hard with overwhelming support to keep this land in the hands of the public. People from all persuasions worked in unison to make our points heard loud and clear. I personally have a favorite memory from 2006 when Aunti Genoa Keawe entertained us during a rally, where Da Hui provided lunch, in support of keeping this land public. We need to protect this special land, the last oceanfront land on the South shore of Oahu from becoming another Waikiki. It is already too late for Mauka side of Kaka'ako but it is not too late for Kaka'ako Makai. Let's protect these open spaces for our children and our children's children.

Aloha,

Marvin Heskett

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 9:06:56 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sara Borreca	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I do not think OHA should build residential units at Kakaako Makai. There is so little public oceanfront land that remains in urban Honolulu, and it should continue to be protected from residential buildings. Many of us in the community cherish this land and believe it should continue to be open space for all of us to enjoy. Just as residential buildings do now not belong in Magic Island or Ala Moana Park, nor do they belong in Kakaako Makai. Please represent your public and oppose this bill. Thank you

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 9:07:45 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jill Kono	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Members of the Committee,

My name is Jill Kono, and I am submitting this testimony in strong opposition to SB 534, which seeks to authorize the development of “affordable housing” in Kaka‘ako Makai. While I support efforts to address Hawai‘i’s housing crisis, this proposal raises significant concerns about environmental, cultural, and community impacts that cannot be ignored.

Every few years, OHA tries to push this bill through legislation. And each time, they have failed. We Hawaiians did not want it then, and we do not want it now. This issue has long been debated with previous decisions to preserve the area for public and cultural use. The fact that this keeps being brought up undermines my trust in government and public process since the history of opposition on multiple occasions is being ignored.

In conclusion, I urge you to oppose SB 534 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai as a community and cultural resource for current and future generations. We do need affordable housing, but compromising our precious coastal lands is not the answer. I respectfully request the committee reject this bill and explore other options.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to submit my testimony on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Jill Kono

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 9:23:31 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Karen K Alamida	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Karen Alamida

alamidak001@hawaii.rr.com

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 9:23:38 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Joni Dacuycuy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha

We are 100% in support of BILL SB534. I'm 50% Hawaiian and my husband Kalani Wong is also of Hawaiian ancestry, born and raised on Hawaii Island, high school sweethearts and now reside in Oahu since 1990. We have experienced the struggles of working long hours, the grind, and the dedication that it took to be able to own a home here in Hawaii. We have been fortunate to own a business since 1995 that has given us the opportunity to purchase our home. But it is still difficult because of the high mortgage and high insurance rates.

I'm the youngest of 19 children, 10 girls and 9 boys and we have four generations of a lot of ohana. We were raised to be respectful and good people in our community, and we were thought to work hard so one day you could own your own home. Well, that dream has been an impossible dream for many of my Ohana.

There are numerous of my ohana still live at home with their parents and with their spouses and children. My one sister has her two children and their families living in their home which is a total of 14 individuals. My brother has three generations living in his home with a total of 10 individuals. My niece has taken in all your children, her sisters children and their families and I believe there are more the 20 of them living in her home and I've basically lost count.

My daughter is part owner of our business, she is the smartest, hardworking entrepreneur and her husband and has a good job at Pearl Harbor. My manager who is also related through marriage is 100% Hawaiian and my niece work for our company and they all are hardworking, dedicated Hawaiians that can't afford to purchase their own home here in Hawaii. Owning their own home seems like an impossible dream, especially when buyers from out of the state offers cash or offer more money than the asking price. Owning their own home seems impossible with the minimum home here in Oahu is over million dollars. Who would have thought that \$100,000.00 monthly income is still considered low income.

It is time we take care of our children of Hawaiian decent and help them be able to afford a home and support their family. It is also time that the parents be able to enjoy their retirement and be the part-time grandparents that they look forward to.

I support Bill SB534...

Aloha

Joni Dacuycuy

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 9:27:55 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Teru kono	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose SB 534. I am unsure how this bill keeps coming up when it did not pass thorough legislation the on multiple occasions. Why are they bringing up this issue again when it was already rejected more than once. The fact that it is being brought up yet again undermines my trust in government and public process.

Ua mau ke ea o ka 'āina I ka pono

Mahalo for allowing me to testify in opposition to SB 534.

Teru Kono

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 9:42:45 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
János Samu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the due authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

I mua no ka lāhui o Ko Hawai‘i Pae ‘Āina.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 10:38:25 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Loren Watanuki	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in strong opposition to SB 534.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 10:46:42 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sherry Kehau Kaiwi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Sherry Kaiwi, and I'm reaching out to convey my Strong support of SB534, which is designed to facilitate the development of affordable housing specifically aimed at our workforce in the Kaka'ako Makai area.

As a resident and Native Hawaiian small business owner, I have witnessed firsthand the pressing housing issues that our communities are grappling with. This proposed legislation is not only timely but also a vital step toward ensuring that our local families can achieve stability and prosperity.

The significance of affordable housing cannot be overstated, particularly for our essential workforce, which includes dedicated professionals such as educators, healthcare providers, first responder, and many others who play a critical role in the functioning of our society.

These hard-working individuals often find themselves priced out of the neighborhoods and communities where they provide invaluable services. By supporting SB534, we take a meaningful step towards providing these essential workers with affordable housing necessary for them to live comfortably in the communities they serve.

Additionally, I am deeply encouraged by the cultural component embedded within this bill. The revenue generated by this project is earmarked to support the establishment of a Hawaiian Cultural Center, which is long overdue, and will serve as a vibrant venue, and hub for education, and community engagement. This center will play a critical role in helping to perpetuate and celebrate our rich heritage, benefiting not only Native Hawaiians, but also enriching the lives of all residents who call Hawai'i home. As the former Director of events at the Hawaii convention center, there is no doubt the revenue opportunity a Hawaiian Cultural Center would have under SB534 and to be built and operated by the office of Hawaiian affairs could have several revenue implications, particularly when considering the context of the aging Hawaii Convention Center and its many challenges.

1. Increased Tourism Revenue: A new Hawaiian Cultural Center could attract both domestic and international tourist interested in Hawaiian Culture. This influx could lead to increased spending in the area benefiting local businesses such as hotels, restaurants, and shops.

2. **Event Hosting and Economic Activity:** The cultural center could serve as a venue for various events, workshops, conventions, and performances, generating ticket sales, rentals, and concessions. This could create additional employment opportunities and help stimulate the local economy.
3. **Complimentary to the Hawaii Convention Center:** The new cultural center could provide a unique experience that compliments the offerings of the Hawaii Convention Center. The convention center is no doubt struggling due to its age and maintenance issues, a cultural center could draw visitors who might otherwise bypass the area, thereby increasing overall visitor spending in Kaka'ako Makai.
4. **Cultural Education and Programs:** Offering educational programs about Hawaiian Culture could attract schools and educational groups, creating consistent revenue streams through group admissions and workshops.
5. **Community Engagement and Support:** By fostering community involvement and pride, the cultural center could galvanize local support and funding opportunities, potentially increasing revenue through donations and partnerships.
6. **Revitalization of the Area:** As a part of urban development, the cultural center could lead to increased property values and attract more businesses to Kaka'ako Makai, further enhancing economic activity for Oha and the state in the region.
7. **Long-Term Sustainability:** If properly managed, the cultural center could establish itself as a sustainable entity that contributes to the local economy over the long term, creating a legacy of cultural preservation and long-term economic benefits for our state.

In summary, the Hawaiian Cultural Center could provide significant revenue implications through tourism, event hosting, educational programs, and community engagement, potentially revitalizing the area and complimenting the existing faculties that SB534 has the power to offer. Furthermore, the focus on owner-occupied housing is particularly noteworthy, as it aligns with our local values, and emphasizes the importance of community identity. By promoting homeownership, we can ensure that the neighborhoods we create reflect our collective aspirations and foster a sense of belonging among our residents, especially our Native Hawaiian community. In conclusion, I wholeheartedly urge you to lend your support to SB534. This legislation represents a significant opportunity to pave the way for a brighter future for all of us in Hawai'i. in the spirit of Aloha, through collaboration. Let us create an environment where our residents, and our Native Hawaiian Community can live, work, and truly thrive in communities we all cherish. Mahalo Nui for your attention to this crucial and critical issue that has been on going and never properly addressed, giving way to serious and truly meaningful change. I look forward to seeing positive steps taken by this honorable committee toward affordable housing solutions for our community.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 11:17:45 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Dawn Morais Webster Ph.D.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

- This bill would address a critical need: local, workforce housing for essential workers who are being priced out of our communities. Too many education, healthcare, construction, hospitality, law enforcement, and civil service workers cannot afford decent housing. That is a disgrace.
- Revenue from this project will help fund a Hawaiian cultural center,
- owner-occupied housing will help build neighborhoods that thrive.
- This bill is consistent with OHA's mission of addressing the needs of Hawaiians, too many of whom are unhoused. Please move this bill forward. mahalo.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 11:18:37 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kerry Long	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 1:37:54 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Dylan Okihiro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support bill SB534 in order to provide more essential and affordable housing for kama'āina, especially for Kānaka Maoli.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 2:08:11 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Sharlene Chun Lum	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

January 27, 2025

THE SENATE, KA AHA KENEKOA

Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, Housing

The Thirty-Third Legislature Regular Session of 2025

Aloha kākou Committee chairs and members,

I am testifying in full support of SB 534, that allows the Hawaii Community Develop Authority (HCDA) to approve residential development on certain parcels of land in Kaka`ako Makai that were conveyed by Act 15 of the 2012 Legislative session to settle certain claims against the State, regarding the Office of Hawaiian Affairs' longstanding claims to income and proceeds from ceded lands (1978-2012).

Approving this Bill will address two of Hawaii's critical needs: 1) making affordable housing available to the essential workforce in the area and 2) enhancing the revenue generating capacity of certain parcels of land in the Kaka`ako Makai area, including parcels that were conveyed to the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) pursuant to Act 15, for the purposes of bettering the conditions of native Hawaiians.

1) Affordable housing has been a longstanding need for local residents, who over the past thirty years have found themselves outbid by investors both foreign and local and retirees with resources. Homeownership and even renting have become increasingly difficult for local residents resulting in more young people and families leaving the islands.

While HCDA requires all Kaka`ako properties to have at least 20% affordable housing, SB 534 requires 50% cent plus one of the residential units developed on certain parcels to be allocated to households with income at or below one hundred forty per cent of the area median income, with priority given to individuals who are essential workers working within a five-mile radius of Kakaako makai, including but not limited to essential workers working for an employer in the health care, hospitality, education, law enforcement, civil service, or construction industry;

Furthermore, the bill addresses investor issues by limiting the sale of residential units developed in certain residential developments to prospective owner occupants.

The bill also calls for HCDA to establish a Kaka`ako Makai special fund and association fee to fund various services and projects in the Kakaako makai area so that the community can thrive.

This is a bold vision—one that can bring about much needed reform and opportunity to address Hawaii's housing crisis.

2) OHA was established under article XII, section 5, of the Hawaii State Constitution to "hold title to all the real and personal property now or hereafter set aside or conveyed to it which shall be held in trust for native Hawaiians and Hawaiians." OHA's board of trustees is authorized by article XII, section 6, of the Hawaii State Constitution "to manage and administer the proceeds from the sale or other disposition of the lands . . . and income derived from whatever sources for native Hawaiians and Hawaiians, including all income and proceeds from that pro rata portion of the trust referred to in section 4 of this article [the public land trust] for native Hawaiians".

In 2012, in lieu of hundreds of millions of dollars owed to OHA as its pro rata portion, OHA received the Kaka`ako Makai lands instead. The State represented that the value of the Kaka`ako Makai lands was \$198 Million, based on the State's appraisal by the Hallstrom Group, assuming a 400-foot height limit for Parcels E and I, which exceeded the current allowable heights for these parcels. They promised those restrictions would be changed. However, for more than a decade, OHA has been prohibited from developing the lands, greatly crippling OHA from its fiduciary responsibility to use its resources to the best and highest use for the benefit of the Native Hawaiian people.

It's time to make good on that promise for the betterment of not just Native Hawaiian people but for Hawaii citizens who want to live, work and play in their place of birth.

Approving SB 534 is just the first step in the process for HCDA to allow for residential development of certain lands owned by OHA. The bill requires OHA to hold a public meeting with at least 30 days' notice and to fully address all issues and questions raised, prior to submittal to HCDA. Additionally, HCDA shall, before approving any plan or proposal for residential development, hold a public meeting and fully consider all written and oral submissions received at the meetings held by OHA and itself.

We need to proceed and explore the best options for our people to just to survive but thrive in Hawaii. Please vote yes to SB534.

Respectfully,

Sharlene Chun-Lum  
99-546 Iwaiwa Street  
Aiea, HI 96701

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 7:04:42 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Richard Knocton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

More housing needed in the prime central areas. It's key for people to be housed close to job to reduce travel commutes!

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 5:26:44 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ernest K Moses Jr	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Once again OHA is putting the cart before the horse, after all these years they have spent a lot of money on planning , renderings , and TV commercials for High Rise condos at Kakaako Makai. But not one cent for an Enviromental Impact Study and Statement , why ? Are they afraid of what they will find in the land fill soil , heavy metals from the old shipyard , the deteriorating tuna packing factory piers-, and the impact of sea level rise in aTsunami evacuation zone on existing infrastructure , which may be inadequate for the proposed High Rises.The leadership has using the Work Force Housing mantra , just like HCDA and Howard Hughes did for Ward Villages , look how that turned out ,far from being affordable for the average Joe- That's why I am against the High Rise housing in Kakaako Makai. Aloha Kakou, Ernest K Moses Jr

**SB-534**

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

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kevin K. Holu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, my name is Kevin Holu the President for Hawaii Teamsters Local 996 and I am in full support of bill SB534.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 7:59:27 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lavaun Lei	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

today i am writing in support of SB534. This bill will allow the hawaiian people to secure more land to build housing. Not only will it create housing for our community but bring a multitude of jobs through out the process.

mahalo

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 8:01:50 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kevin Kekoa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass SB534 to assist Hawaiians in becoming part of the community in the heart of Honolulu. I am a native Hawaiian fortunate enough to live in Kaka'ako. During the height of covid, the tourists were gone, the city was empty but I could still see eleven construction cranes across the Kaka'ako, Ward and Ala Moana areas. It seems this construction mostly benefitted foreign investors and well-heeled locals. Please pass this bill to foster a fair, balanced and equitable participation by Hawaiians in the evolution of Honolulu housing so they can reside in town.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 8:21:47 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
KATHALYNN BENNER	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- As a Native Hawaiian and lifelong resident, I have seen my family and friends struggle to find affordable housing.
- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Kathalynn Benner

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 8:30:55 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Theodora Furtado	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
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In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Mahalo for your consideration an for being of service to your constituents and all people of Hawaii .

Sincerely,

Theodora Furtado



**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 9:40:04 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ryan Willis	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I stongly oppose

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 9:54:06 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Bruce H	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Respectfully I firmly oppose this Bill. OHA wants to build a residential high rise by repealing the current residential law. If the law is repealed 20 more hi rises will follow just like Kakaako Mauka. Ironic that OHA, whose 3rd mission statement is malama aina, opposed a 30 meter telescope but is looking to further desecrate lands by building a 400' hi rise instead of the 200' that is currently allowed. Thank you for your attention.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 10:18:00 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Wai H. Low	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Senators:

I **oppose** this SB534 because our families need open spaces to breath and Hawaii must preserve its unique landscape as a tourist destination. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully:

Wai Low

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 10:18:31 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Dr. William H. Wilson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support OHA's position on this bill.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 10:25:16 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Raymond Madigan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

*I am testifying in strong opposition to have residential on Kaka'ako Makai. We have too many high rises already in the area and more are on its way. We need to protect this special land, the last oceanfront land on the South shore of Oahu from becoming another Waikiki. It is already too late for Mauka side of Kaka'ako but it is not too late for Kaka'ako Makai. Let's protect these open spaces for our children and our children's children*

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 10:35:08 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Dominic D'Aleo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha to the chairs and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing,

I strongly oppose SB534, which would repeal the ban on residential development in Kaka‘ako Makai. This area is not appropriate for housing due to its environmental hazards, flood risks, and the overwhelming public opposition to high-rise development on coastal lands.

Kaka‘ako Makai was never intended for residential use. The law prohibiting housing here was put in place to preserve open space, protect public access to the coastline, and prevent the kind of overdevelopment that has already changed so much of Honolulu. Allowing high-rise residential buildings in this area would set a dangerous precedent for future coastal development and privatization.

Beyond land use concerns, this area is also extremely vulnerable to sea-level rise and coastal flooding. State climate projections show that Kaka‘ako Makai will face regular inundation within decades. Building homes in a flood-prone area will lead to costly infrastructure damage, displacement, and financial burdens on homeowners, taxpayers, and the state.

This proposal also raises serious questions about affordability. In similar developments across Honolulu, so-called "affordable" housing often ends up being priced out of reach for local families. Given the cost of remediating contaminated land, mitigating flood risks, and maintaining infrastructure, there is no guarantee that housing in Kaka‘ako Makai would truly be affordable in the long term. Instead, we risk allowing luxury high-rises that further push local families out of urban Honolulu.

The community has consistently opposed residential development in Kaka‘ako Makai, yet this issue keeps coming back. It is time to listen to the public, uphold the current law, and reject SB534.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Dominic D'Aleo



Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka'ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature when they agreed upon the appropriate compensation in 2012.
- This will create an "economic engine" to help OHA become more self-sustaining. This in turn will allow OHA to provide funding and other assistance to our native Hawaiian population.
- SB534 will provide much needed affordable housing for our local workforce, especially in the urban Honolulu area. It'll also help our local population remain and thrive in Hawaii which is something that is desperately need.

Please help protect the future of our local population by fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai'i. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

*Lionel Camara Jr.*

*(808) 282-7126*

*CamaraL001@hawaii.rr.com*

I OPPOSE SB 534 for the following reasons

Changing zoning Kakaako Makai

OHA is a semi-autonomous state agency mandated to better the conditions of Native Hawaiians. OHA fulfills its mandate through advocacy, research, community engagement, land management, and the funding of community programs.

THERE ARE SO MANY UNANSWERED QUESTIONS:

Why doesn't OHA focus on developing the harbor commercial property as well as a Hotel on parcels they can do right now to help their beneficiaries. Instead of using affordable housing as their vehicle.

OHA wants the State to change the zoning law to build affordable workforce residential housing increase the height variance from 200' to 400' for properties in the Kakaako Makai Area.

OHA's plan SB534, would authorize construction of residential towers along Ala Moana Boulevard up to 400 feet, subject to the provision that 50% + 1 unit in any tower would be reserved for affordable workforce housing.

Affordable, Reserved, and Workforce are three different terms and come with different benefits. They should never be commingled. This confuses the general public.

SB534 would also enable construction of affordable housing for Hawai'i residents making less than 140% of the Area Median Income (AMI).

Priority for affordable housing would be given to residents working in six essential industries: health care, hospitality, education, law enforcement, civil service, and construction.

Very few if any with PRIORITY would qualify to live their.

What will happen to affordable units if not sold.

If this is allowed how much money would be left to go to beneficiaries after everyone else is paid.

BANK, CONTRACTOR, DEVELOPER, REALTOR, MARKETER, HCDA.

After championing residential housing for years OHA should show how their formula, including pricing of units would work to better beneficiaries.

Mixing fair market housing with affordable housing when it comes to common area maintenance doesn't work. It prices the affordable out of market eventually.

OHA would also support HCDA to create a Kakaako Association Fee to be collected from all residential development on certain parcels in Kakaako Makai area. This will add another tax to affordable pricing.

With sea level rise All Areas that were once wetlands and have been heavily layer filled with soils, such as Kakaako Makai are now showing salt water moving inland. These low lying regions ground water will become saltier and more corrosive to structures and damage service infrastructure built on them. It is already taking place so starting new projects especially raising heights to 400' where people will call home does not make sense.

There are many questions than answers right now. Make sure this project can succeed before changing laws.

Mahalo,  
Keone Downing

In October, the Urban Institute found that monthly payments on a new mortgage [would](#) consume more than 30 percent of the typical family's income—a level just shy of that of November 2005, at the so-called housing bubble's peak. Higher prices and mortgage rates explain why the rate of new home sales [plummeted](#) after Biden took office.

The swelling housing costs hit some groups especially hard, including Americans under 30, predominantly renters or first-time homebuyers. In one poll, one-third of younger [voters](#) called the cost of living their biggest concern—by far the largest proportion identifying any single issue. In another [poll](#) of under-30 voters, housing came in third, behind overall inflation and health care. This partly explains why young voters made the greatest [shift](#) toward Donald Trump of any age group, compared with the last election.

This importance of housing was unprecedented in the modern election era. Arguably, the last presidential campaign in which it played such a crucial role was in 1948, when homecoming veterans, eager to start new families, found themselves with dilapidated and inadequate lodging. The domestic section of that year's Democratic platform prominently [featured](#) calls for rent control and more government housing construction.

— Judge Glock City Journal

[https://www.city-journal.org/article/housing-market-trump-election-republicans?utm\\_source=virtuous&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=cjdaily&vcrmeid=5V8LAzmDDEa dMTnC b1B3jg&vcrmiid=NDX7A-3UKkCXU3to3AJvsw](https://www.city-journal.org/article/housing-market-trump-election-republicans?utm_source=virtuous&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=cjdaily&vcrmeid=5V8LAzmDDEa dMTnC b1B3jg&vcrmiid=NDX7A-3UKkCXU3to3AJvsw)

One of Democratic state Sen. Stanley Chang's goals when he heads back to Hawaii's legislative floor on Jan. 15 is to change how quickly the state uses its rental housing revolving fund. Under the current system, Chang said, roughly \$519 million the state holds in the fund might not be spent until 2038.

"Housing finance reform has been our top priority for years," he said. "This program alone funds over half of all new housing construction in Hawaii — it's the primary way we produce housing in the state. If we tweak this program, we could get 10 buildings for the price of one."

Chang added, however, that the scale of the affordable housing problem is too complex to boil down to one or two issues or solutions.

"Housing isn't just one issue: It's the foundation of everything. Affordability, homelessness, economic mobility — they all hinge on whether we can provide enough housing. It's time to stop treating this as a side project and recognize it as a central priority," Chang told Stateline. "This is a solvable problem."

— Robbie Sequeira, Stateline

<https://stateline.org/2025/01/09/a-slew-of-new-housing-laws-take-effect-this-month-to-streamline-building-protect-tenants/>

What if the housing crisis wasn't about the cost of lumber, labor, or land, but about bureaucracy? Imagine a world where, instead of developers navigating an obstacle course of entitlements, permits, and approvals, cities themselves took on the challenge of creating the housing they want and need. The good news: there are two models that show how U.S. cities can fast-track high-quality housing that people want to live in and enjoy seeing on the streetscape. The first is Vienna, a global model for affordable housing that shows how streamlined processes and collaborative policies can rapidly deliver high-quality, affordable urban homes. The second is Paris, where in the mid-19th century the city created a set of standard architectural plans, enabling the efficient, large-scale construction of now-iconic neighborhoods, reproducing a model that goes back to ancient Rome.

— Gerhard W. Mayer, Lindsay Sturman, Common Edge  
<https://commonedge.org/a-radical-and-totally-practical-rethinking-of-u-s-housing-construction/>

University of Hawaii Economic Research Organization noted that *a household needs to earn two times the statewide median income, or roughly \$200,000 a year, to afford a median-priced single-family home in Hawaii*. UHERO's report said before the coronavirus pandemic in 2020, *a household needed to earn about 10% more than the statewide median income* in order to afford a mortgage on a median-priced home in Hawaii. "High prices and high interest rates together make mortgages extremely unaffordable," the report said. [emphasis added]

Carl Bonham, UHERO director, [] said that relatively high interest rates in 2024 inhibited some homeowners from listing their homes for sale because most of their existing mortgages carry lower rates and make buying a different home less attractive. [] Relatively tight inventory of homes on the market combined with strong buyer demand can contribute to rising median sale prices.

CONDOS: SALES, MEDIAN PRICE  
2024 ... .. 4,459, \$515,000  
2023... .. 4,573, \$508,500  
Change ... .. -2.5%, +1.3%

— Andrew Gomes, HSA  
<https://www.staradvertiser.com/2025/01/07/hawaii-news/oahu-housing-market-notches-price-gains-in-2024-but-not-complete-rebound/>

the LIHTC program [] since its inception has created some 3.65 million affordable units —and a food chain of ravenous middlemen has cropped up to bite off chunks of the now \$13.5 billion in tax breaks the program hands out each year.

Organizations like Popular Democracy call for plans that support social housing, including public housing and other community-controlled rental options that are deeply and permanently affordable—and that sidestep the private market. Sixteen million families currently need federal housing assistance but don't receive it due to funding limits, [Amee Chew, Popular Democracy housing researcher,] noted. "There's no way around generous, direct, up-front public money in the form of grants and low-interest loans in order to make the housing work for those who need it most," she said. "It's for public goods, and that's worth the cost, because housing is a basic need and a human right."

Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York and Senator Tina Smith of Minnesota introduced the Homes Act, a plan to fund the creation of social housing. The bill would forge a new federal development authority to build as many as 1.25 million homes, to be owned by public entities and community organizations. It would also fund public housing and repeal the Faircloth Amendment, which blocks cities from building new public housing. In a New York Times essay announcing the bill, Ocasio-Cortez and Smith explicitly propose the bill's provisions as a corrective to the LIHTC program: "The largest affordable housing incentive our government offers—the low-income housing tax credit—too often ends up in the hands of for-profit developers."

— Michael Friedrich, New Republic  
<https://newrepublic.com/article/184005/low-income-housing-tax-credit-enriches-corporations-kamala-harris>

Cities become affordable when lots of new housing is built, not when a larger percentage of a small amount of new housing is made "affordable" by regulation.

A 2022 report from Congress' Joint Economic Committee [] estimates that building on federal BLM land could add 2.7 million homes. This would overcome 14 percent of the country's estimated housing shortage and 100 percent of several Western states' housing shortage.

[Interior Secretary-designate Doug] Burgum touted zoning reforms that would allow for more mixed-use, walkable neighborhoods, saying, "We've got to get the coffee shop, the barber shop, and law firms back into residential neighborhoods in ways that could help lower the cost and create services where you don't need a car for everything." In those same remarks, Burgum also criticized greenfield development of auto-oriented, exclusively residential neighborhoods that require lots of "linear feet" of road, sewer, and water infrastructure.

Blue America's high-cost, high-regulation housing markets have led to a slow, mass exodus of people to more growth-friendly, Republican-dominated states. With those cost-of-living refugees go congressional seats and Electoral College votes. If those trends continue, the Democratic Party will become less and less competitive at the national level.

But as Jerusalem Demsas notes in a new essay for *The Atlantic*, Democrats' postelection recriminations have been light on any consideration of what role housing policy is playing in their waning political fortunes.

More and more Republican voters leaving New York and California because of the high housing costs is good for Democrats in New York and California, even if it's bad for the party nationally. And state governments have a lot more say over housing than the federal government.

. . . it is certainly a good thing for the country if both parties see an electoral advantage in offering pro-growth, pro-market policies on housing and the economy generally.

— Christian Britschgi., Reason

[https://link.mp.reason.com/a/2534/preview/5007/739491/eadfa69af53defcd2921bf230f85ccb09ae3e073?ana=lnV0bV9tZWRpdW09cmVhc29uX2VtYWIsJnV0bV9zb3VyY2U9cmVudF9mcmVlJnV0bV9jYW1wYWlnbj1yZWZzb25fYnJhbmQmdXRtX2NvbnRlbnQ9V2lsbCBEb3VnIEJ1c md1bSBCZSBEb25hbGQgVHJ1bXAncyBlb3VzaW5nIEN6YXI/JnV0bV90ZXJtPSZ0aW1IPU5vdmVtYmVyIDE5dGgsIDIwMjQ0MzZkO0TEi&message\\_id=ljhlNml3NWMwLTg4ZDYtMDEzZC1IOTE2LTQ2NTc1OTNmNjEzZkByZWZzb24uY29tIlg==](https://link.mp.reason.com/a/2534/preview/5007/739491/eadfa69af53defcd2921bf230f85ccb09ae3e073?ana=lnV0bV9tZWRpdW09cmVhc29uX2VtYWIsJnV0bV9zb3VyY2U9cmVudF9mcmVlJnV0bV9jYW1wYWlnbj1yZWZzb25fYnJhbmQmdXRtX2NvbnRlbnQ9V2lsbCBEb3VnIEJ1c md1bSBCZSBEb25hbGQgVHJ1bXAncyBlb3VzaW5nIEN6YXI/JnV0bV90ZXJtPSZ0aW1IPU5vdmVtYmVyIDE5dGgsIDIwMjQ0MzZkO0TEi&message_id=ljhlNml3NWMwLTg4ZDYtMDEzZC1IOTE2LTQ2NTc1OTNmNjEzZkByZWZzb24uY29tIlg==)

[Rhode Island] advocates have been pushing for the state to create a public development entity similar to [one used](#) in Montgomery County, Maryland. There, the county invests directly in mixed-income housing projects, and instead of profiting off the market-rate units, it uses the income to subsidize reduced rents for lower-income people and reinvests its equity in other projects.

Low Income Housing Tax Credits [LIHTC] is costly and inefficient, says Jeff Hamill, a policy analyst at the Rhode Island Public Expenditure Council, which tracks public spending. The state's ARPA investments only helped produce around 1,500 units. That's in part because they were mostly geared toward people with the lowest incomes. The average subsidy per unit was a whopping \$161,542, according to the report. Based on the efficacy of previous investments, the new [\$120 m.] housing bond could result in just 586 units being built around the state.

— Jared Brey, Governing

<https://www.governing.com/policy/rhode-island-could-create-a-public-developer-to-address-housing-crisis>

in many states, lawmakers in the capital seem intent on making things worse. Instead of trying to free up more development, legislators have created tax exemptions for apartment buildings that set aside a percentage of units for affordable housing. As these exemptions run into opposition from progressive politicians who see them as a “giveaway” to developers, even more rules are imposed.

what not to do . . . \$40 wage minimums for construction workers and required spending on minority- and women-owned businesses. . . . New York needs more housing, not more rules.

— Bloomberg editorial

<https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2024-12-13/new-york-city-rezoning-knocks-down-some-housing-obstacles?srnd=opinion>

[According to one survey](#), 82% of homeless adults in California reported having experienced a serious mental health condition, and 65% had used illicit drugs at some point. The state’s [Black people are disproportionately affected by homelessness](#): Despite making up only about 5% of California’s total population, they represent roughly 25% of its homeless people.

although Newsom and others have heralded emergency housing and other measures to answer the crisis, *the total capacity is far short of the unhoused population*.  
[emphasis added]

Reducing and preventing homelessness [] could provide a road map to arrive at bipartisan solutions for other challenges facing the state and country.

— Jerel Ezell, UC Berkeley

<https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2024-11-28/homeless-housing-california-san-francisco-san-diego-los-angeles-democrats-supreme-court-grants-pass>

Councilmembers:

UHERO's "Hawaii Housing Fact Book" tells us we face "an extreme affordability crisis." Only 20% local households are able to afford the mortgage on a median-priced, single-family home. Largely due to our housing crisis, the number of employed workers here is 30,000 below pre-Covid levels. They're gone.

Appleseed's recent report advocating an Empty Homes Tax found that our high rents mean 80% of Oahu renters spend at least 30% of their income on housing, leaving them "severely housing cost-burdened." Renters' living costs this year in real terms are up 4.9%!

The outside world bids up local real estate prices. Residents can't compete. We lose to the mainland younger workers and others who don't own homes or can't afford escalating rents. You feel their pain, I know. You feel compelled to pass BILL046(24) in its present form, or to commit 100% of revenues collected from the tax to housing for local residents. You will do right.

Aloha, Galen Fox

From Family Promise (11/1/24):

As of October 2024, the average rent for a studio in Honolulu, Hawai'i, is \$1,680 per month, which is 8% higher than the national average of \$1,558 per month

<https://www.apartments.com/rent-market-trends/honolulu-hi/>

. Unfortunately, only 1 in 4 individuals eligible for federal rental subsidies are actually able to utilize them

[https://www.cbpp.org/research/housing/funding-limitations-create-widespread-unmet-need-](https://www.cbpp.org/research/housing/funding-limitations-create-widespread-unmet-need-for-rental-)

[assistance#:~:text=Only%205.3%20million%20\(1%20in,fraction%20of%20renters%20in%20n](https://www.cbpp.org/research/housing/funding-limitations-create-widespread-unmet-need-for-rental-)  
eed.

. There is a growing consensus that we need bold new approaches to address the lack of affordable housing and the harsh reality that thousands of Hawai'i residents are currently living unsheltered. To tackle these issues, we must focus on creating more affordable housing, protecting the affordable housing we currently have, and supporting renters at risk of homelessness.

HHFDC's Consolidated Plan (CP) assesses five-year affordable housing needs of the state, while the annual Action Plan establishes specific actions to meet CP objectives.

We issue private activity bonds through a separate program in conjunction with LIHTC. Both programs receive a small-state minimum, fixed by the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

—Dean Minakami

<https://www.staradvertiser.com/2024/10/04/editorial/5-questions-with/5-questions-dean-minakami-hhfdc-executive-director/>

From Alex Lee:

<https://www.commondreams.org/opinion/social-housing>

As in Singapore, most residents qualify for social housing under the high income cap that encompasses [75% of the Viennese population](#). This income limit only applies when the tenant moves in.

governments prioritize creating housing for the public good. The foundation of their policies are the finances, land banking powers, and expertise to build housing as a human right.

What's needed here is the political will to bring social housing to our state. We can't afford to wait.

The Golden State must build at least 2.5 million more homes by 2030 to end the current shortage. But California built just [85,000 housing units annually](#) from 2018 to 2022. (425,000?)

creating socioeconomically integrated, financially self-sustaining housing.

The state of Hawaii has passed legislation to develop social housing.

Montgomery County [Housing Opportunities Commission] [serves](#) roughly 17,500 renter households

[created](#) a \$100 million revolving fund to dramatically ramp up construction. . . .  
affordable permanently

Jenny Schuetz, a housing policy analyst at The Brookings Institution, says not every place can take on this kind of financing.

“Montgomery County is big. It's wealthy. They have phenomenally competent and experienced staff,” she says. “These are all really unusual characteristics for most local governments across the U.S.”

Public development advocate Williams sees an answer for that. Maryland just created a state housing fund to help other places that couldn't do this on their own. A new [bill](#) in Congress would do the same, offering federal money to help communities create more publicly owned affordable housing.

British Columbia, Canada, [announced](#) a CAD \$4.95 billion (USD \$3.67 billion) social housing initiative. Called BC Builds, the plan is to build 8,000 to 10,000 homes over the next five years, which could be the world's largest new social housing program in decades.

*“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.”*

[Margaret Mead](#)

Ellen, Keith, Richard:

Our October 20 PJSC Adult Ed program includes a discussion of the church's state-level affordable housing agenda, along with the Empty Homes Tax. At the Legislature, Crossroads has supported Sen. Chang's Aloha Homes initiative. That effort continues to evolve. We would benefit from meeting with the Senator before October 20 on how best to handle the upcoming Legislative session.

But prior to any Sen. Chang meeting, we would benefit from a discussion among us 4, led and hosted by Ellen on Zoom. The attached short paper is background for such a discussion. I'm impressed with all your work on the Empty Homes Tax. During the recent EHT webinar Ellen and Keith hosted with the Senator, you could see how much Chang respected what you collectively have accomplished thus far.

Aloha, Galen

We had planned to have a session together before meeting with Sen. Chang (and we still could). But we seem to have reached consensus around Keith's detailed response to my 2-pager. Keith began with "I agree with your assessment of the crisis and the work we need to do from here." He then wrote a "findings" statement with which, I believe, we all identify:

As the world bids up our real estate prices, our local residents can't compete and we are now at a crossroads where we fix it, or, we lose our younger working folks and any older people who don't already own homes.

We saw the basic solution in every place Senator Chang had us visit that has solved this issue. The solution is to create a "local" housing market (Social Housing) that exists along side the international housing market. The local housing market has restrictions that require owners and renters to reside in the home and not use the local market as a speculative passive investment. With our current costs for construction, this local market also requires subsidy — even for middle class housing.

Local housing will be needed in perpetuity so it cannot time out and become market rate. There is no way to ever catch up if we are always losing local housing. The movement of local to market housing becomes a windfall for someone at the expense of all the taxpayers and future generations.

We need a government-subsidized “local housing” market that “in perpetuity” won’t become “market rate.” The speculative, potentially-windfall-generating market, we leave that to the private sector, along with the NIMBYism fights that accompany owners protecting their investments.

Keith then wrote the sentence that guides our state housing future:

Crossroads and Housing Now! cannot cover all the areas needed to solve our crisis but we can take on something and work with others to solve this.

Ellen, Keith, and Richard, you have accomplished more with the Empty Homes Tax than we are going to be able to achieve at the state level with even one piece of Sen. Chang’s Aloha Homes initiative. Ellen writes:

We need some type of effective planning function, as Singapore has, to develop, implement and monitor housing plans. That should be a core governmental function.

True. Lee Kuan Yew ran a country. The socialists (“reds”) in the 1920s governed Vienna and influenced suddenly-tiny Austria. It’s going to take a governor or a mayor here, backing something like Maryland Montgomery County (population: 1.1 million)’s social housing effort. Its Housing Opportunities Commission has bonding authority that enables it to build and own housing serving low- and middle-income residents. Its current portfolio covers 9,300 units.

For our upcoming discussion with Sen. Chang, it helps that Keith has laid out local housing areas that need work:

1. Funding sources for subsidies (Ellen seconds motion).
2. Reduce costs of construction.
3. Develop Social Housing construction capacity [using] steady subsidy funding.
4. Invest in livable neighborhoods (Richard agrees).

These are all areas that Sen. Chang has covered in his “Housing Now” webinar programs. They all relate to Aloha Homes and the Singapore model (Vienna too).

Keith worked hard on the failed Kawainui Project, and learned from the experience. So Keith I think has come to believe in:

5. Education and outreach.

Education is a long-term effort. Does this relate to the task of overcoming NIMBYism? Can we short-circuit NIMBYism by putting social housing on government land in planned communities outside existing settled neighborhoods?

Aiea-Foster Village's successful effort — fully backed by Sen. Glen Wakai — to block a highrise cluster on the Aloha Stadium land may be behind Keith's final housing point:

## 6. Visualize the plan.

If we want to add high-rises, it would help visually to surround them situated in a model where, Keith writes:

adding a few stories to buildings in an area won't take everyone by surprise. It will also show the green areas and the country and how we're keeping the balance.

Regarding "social housing." Christy MacPherson doesn't like the term. She suggests "local housing" instead, a term Keith also used.

Aloha, Galen

Answering Richard's public housing comment:

"I am leary about the potential of social housing producing low-income "projects" that wind up having to be dynamited. . . . What prevents that from happening is building "communities" not low-income ghettos."

Ellen, thank you for sending me [this article](#). It reports the San Francisco Board of Supervisors budget and Legislative analyst (link here:) [released today a report on the feasibility of building social housing](#) in that city.

From the summary:

While mixed-income social housing developments are found in other cities and countries, notably Vienna and Singapore, they are less common in the United States. Montgomery County, Maryland, has created a type of social housing with its Housing Opportunities Commission. This public entity invests in privately constructed housing with public funds, assumes ownership, and subsidizes rents for tenants with a mix of incomes up to a certain cap.

Montgomery County has 1.06 million people, Honolulu 990,000, San Francisco 810,000. We are all roughly the same size. The San Francisco report shows how the city, without federal or state financing beyond LIHTC, can finance social housing (we prefer the term “local housing”), as Montgomery County already does.

Keith, I wanted you to see this, and gain your reaction.

Aloha, Galen

Aloha Galen et al

My apologies for being late to this thread, but mahalo, Galen, for including me. And Keith, I second Ellen’s applause for your comprehensive survey of what’s needed. It’s really remarkably thorough and to the point. It also makes one take a deep breath because of how much is required.

My perspective is from years in advertising/marketing real estate projects from one-offs like Kukui Plaza to ongoing communities like Mililani. I am leary about the potential of social housing producing low-income “projects” that wind up having to be dynamited like the Henry Taylor projects in Chicago and similar ones in New York. What prevents that from happening is building “communities” not low-income ghettos. I like Keith’s points 3, 4, and 5 especially because they address this need for building communities, not just affordable housing.

I don’t think there are people in either the state or county government with the kind of needed expertise. If a savvy, experienced, and noble-minded developer or banker could be a member of the team, these ideas might have a better chance of being realized. I don’t have any idea of who that individual could be, and I know it might seem like supping with the devil, but it might be worth considering.

The recently announced 900 unit affordable housing project in Kapolei seems from a distance to be the kind of thing we’re seeking. We just need 30 more of them. You might want to look at how it got this far. I think money, state land, and existing, paid-for infrastructure were all a part of it.

Imua!  
Richard

On Oct 1, 2024, at 10:29 PM, Ellen Carson <egcarson@icloud.com> wrote:

Wow, Keith, You Go! This is a great comprehensive summary of both our housing needs and potential approaches.

It's a huge push It will take extraordinary time, expense, and coordinated effort. I agree our little groups are not equipped to push such a large agenda.

, but we are utterly incompetent at being effective at this task. So we may be doomed to doing smaller scale projects piecemeal and hoping they can one day be cumulatively affective.

Funding sources are essential. Two others are taxing REITS and increasing conveyance taxes on upper end properties. Anyone know why REITS isn't moving again now that we have a new governor who is unlikely to veto it?

Ellen Godbey Carson

On Oct 2, 2024, at 8:31 AM, Keith Webster <keithhawaii@yahoo.com> wrote:

Galen,

Thank you for your thoughtful writeup on the housing crisis and next steps forward. Also, thanks for including me when you didn't have to.

I agree with your assessment of the crisis and the work we need to do from here. Here is some of what comes to my mind as I read your paper.

Fundamentally, Oahu's housing market is now decoupled from the local economy. I believe this started when the large landowners were forced to sell the fee interests in the residential land they were renting. I suspect outside investors were not interested in leasehold property. Land appreciates, buildings only depreciate so when fee became available, Hawaii, with low property taxes, beautiful climate and limited land supply became a very attractive investment. As the world bids up our real estate prices, our local residents can't compete and we are now at a crossroads where we fix it, or, we lose our younger working folks and any older people who don't already own homes.

We saw the basic solution in every place Senator Chang had us visit that has solved this issue. The solution is to create a "local" housing market (Social Housing) that exists along side the international housing market. The local housing market has restrictions that require owners and renters to reside in the home and not use the local market as a speculative passive investment. With our current costs for construction, this local market also requires subsidy - even for middle class housing.

Local housing will be needed in perpetuity so it cannot time out and become market rate. There is no way to ever catch up if we are always losing local housing. The movement of local to market housing becomes a windfall for someone at the expense of all the taxpayers and future generations.

Crossroads and Housing Now! cannot cover all the areas needed to solve our crisis but we can take on something and work with others to solve this. Here are some areas that need work:

1. Funding sources for subsidies. We're advocating for the EHT to be a part of this. In addition we need additional long-term, reliable dedicated funding from other sources. Planning and building housing is a multi-year effort so a dedicated funding stream for subsidies is essential. Year to year allocations don't support the long-term planning needed to bring new housing to fruition.

2. Reduce costs of construction. Our construction costs are way too high, which increases the needed subsidies.

a. Encourage development of a prefab factory on Oahu. There are many prefab technologies to look at.

b. Reduce planning and permitting time. Projects that fit into the master plan should be given a streamlined approval.

c. Use State/County revenue bonds to reduce project financing costs.

d. Bring in more competition - see section 3 below.

3. Develop Social Housing construction capacity

a. Plan more, smaller projects or increments on larger projects to encourage our local non-profit and for profit developers.

b. Have government purchase or provide the land for local housing. Have government provide infrastructure to the site. Create a competitive environment similar to Vienna where developers compete to provide the best project. Local people helping choose will help bring trust and local control. Competition will help keep cost down.

c. A steady stream of manageably sized projects will help local developer capacity grow. This is where the steady subsidy funding becomes crucial.

4. Invest in livable neighborhoods

a. Transportation is not a popular topic now but as we increase density in the urban footprint, mass transit becomes a necessity.

b. Mixed use, walkable communities are crucial as we move away from car-centric designs.

c. Use of plants and facades to make our communities more attractive. Singapore showed how a little spent on a facade can make an inexpensive building into something very appealing. We need to bring more art and aesthetics into our designs.

d. Active community centers - Hawaii is a place where neighbors know each other but the mainland suburban anonymity is creeping in. We need to get people together to build relationships and community. Neighborhoods are not just buildings.

e. Encourage mixed income development. We need to bring everyone together and not create slums or gated communities.

5. Education and outreach

a. School programs showing what a developer does, what a builder does. Encourage what we need.

b. Community center - community college seminars on social housing opportunities. What are the ways people can get involved. We have ways individuals can renovate and improve housing and get grants and tax breaks. We need to get this information to more people. It takes too long to figure out what's possible now so only developer insiders benefit.

## 6. Visualize the plan

a. I was impressed with the models many of the cities we visited had showing what is there and what is coming. Very few read master plans so a new development takes people by surprise - even if it fits the plan. We're proposing increased density in the urban core. We need something people can see to show what the future will look like. Then, adding a few stories to buildings in an area won't take everyone by surprise. It will also show the green areas and the country and how we're keeping the balance.

before the COVID-19 pandemic began affecting the local labor market, there were 662,400 people in Hawaii with nonfarm jobs in February 2020, according to UHERO data. This count had rebounded to 632,700 in 2023, representing a growth rate of 2.4%, but is forecast to rise just 0.7% this year followed by gains of 0.7% or 0.8% in each of the next three years to reach 650,500 in 2027.

Inflation, which the federal government measures only for Oahu, is projected to be 4.9% this year, up from 3.1% in 2023. Inflation in 2025 is expected to be 3.4%, followed by 2.6% in 2026. UHERO noted that much of the recent relatively high inflation is due to higher asking rates for housing rent and that this does not affect many renters or residents who live in homes they own.

— Andrew Gomes, HSA

<https://www.staradvertiser.com/2024/09/20/hawaii-news/tight-labor-force-to-weigh-on-isle-economy-especially-maui/>

- listen (RHRF)
- why social housing
- why separate from private development (avoid fight)
- importance of target (SIN: start with goal; Vancouver empty homes total)
- importance of money (revenue bonds)
- define resident, in unit, no other property (check law)
- low-cost housing (no income test)
- SROs
- politics: Sen. Hashimoto, Rep. Evslin

## Alex Lee

The government should use public funds to take on an active role as a real estate developer to build more homes where the private market falls short. [Lee] views the current moment as a prime example where high costs and interest rates [have essentially frozen development](#) across the state.

[His] AB 2881 would create a statewide development agency to directly build new homes across all income levels. The idea isn't to eliminate or block private development, but rather, create an alternative source of housing supply that is not beholden to the boom-or-bust cycles of the private sector.

colleagues are warming to Lee's ideas of social housing, as evidenced by his bill's passage last year. Wiener, for his part, said he supported both of Lee's previous bills and would vote for this current one, if it makes it back to the Senate.

Assemblymember Luz Rivas, who has represented the eastern part of Los Angeles County since 2018, said the evolution of his social housing bill is a representation of Lee's journey as a lawmaker thus far.

"I have watched Alex shift his ideas, which many of my colleagues dismissed because they were unfamiliar or too aspirational, into viable policy," Rivas told The Standard. "He has developed relationships with legislators and leaders regardless of whether they share his ideological views."

Bernie Sanders (who endorsed him in both elections) and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, whose autographed business card is framed and prominently displayed in his office[.] have placed social housing at the center of their [latest Green New Deal proposal](#).

Source: <https://sfstandard.com/2024/04/09/alex-lee-leads-social-housing-california/>

## Zillow on Housing Shortage U.S.

At its core, the housing market is driven by supply and demand. When the number of people who want a home increases faster than the number of homes available, prices go up. This balance reached a tipping point when the Great Recession ushered in a decade of underbuilding and millennials — the biggest generation in U.S. history — reaching the prime age for first-time home buying. The result has been [worsening affordability](#), now exacerbated by stubbornly high mortgage rates.

"The simple fact is there are not enough homes in this country, and that's pushing homeownership out of reach for too many families," said Orphe Divounguy, senior economist at Zillow. "The affordability crisis extends to renters as well, with [nearly half of renter households being cost burdened](#). Filling the housing shortage is the long-term answer to making housing

more affordable. We are in a big hole, and it is going to take more than the status quo to dig ourselves out of it."

Across the country in 2022, there were roughly 8.09 million "missing households" — individuals or families living with nonrelatives. Compare that to 3.55 million housing units that were available for rent or for sale, and there is a housing shortage of more than 4.5 million.

The pandemic-era housing frenzy sparked a construction boom, but thus far, that boom has fallen short. In 2022, 1.4 million homes were built — at the time, the best year for home construction since the early stages of the Great Recession. However, the number of U.S. families increased by 1.8 million that year, meaning the country did not even build enough to make a place for the new families, let alone begin chipping away at the deficit that has hampered housing affordability for more than a decade.

<https://zillow.mediaroom.com/2024-06-18-The-U-S-is-now-short-4-5-million-homes-as-the-housing-deficit-grows>

## **UHERO “Hawaii Housing Fact Book” (2024)**

Efforts to address the disaster’s consequences have run up against familiar roadblocks including rigid regulatory barriers, slow permitting, and infrastructure bottlenecks. High interest rates, high prices, and low supply have continued to make housing extremely unaffordable. Statewide, prices have remained elevated while the number of transactions has collapsed. Overall transactions in 2023 numbered only half what they were in 2021. 2023 saw fewer single-family home transactions than any of the previous 25 years.

data continues to paint a picture of a housing market "experiencing an extreme affordability crisis. In 2023, only one in five local households could afford a mortgage on the median-priced single-family home. The ability to provide new housing remains extremely limited. High interest rates make it difficult to finance a home purchase, difficult for developers to finance new construction, and disrupts the filtering process as homeowners are reluctant to trade up and forfeit their existing low mortgage rates. The consequences of unaffordable housing continue to show up in out-migration, homelessness, and more families being priced out of the local market.

Honolulu County saw [a high] single-family home price[ of] \$1.03 million.

The UHERO Repeat Sales Index (RSI) examines homes that have sold multiple times and estimates the average rate of price appreciation. O’ahu has seen [a high] increase since 2000, with homes transacting at 3.8 times their 2000 level.

In 2023, a household needed to earn 183% of the median household income in order to afford the median single-family home, where “afford” means to spend less than 30% of income on mortgage payments. Only one in five households in Hawai‘i met this criteria. Over the past three years, the share of households who can afford the median single-family home has continuously declined, falling from 44% to 30% and now 20%.

According to the American Community Survey (ACS), median rent in Hawai‘i was \$1,868 in 2022, the highest in the nation and six hundred dollars more than the national average.

With the highest rents in the country, it is not surprising that households in Hawai‘i struggle to pay rent. Across the state, 56% of households are rent-burdened (spending more than 30% of their income on rent) while 28% are severely rent-burdened (spending more than half their income on rent).

In 2022, more than 67,000 residents departed Hawai‘i for other states, while only 56,000 moved to Hawai‘i, resulting in an 11,000 resident net domestic outflow, draining nearly a full percent of the state population. [] 10 of the 11 most recent years with data available showed a net outflow. [] [] High housing costs consistently appear in surveys as a leading cause of why residents leave Hawai‘i for other states.

Regulatory costs make up over half the purchase price of a new condominium in the state. A recent UHERO report examines why new condominium prices are so high in Hawai‘i relative to other states. A new condominium in Hawai‘i has a median value of nearly \$700,000, which is double the price in the average state, and six times the price in the cheapest state. We find Hawai‘i has both the highest construction costs and highest land costs of any state in the US, both contributing to higher condo prices. However, these costs add up to less than half of the market price of a new condominium. The remaining condo price premium is a result of the many ways condominium supply is artificially restrained, which lowers supply and drives up prices.

Regulatory costs include steep developer fees, severe limits on where condos can be legally built, multi-year permit wait times, and requirements for developers to include affordable units. These costs discourage new construction, lower the supply of housing, and cause higher market prices. The analysis implies that loosening regulatory restrictions on housing could substantially lower condominium sales prices.

Source: <https://uhero.hawaii.edu/the-hawaii-housing-factbook-2024/>

## HONOLULU

Source: <https://uhero.hawaii.edu/the-hawaii-housing-factbook-2024/>

Net Housing Units over past 5 yrs:  $23,401/369,775 = 6.3\%$

Harris: 3 m. over 4 years = 3.5 m. over 5 years.

Total Homes: 3.5 m./144 m. = 2.4% (77% national need).

## Housing Stock

Number of housing units.....	369,775	(1/4)
Median age of housing units.....	48 years	(1/4)
Net housing units added over past five years ..	23,401	(1/4)
New projects permitted over past five years:		
Single-family homes.....	2,434	(2/4)
Median processing time.....	181 days	(3/4)
Multi-family developments.....	268	(1/4)
Median processing time.....	386 days	(3/4)
Active short-term vacation rentals (STRs) .....	9,021	(2/4)
STRs as percentage of housing .....	2.4%	(4/4)

HNL: 4.5 m./144 m. ratio applied to 369,775 = 11,555 over 5 yrs.  
yearly = 2,310

To afford a median-priced home of \$402,343, Americans need an annual income of \$110,871. California requires the highest annual salary to afford a typical home at \$197,057, followed by Hawaii: \$185,829 (**168%** higher than national average).

Source: <https://www.bankrate.com/real-estate/home-affordability-in-current-housing-market-study/>

California must plan for **more than 2.5 million homes** over the next eight-year cycle, and no less than one million of those homes must meet the needs of lower-income households. This represents **more than double the housing planned** for in the last eight-year cycle.

Source: <https://statewide-housing-plan-cahcd.hub.arcgis.com/>

That's 312,500 a year. Hawaii is .037 of CA, so here: 11,562 *a year!* 50% subsidized, so 5,781 a year for social housing.

“Stable growth will result from continued strength in construction industry activity, overcoming relative weakness in the tourism sector,” DBEDT said in an executive summary of the report released Thursday. “We expect the construction industry will continue to lead our economic recovery in the next few years,” Tokioka said.

According to the report, construction spending statewide jumped 12.7% during the first four months of this year, based on industry tax receipts. That compares with a 9.8% gain in 2023 over 2022. 2023’s increase represented about \$1 billion in additional construction spending. The number of construction jobs, according to DBEDT, totaled 41,200 during the first seven months of this year and represents an industry record.

Hawaii’s housing market is another sector contributing to economic growth this year. DBEDT reported that sales of new and previously owned homes statewide grew 25.2% during the first half of this year and that the average sale price was up 10.1% for single-family houses and 1.5% for condominiums. The report also noted that 27.8% of all those sales were made to out-of-state buyers, representing the highest share since 2011.

— Andrew Gomes, HSA

<https://www.staradvertiser.com/2024/09/06/hawaii-news/booming-construction-helps-buoy-hawaiis-economy-as-tourism-lags/>

Hawaii is an especially desirable place to live—unless you’re trying to buy or rent a home.

Since the start of 2017, home prices are up 50% while rents have soared 47%. Hawaii is now the most expensive state in the U.S., both by median rent (over \$2,200) and home price (\$839,000).

What explains these high costs? Hawaii’s housing shortage is the main culprit. Over the past decade, Hawaii has added just 0.8% per year to its housing stock, not nearly enough to keep up with demand. And as anyone who has ever bought or sold a home knows, when housing is in

short supply, it's a seller's market, and when housing is plentiful, it's a buyer's market. [Rents work the same way](#)

[Oahu office vacancies](#)—currently topping 13%—offer an opportunity to revive micro-units and quickly make a dent in homelessness. Allowing vacant offices to be converted into low-cost housing, often called adaptive reuse, [allows for] reducing vacancies, reviving downtowns, adding rental homes, and reducing homelessness. These conversions have been very [expensive for conventional apartments](#). But there is initial evidence that [conversions to micro-units](#) with shared bathrooms and kitchens are economically viable.

— Alex Horowitz, Pew

<https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/about/news-room/opinion/2024/04/09/zoning-reform-can-cure-hawaiis-housing-struggles>

## SROs

In the 1950s, single-room occupancy hotels (SROs) comprised 10 percent of New York's housing stock. But in the postwar years, American norms began to shift[.]. In 1955, New York City banned the new construction of SROs in the city. Zoning codes everywhere were tweaked to discourage anything but single-family residences. [By one estimate](#), 1 million SRO units were lost between the 1970s and the 1990s.

“Many people attribute the growth of street homelessness in the '80s to the loss of this SRO stock that began in the '60s,” says Dennis Culhane, professor of social policy and homelessness at the University of Pennsylvania.

Rooms for rent with shared bathrooms and kitchens are still embraced when it comes to dormitories and other forms of student housing.

[Proposed Philadelphia] legislation would not allow single-room residences in neighborhoods zoned for single family [and] includes the proviso that they cannot be within 500 feet of each other in any part of the city.

— Jake Blumgart, Governing

<https://www.governing.com/community/sro-housing-nearly-zoned-out-of-existence-could-re-emerge>

Copenhagen

U.S. homeownership affordability [] remains at historical lows, with home prices now at 7.6 times median income, a significant increase from the previous peak in 2006 of 6.8 times median income. . . . states, localities and private actors have begun to take the crisis into their own hands, driving novel solutions across housing trust funds, development entities, land use and more. This focus on bottom-up innovations would benefit greatly from models developed in other countries. . . . Denmark offers one such model.

Although only about 4 percent of Americans live in subsidized affordable housing, 20 percent of Danes live in affordable housing, which typically rents at about half of the market rate, or in what is known as “social housing,” priced at about one-third of the market rate.

- city governments are mandated by the national government to require developers to set aside 25 percent of all new housing construction (including major renovations) for affordable and social housing. Within this 25 percent allocation, a subsection of 30 percent is reserved for social housing.
- national government provides a 40-year interest-free loan to developers to keep the affordable and social housing rentals below market rates. These interest-free loans account for about a fourth of the entire construction cost or loan financing
- Within 30 years, the mortgage is repaid. During the subsequent 10 years, the government interest rate-free loan is repaid. Thereafter, the rental revenue flows right back into the housing corporations
- Once rental revenue is translated to reinvestment capital, one-third flows back into the individual housing estate for maintenance and improvements. Two-thirds flows into the industrywide National Building Fund, which is also private, and the fund in turn redistributes its share into the industry

[The] revolving finance model [] emphasizes long-term sustainability rather than quick-fix solutions.

for the U.S. to adapt:

- The disposition of public assets, such as land and buildings, to enable the financing of affordable and social housing
- The use of long-term, low-cost capital to subsidize below-market-rate rents (which is already part of [Montgomery County, Md.’s approach](#) to inclusionary zoning)
- The scaling of affordable and social housing corporations, which builds financial capacity and market acumen, enabling greater intervention in the housing market

— Luise Noring, *Governing*

<https://www.governing.com/urban/addressing-americas-housing-crisis-lessons-from-denmark>

Articles removed from Firefox tabs:

<https://www.cNBC.com/2024/08/14/heres-where-rent-concessions-are-happening-the-most-in-the-us-.html>

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2024/08/20/kamala-harris-housing-plan-obstacles-construction/>

<https://www.aspern-seestadt.at/en>

<https://calmatters.org/housing/2024/08/coastal-commission-bills-die/>

To paraphrase Vince Lombardi, “Housing isn’t everything, it’s the only thing.”

It takes too long for Americans to reach the level of economic security that they need to feel comfortable marrying and bringing children into the world. Changing cultural attitudes is important, but we should also seek lower housing costs

— George Hawley, City Journal

[https://www.city-journal.org/article/about-those-childless-cat-ladies?utm\\_source=virtuous&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=cjdaily](https://www.city-journal.org/article/about-those-childless-cat-ladies?utm_source=virtuous&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=cjdaily)

Stay at the Ching. Invest in the Ching. Leave Halawa for *low-cost housing* with room for vegetable and lei gardens, a community learning center, and maybe small-business incubator [emphasis added]. Keep UH football on the UH campus where the UH community can easily fill the student section (or watch surreptitiously from the parking garage.) Build a local fan base. Build a community. Build some shade.

— Lee Cataluna, Civil Beat

[https://www.civilbeat.org/?p=1669650&utm\\_source=Civil+Beat+Master+List&utm\\_campaign=807735e0e7-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2023\\_11\\_29\\_12\\_00\\_COPY\\_01&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_-82a4618625-%5BLIST\\_EMAIL\\_ID%5D&mc\\_cid=807735e0e7&mc\\_eid=45b24fb0d6](https://www.civilbeat.org/?p=1669650&utm_source=Civil+Beat+Master+List&utm_campaign=807735e0e7-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2023_11_29_12_00_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-82a4618625-%5BLIST_EMAIL_ID%5D&mc_cid=807735e0e7&mc_eid=45b24fb0d6)

And BusRider33:

Completely agree with Lee's perspective. A size-appropriate stadium for our state and at the university is what we need. Aloha Stadium always felt too big. *That space can be used for desperately needed affordable housing.*

## Vienna

how reasonable [Vienna's] rents are compared with London, New York and most other European capitals. The reason [ — ] Vienna City Council's radical social housing policy. It is the largest property owner in Europe. Some 60 per cent of the population live in high-quality subsidised housing, including middle-class families and young professionals.

In Vienna, the wide availability of subsidised housing has moderated rents in the private sector — the average monthly price for a 60 sq m [646 sq ft] flat in the city is €767 [\$850], according to the Mietspiegel rental index for 2022, with social rents significantly lower. Added to that, tenants have high levels of protection against rent rises and evictions. Having a comfortable and affordable roof over your head is critical to a sense of security and happiness — and, some economists have argued, productivity.

[60 per cent of Vienna] population lives in some form of subsidised housing, according to official data.

Vienna city hall continues to have “an active land policy”, requiring developments of more than 150 units to have two-thirds subsidised housing

types of social housing in Vienna. Gemeindebau are council flats owned by the city and allocated through a points-based system. Co-operatives are non-profit housing associations in which residents buy shares. Subsidised apartments are built by public-private development corporations with money invested by the city. Most of these are built on brownfield sites.

“Have a loud party late at night and your neighbours will call the police,” [a British expat] says, “but liveability is not about cool. It's about enjoying an easy life for you and your family. Most people live in flats, they don't have gardens. They place much more importance on public space.”

— Kirsty Lang, Financial Times

<https://www.ft.com/content/05719602-89c6-4bbc-9bbe-5842fd0c3693>

California housing regulators are pushing local governments across the state to permit 315,000 new units every year until the end of the decade — a [pace of construction](#) without precedent in California.

— Ben Christopher, “Cal Matters”

<https://calmatters.org/housing/2024/08/coastal-commission-bills-die/>

CA population: 39.54 m.

HI population: 1.45 m.

Ratio: 27.25x

HI = 3.7% CA's size

In HI = 11,655 a year! 58,275 by decade's end.

Vance said one of the things he hears a lot from people he meets and talks to on the trail is the struggle to achieve the American dream of homeownership.

“It is the most common complaint that I hear, and I hear the same exact complaint coming from younger people versus more elderly people, but the perspective on it is slightly different,” he said.

Vance said he hears frustration from the young people and heartache from the elderly.

“Young people tell me that when their parents were their age, they could work and as long as they played by the rules and did a good job, they could afford to buy a home,” he said. “They could put down some roots.”

“When you talk to their grandparents they'll say, ‘Well, we just want our kids to be able to have as good of a life as we did, and we're worried they're not going to,’” he explained. “And we are worried that they have no prospects of home ownership, and they'd like to build a life down the street from us but they can't because they can't afford it.”

— Salena Zito, Washington Examiner

<https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/columnists/3138057/what-really-happened-vance-erie/>

At the Democratic convention, leaders including Kamala Harris and Barack Obama built on existing momentum in both red and blue states — including Harris' home state of California — and called for an overhaul of local zoning laws that act as barriers to new and cheaper housing. But the federal government has limited influence on these rules.

it's a political risk for Democrats to confront housing. The issue has proven to be a liability for them in some of the cities they control, fueled by notoriously intense, 'Not in my backyard' or NIMBY fights that have already gifted a potent line of attack to Republicans

it's a political risk for Democrats to confront housing. The issue has proven to be a liability for them in some of the cities they control, fueled by notoriously intense, 'Not in my backyard' or NIMBY fights that have already gifted a potent line of attack to Republicans

Adrienne Todman, who leads the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, said at the CNN-POLITICO Grill at the DNC, adding that “we need to be doing everything we can to break down those barriers” that have contributed to a [housing shortage in the millions](#).

But it's also a sign of how hard it's become for Democrats to ignore the growing chorus of voters who can't find affordable housing or are priced out of buying homes. Now they want to flip the script and own an issue impacting large swaths of Americans as it [becomes a centerpiece](#) of Harris' campaign.

Affordable housing "has to be" top of the agenda, Adrienne Todman, who leads the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, said at the CNN-POLITICO Grill at the DNC, adding that "we need to be doing everything we can to break down those barriers" that have contributed to a [housing shortage in the millions](#).

The specific push for zoning and land use reform highlighted by Obama's DNC call to "clear away some of the outdated laws and regulations that make it harder to build homes"

California and San Francisco in particular have become the poster child for unaffordability, with expensive housing fueling waves of homelessness that burden city services and repel people and businesses. State lawmakers have responded, passing laws that streamline permits for affordable housing and banning single-unit zoning, an effort seen as critical to paving the way for more building.

Red and blue states alike have pursued similar paths as lawmakers in state capitals have taken zoning power away from localities. Washington state and Vermont have also effectively banned single-family zoning. New York Gov. Kathy Hochul and Colorado Gov. Jared Polis have made housing reform top priorities. They both found out the hard way how politically combustible the issue is even within their party

Conservative states like Montana have taken action, too, [appealing to an anti-California sentiment](#) in a push to keep the state affordable for locals after a rush of homebuyers hailing from liberal enclaves swooped in to buy cheaper housing during the Covid-19 pandemic.

with top Democrats from Obama to Harris to Polis to House Financial Services ranking member Maxine Waters devoting substantial time to the issue at the DNC, the push from the national ranks to apply pressure for more and cheaper housing is unmistakable. There could be wide appeal, from younger people disillusioned by the housing market to more conservative-leaning voters who are also feeling squeezed.

Harris has [focused on housing policies](#) that could be tough sells in Congress, including up to \$25,000 in federal down payment assistance for first-time homebuyers, a \$40 billion "innovation fund" to encourage localities to build more housing and [cracking down on rent hikes](#). The Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget, a nonpartisan nonprofit, [estimated Harris' economic agenda would increase deficits](#) by \$1.7 trillion over a decade.

Much [] comes down to state and local zoning and land-use regulations that can make it prohibitively expensive — and in some cities outright impossible — to build affordable units. Regulations from all levels of government typically account for 25 percent of the cost of building a new single-family home and about 30 percent of the cost of building a new apartment building, according to the National Association of Home Builders.

For Democrats, it's a test of whether they can overcome being their own worst enemy at times. Wealthy homeowners, some liberal, have historically acted as an immovable force to block zoning changes or affordable housing projects.

Now, pro-housing Democratic candidates “can go out and say, ‘I am with Barack Obama. I believe this is a problem. I support our presidential nominee when she says this is a problem.’ If you’re a mayoral candidate, are you suddenly not on the side of Barack Obama?” said Bobak Esfandiari, a YIMBY activist in San Francisco who was at the DNC. “It sets up a very healthy contrast.”

— Jordan Wolman and Melanie Mason, Politico  
<https://www.politico.com/news/2024/08/25/democrats-housing-costs-00176265>

Melanie Mason

***Tiffani McCoy [is] leader of the movement to bring social housing to Seattle. She led the coalition that passed [Initiative 135](#) last year, creating a social housing developer for the city. House Our Neighbors [is] currently collecting signatures for another ballot initiative that would provide a steady source of funding for the social housing developer. The proposal would tax compensation over \$1 million [], generating an estimated \$50 million per year.***

I'm really close with Senator Stanley Chang in Hawaii who has been pushing Aloha Homes for the past five plus years, based on a Singaporean model. And then Assemblymember Alex Lee in California, what he's doing is really, really exciting continuing to advance this regardless of all the obstacles. One of our groups that's meeting with us quarterly is from San Diego. Those are students and youth with the Sunrise San Diego movement that are looking to potentially do a county ballot initiative. In DC they're potentially starting to explore a ballot initiative as well.

Public housing in the United States over the decades has been set up to fail, because you cannot sustain a building when you're segregating out a community based on income. It's not mathematically possible. But we continue to do this thing in the United States where we focus only on the lowest income, and some people are really attached to that model. They think it's really important that those with the most need get the public dollars. That's something that's been levied against us from low-income housing advocates.

[We] have this scarcity mindset. There's not enough LIHTC. Vouchers — don't even get me started on the waitlists, those are absolutely insane and quite frankly an embarrassment.

Montgomery County shows us [] you can utilize the tools that are there right now, and you can produce more low-income housing in a given year with a mixed-income social housing project than you would have been able to do with just HUD. So either we explore that, lean into it, figure out what we can learn from that and implement it here, or we can spend all of our time and energy trying to get the federal government to add more money to LIHTC and to vouchers.

For us, with our ballot initiative, making sure that this housing was permanently affordable was non-negotiable.

There was a study comparing Vienna and Ireland during an economic bust. You still see housing production in Vienna increasing, whereas in Ireland, it drops because the public sector there isn't as strong. When housing is a public good, you're still producing it even during a bust year because you're not worried about the profit.

— Benjamin Schneider

<https://benjaminschneider.substack.com/p/social-housing-lands-in-america>

in Hawaii. [] the state government is pushing ahead with a concept known as social housing: government-built housing that's available to people across the income distribution. The state has already begun the process of redeveloping roughly 1,000 low-density public housing units into nearly [11,000 social housing](#) units across nine sites. Much has been made of the [politics and economics](#) behind this form of housing tenure. But there's been less talk of the urbanism of Hawaii's plans. State Senator Stanley Chang, the leading champion of social housing in Hawaii, envisions "forests of towers" with thousands of residents next to the newly opened metro stations in the Honolulu suburbs.

"We're very fortunate with the Skyline [metro system], because the state is the largest land owner along the Skyline and most of the stations are on parcels where there's a potential for large-scale redevelopment," he said in a recent interview. "With this proposal, we can credibly say not one inch of existing greenfield agricultural conservation land will ever be touched."

local government in the U.S., and particularly in California, is set up to shrink or block urban development projects, not lead them. The levers of the urban development process—zoning,

environmental review, community engagement—tend to facilitate smaller projects than developers would like to build, or which the economic fundamentals demand. Local residents, in turn, have grown accustomed to a political system whose core function is keeping the cityscape largely as it is.

— Benjamin Schneider

<https://www.fastcompany.com/91170982/california-forever-wasnt-radical-enough>

the US's largest source of unsubsidized affordable homes is what's known as [manufactured housing](#), a higher-quality version of what were once known as mobile homes. . . . What's really needed is both limited financial support and sensible deregulation. Bipartisan [legislation](#) in Congress that would allow homes to be manufactured without a permanent steel chassis would foster [design innovation](#) and competition, boosting affordable options for homeowners.

bolder ideas [] include [using data](#) to help communities understand the limits imposed by zoning, [encouraging](#) affordable housing design [innovations](#) to win local support, and discouraging counterproductive "inclusionary zoning" requirements that force apartment developers to rent units at below-market prices.

there's only one way out of this crisis: Start building again.

— *Bloomberg* Editorial

<https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2024-08-12/trump-harris-should-go-big-on-building-more-to-lower-housing-costs?srnd=undefined&leadSource=verify%20wall>

“There isn't any magic that the Viennese have divined,” says John Paraskevopoulos, legislative director for New York State Assembly member Emily Gallagher. Paraskevopoulos says is that America's ambitious housing programs have regularly been undercut or abandoned outright. But he and a growing movement of housing advocates believe New York can also adopt [social housing](#), a model that [promotes](#) permanent affordability, social equity and democratic resident control.

Now a bill to create the statewide Social Housing Development Authority (SHDA) — as designed by Paraskevopoulos and a brain trust of various housing advocates, tenant rights activists, policy wonks, labor leaders and other lawmakers — has been introduced in the New York State Legislature. The authority's goal is to utilize a variety of tools to finance, build, convert or maintain permanently affordable, union-built housing for people throughout the state.

**Paraskevopoulos:** The model of American homeownership that our country has relied on basically since the Great Depression is no longer working for people. The traditional model was that everyone should be able to get a home through a mortgage insured by the federal government. That's how you pass on intergenerational wealth; that's how you develop equity that

you can use to retire on. *Rising home costs and property values have made this basically impossible for younger generations.* [emphasis added]

In 1968, Governor Rockefeller wanted to create a statewide housing authority that would build subsidized housing that would be mixed-income and permanently affordable. The governor forced this proposal through the state legislature and created the Urban Development Corporation.

The UDC wanted to build housing for all New Yorkers and wanted to build it at an extremely fast pace. They wanted it to be mixed income, desegregated, and affordable. They wanted to



build things that were innovative in terms of design, that people wanted to live in, and that were nice. Between '68 and '75, they built 33,000 units of housing across the state (see picture). They redeveloped Roosevelt Island.

in New York, all [replacement] models, although successful, were sort of fitful – they were subject to the whims of changing administrations and shifting national politics. We would start a program and then it would be defunded two decades later. We aggressively expanded public housing, and then everything began to be defunded in the '70s and '80s. Limited-equity coops and [Housing Development Fund Companies] were incentivized, but really only to take over buildings that had been abandoned by landlords during the '70s and '80s.

I think in retrospect, to build a lot of deeply affordable housing, it can't be revenue neutral. It's just a fact that it's going to need subsidies in order to maintain that ability to build below market, keep acquiring housing and property and to maintain permanent affordability.

— Leo Miranda, Next City

<https://nextcity.org/features/social-housing-vienna-new-york-history-shda>

Some agencies like the Housing Opportunities Commission of Montgomery County, Maryland, and Massachusetts' MassHousing, have recently begun to dip their toes in this space with construction lending programs, dubbed the [Housing Production Fund](#) (HPF) and [Momentum Fund](#), respectively. These programs provide sketches of a national model to accelerate housing development across the business cycles, and indeed, across the country.

In order to move capital into projects, lenders must be willing to make the construction loans. With a housing construction fund on the back-end ready to buy those loans once they are made, lenders will have more willingness to write the loans.

housing finance agencies (HFAs) operate both single-family homeownership loan programs and affordable and mixed-income multifamily housing programs. On the multifamily side, HFAs often run the state's Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program and issue short- and long-term tax-exempt bonds to fund construction and permanent loans for supported affordable housing developments. Many of these agencies are quite sophisticated in their use of public financing tools to support housing development and are in the business of finding ways to make projects work—a difference they have with conventional banks.

From the point of view of the housing construction fund, who makes the loan is less relevant than what backs the loan. Whether it comes from a bank or an HFA underwriting the risk depends far more on the housing project itself.

Underwriters will assess a property's riskiness . . . based on expectations for the property's cash flows; its hard costs, such as construction and permitting; and the other sources of capital funding the project. . . in economic environments with high rates and low loan-to-value ratios, lenders are nervous about entering into deals that already have very high costs attached, let alone to try to lower those costs. Viable projects thus get stuck in limbo.

A financing lever with the ability to partially insulate housing investment from the volatility of the business cycle has been, until now, a missing piece among the existing array of tools and interventions. We hope that a housing construction fund, as outlined here, can fill that gap

— Paul E. Williams & Yakov Feygin, Center for Public Enterprise

<https://publicenterprise.org/report/smoothing-the-housing-investment-cycle/>

(then access report PDF file)

*Demographia International Housing Affordability* rates middle-income housing affordability in 94 major housing markets in eight nations: Australia, Canada, China, Ireland, New Zealand, Singapore, the United Kingdom, and the United States. *Demographia International Housing Affordability* uses a price-to-income ratio, the “median multiple” to rate middle-income housing affordability. The median multiple is a price-to-income ratio of the median house price divided by the gross median household income.

In a well-functioning market, median priced houses should be affordable to middle-income households, as they were in virtually all markets before the inception of more restrictive land use policies, especially urban containment. Only a few markets had adopted such policies by the 1970s, with many more to follow. Middle-income housing affordability has been rated in four categories, ranging from the most affordable (“affordable”) to the least affordable (severely unaffordable),

[Now] we add a new category, “impossibly unaffordable,” which will apply to markets with a median multiple triple or more the “affordable” standard (3.0) which predominated in most geographies only three decades ago. The term ‘impossible’ was selected to convey the extreme difficulty faced by middle-income households in affording housing at a median multiple of 9.0. This level of unaffordability did not exist just over three decades ago. Furthermore, securing financing for a house at this median multiple is largely impossible for middle-income households.

Singapore established the Housing and Development Board (HDB), adopted policies to *...encourage a property-owning democracy in Singapore and to enable Singapore citizens in the lower middle-income group to own their own homes.* This objective has been largely achieved, with Singapore’s home ownership rate at+ 90%.

The United States had five impossibly unaffordable markets, four of which are located in California. San Jose was the least affordable major US housing market in 2023, with a median multiple of 11.9 (91st internationally). Los Angeles was the second least affordable in the US (90th internationally), with a median multiple of 10.9, ranking, while San Francisco (CA) had a 9.7 median multiple and San Diego’s median multiple was 9.5. Honolulu was the third least affordable, with a median multiple of 10.5 (89th internationally).

there has been a strong association between severely unaffordable housing and net domestic out-migration. This is indicated in a review of housing affordability in virtually all of the geographies of the United States

Land prices are now much more expensive, and house prices relative to household incomes have tripled in markets such as San Francisco, Sydney, Vancouver, Honolulu and Auckland. These early urban containment markets have each had house prices that are the equivalent of 9 to 15 years of household income.

In the United States. . . more than 85% of the cost-of-living difference between the most [and least] expensive markets is due to higher housing costs.

Urban containment, as explained by its own proponents, is contrasted with “...traditional approaches to land use regulation by the presence of policies that are explicitly designed to limit the development of land outside a defined urban area...”<sup>7</sup> Each of these strategies reduces the

land available for development of middle-income housing in the form that most households prefer (ground oriented, such as detached and semi-detached or row houses). The middle-class is under siege principally due to the escalation of land costs. the middle-class, whose existence depends upon the very competitive land market destroyed by the planning orthodoxy.<sup>9</sup>

All of the Impossibly Unaffordable Markets in Demographia International Housing Affordability follow the “international planning orthodoxy”

Source: Access the PDF @:

<https://www.hawaiinewsnow.com/2024/06/15/report-honolulu-is-one-5-impossibly-unaffordable-us-housing-markets/?tbref=hp>

We are more likely to believe that “housing is a human right” than conservatives in Florida or Texas, but less likely to actually get people housed. We accept a yawning gulf between our values and our outcomes.

The two states with the highest rates of unsheltered homelessness are California and Oregon. . . . We in the West impeded home construction in ways that made cities unaffordable, especially for people of color. We let increasing numbers of people struggle with homelessness, particularly Black and brown people.

What matters is improving opportunities and quality of life, and the best path to do that is a relentless empiricism — which clashes with the West Coast’s indifference to the laws of economics.

The basic reason for homelessness on the West Coast is an enormous shortage of housing that drives up rents. California lacks [about three million](#) housing units, in part because it’s difficult to get permission to build.

As long as there is such a vast shortage, housing is like musical chairs. Move one family into housing, and another won’t get a home.

Public sector efforts to build housing are often ruinously expensive, with “affordable housing” [sometimes costing more than \\$1 million per unit](#), so the private sector is critical. Yet one element of progressive purity is suspicion of the private sector, and this hobbles efforts to make businesses part of the solution.

Perhaps on the West Coast we have ideological purity because there isn’t much political competition. Republicans are irrelevant in much of the Far West, so they can’t hold Democrats’ feet to the fire — leading Democrats in turn to wander unchecked farther to the left.

Without opposition party oversight, problems aren’t always fixed expeditiously. For example, some blue states have well-intentioned laws meant to protect citizens from involuntary

commitment to mental institutions — but these days, with drugs and untreated mental illness interacting to produce psychosis, such laws can crush the people they’re supposed to help.

— Nicholas Kristoff, New York Times

<https://dnyuz.com/2024/06/15/what-have-we-liberals-done-to-the-west-coast/>

*Sons, Daughters, and Sidewalk Psychotics* points the way to a more honest debate about community mental health. Housing isn’t health care. Third-party insurance-payment mechanisms are a strange fit for care for the seriously mentally ill, whose needs are more complex than short-term medical interventions can provide. Claims about how capitalism causes injustice in mental health should be discounted in view of rich people’s weakness for quacks and cure-alls. Though much of Gong’s analysis emphasizes differences between modes of care for the poor and rich, readers may find something tragically unifying about the challenge of untreated serious mental illness.

[Stephen Eide](#) is a senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute, a contributing editor of City Journal, and the author of [Homelessness in America](#).

Source: [https://www.city-journal.org/article/class-based-analysis-of-mental-health-care-in-los-angeles?utm\\_source=mailchimp&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=cjdaily](https://www.city-journal.org/article/class-based-analysis-of-mental-health-care-in-los-angeles?utm_source=mailchimp&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=cjdaily)

[Vienna: How the City of Ideas Created the Modern World](#), by Richard Cockett (Yale University Press, 464 pp., \$35)

[https://www.city-journal.org/article/review-of-vienna-how-the-city-of-ideas-created-the-modern-world?utm\\_source=mailchimp&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=cjweekly](https://www.city-journal.org/article/review-of-vienna-how-the-city-of-ideas-created-the-modern-world?utm_source=mailchimp&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=cjweekly)

Cockett stresses the pervasive disagreement that marked the Viennese world of ideas. Red Vienna’s Marxist intellectuals and politicians, for example, were explicit about trying to produce a “new man” via top-down planning in areas ranging from the economy to housing policy. That produced sharp ripostes from figures like the economist Ludwig von Mises, who showed how socialism could not replicate anything like the signaling function of free prices as a conveyor and coordinator of economic information. Likewise, Hayek argued that many of his fellow Austrians’ exaltation of the scientific method led them — whether liberals or Marxists — into errors of scientism. . . . these disputes, Cockett points out, eventually figured among the twentieth century’s most important intellectual debates: most notably that of planning versus markets, which in turn reflected arguments about the nature and limits of reason.

Australia follows Singapore:



Economist and author Cameron Murray has proposed a bold idea to help solve Australia's housing woes – HouseMate. [social housing]

“When people talk about solving the housing issue, they miss the

fact that if we make home prices and rents considerably cheaper, we're screwing over the majority of Australians – the 66 per cent who own a home, and the 18 per cent who are landlords. I'm fine with that, but politically, you've got to accept that it's not going to happen. So, why don't we just leave that part alone – let it slide – and focus on renters, the ones who are really suffering. They're the future homebuyers that we could offer a better option to, and therefore we're kind of 'solving' the whole market."

"My calculations suggest building these homes on land that would cost little. . . . would by itself cut the price 20 per cent to 35 per cent. The lower interest rate, and the use of superannuation (pension) savings for both the deposit and repayments, would cut [the price further, and] the 'after super' cost saved by as much [as] 50 per cent to 70 per cent. Because the use of super would be quarantined to new HouseMate homes, it would be unlikely to push up the price of existing homes."

#### Australia looks at Vienna:

Enormous housing costs make people "slaves" to their jobs and the pursuit of unsustainable economic growth, Alex Baumann, a sessional lecturer in the School of Social Sciences and Psychology at Western Sydney University, said.

A model worth considering is the one found in Vienna in Austria, where major investments in public housing and rent price controls mean 80 per cent of residents spend only 20 per cent to 25 per cent of their incomes on housing.

Vienna "redefines land *and housing* as social or common goods, rather than just as market commodities. After all, land, like air and water, is not a market good but part of our collective natural heritage. "*The main barrier is inadequate funding of public housing,*" he said.

"But as the housing crisis deepens, public housing is attracting more funding which could be applied to innovative housing models. The right model of public housing could eventually be expanded toward the high levels seen in places such as Vienna and Singapore. . . . widespread global adoption of public forms of housing could help balance the downsides of our current absolute reliance on economic growth."

— Shannon Molloy, [news.com.au](https://www.news.com.au)

<https://www.news.com.au/finance/real-estate/buying/a-leading-economist-has-come-up-with-a-radical-plan-to-end-australias-housing-woes-once-and-for-all/news-story/05d38242700b27f4d193ff1cd5417da6>

Legislators in states including California, Minnesota, Montana, New York, Oregon, and Texas have reached for . . . loosening zoning and development laws to speed construction, expanding renter protections for tenants and increasing funding for subsidized housing.

In . . . blue states, where land use tends to be more heavily regulated — there is [serious](#) and [organized opposition](#) to these policies. Especially at a local level, voters have blocked

developments of all sizes. (In many places, the divide over what to do about housing comes down to homeowners versus renters, rather than breaking along more typical political lines.)

conference attendees were young people in their prime homebuying years. They also tended to be people whose interest in politics was sparked by economic policy. Whichever party they identified with, they shared a collective belief that what America needs most is “abundance,” a new buzzword to denote a broader pro-growth mind-set of which YIMBYism is part.

“There’s a group of people, Republicans and Democrats, who want to slow down growth — they’re preservationists, they’re protectionists. And there is the other side of things which says let’s build things again.”

—Conor Dougherty, NYT

<https://edinaneighborsforaffordablehousing.org/the-surprising-left-right-alliance-that-wants-more-apartments-in-suburbs/>

although zoning and planning are local actions, the only way to build the millions of housing units California desperately needs is through state-level reform.

The state has enormous power to change the housing story in California. It sets the planning framework within which regional and local governments function. It has the funding power to deliver infrastructure where it is needed and to withhold infrastructure from places that should not support intensive development. The state can pass laws that supersede local zoning regulations, as it has been doing with greater frequency over the past several years. The state also has more tools to solve . . . housing scarcity,

We recommend that the state create a standalone housing agency to focus solely on all aspects of housing production and policy in California.

the processes to get feedback on development plans should not just include the usual suspects — those with the time and resources to participate. If our public processes are going to truly reflect the public, effort needs to go into ensuring that everyone can participate, including people who have inflexible jobs, people whose primary language is not English, people who don’t track land use changes in their limited free time, people with small children, people who work in a community but don’t have an opportunity to live there yet, and people who may not want to spend hours attending a hearing so that they can speak for two or three minutes. All of these people are members of the community with critical perspectives to share.

—Sarah Karlinsky, SPUR — San Francisco Bay Area **P**lanning and **U**rban **R**esearch Association  
<https://www.spur.org/news/2024-01-29/solutions-californias-housing-crisis-start-state-qa-sarah-karlinsky>

Form follows zoning. Form follows land use regulations. Form follows building codes. Form follows the developers who craft our built environment. And form follows finance. If we work hard to get the form right, who knows what magic we can create.

— Coby Lefkowitz

<https://www.noahpinion.blog/p/why-small-developers-are-getting>

**zoning** [] is particularly a problem in our biggest cities, where zoning can prevent development, often of multifamily housing, which is cheaper per unit and therefore cheaper for renters. The restrictions on multifamily housing or housing of a certain height certainly contribute to supply problems. It's Economics 101: If you have high demand and low supply, this will lead to higher prices.

you're typically seeing blue states taking action against their own blue cities. . . . The idea is to prevent these local governments from responding to interested citizens who will be typically voting against increased density, against multifamily housing and against other forms of supply increases like accessory dwelling units or granny flats

the motives can sometimes be hard to disentangle. Are . . . they about preventing people of a particular class from moving into these neighborhoods and protectionism around the amenities that you get if you live in a richer single-family area?

where the local governments are slow to come along, that is a space for the state to start to examine the puzzle and get involved. . . . such as controlling funding, which it can use to try to encourage localities to do the right thing and respond to the crisis in our midst.

There's also generational change . . . — millennials and Gen Z tend to recognize that without serious change, we're not going to be able to afford housing to the extent previous generations have. These things make me hopeful.

— Maureen “Molly” Brady, the Louis D. Brandeis Professor of Law at Harvard

<https://hls.harvard.edu/today/whats-behind-the-us-housing-crunch/>

The White House  
February 29, 2024

### **Boost the Supply and Affordability of Manufactured Homes:**

Manufactured housing is a critical source of affordable housing, especially for low-income, rural, and Native American households and offers a potentially lower-cost pathway to homeownership. More than 20 million Americans currently live in manufactured housing, which is the largest form of unsubsidized affordable housing in the country. Manufactured housing provides an essential path to increasing overall housing supply and offers significant savings over site-built housing. Today, the Biden-Harris Administration is announcing steps to preserve and rehabilitate

existing manufactured home communities and to make it easier to finance the purchase of manufactured homes, including by:

*Releasing a first-of-its-kind \$225 million funding opportunity to support manufactured housing communities.* Today, HUD announced that the application for Preservation and Reinvestment Initiative for Community Enhancement (PRICE) grants is now open to support the preservation and revitalization of manufactured housing communities. These competitive grants can be used for the replacement of dilapidated homes, assistance for homeowners such as repairs and accessibility modifications, mitigation and resilience upgrades, improvement of infrastructure such as stormwater systems or utilities, housing services including eviction prevention, and planning activities. This marks the first time the federal government has made grant funding available specifically for investments in manufactured housing communities, including resident-owned communities. A portion of funds are dedicated to supporting Tribes and tribal nonprofit organizations.

*Preserving the affordability of manufactured housing communities via expanded financing options.* Corporate investors are purchasing manufactured housing communities and driving up rent and driving out longtime residents. Today, FHA is publishing a draft Mortgagee Letter that, once finalized, will create a new program to preserve affordability for existing residents of manufactured housing communities. Under the new program, resident cooperatives and other mission-oriented borrowers will be permitted to use FHA 223(f) multifamily loans to acquire or refinance communities. Designed to complement the PRICE grant program, a PRICE recipient could use this program to purchase the community from its current owner, preserving its long-term affordability and use PRICE funds for critical infrastructure improvements and home repairs. However, eligibility for this program will not be limited to PRICE awardees.

*Increasing loan limits for Title I Manufactured Housing.* This week, FHA published a final rule increasing loan limits for the Title I Manufactured Housing program, which insures loans to finance the purchase or refinancing of manufactured homes titled as personal property. Doing so will allow FHA to better serve low- and moderate-income and first-time buyers of manufactured housing whose financing needs have not been well-served by the private market. Historically, HUD's Title I program has been an important source of financing for manufactured homes, but low loan limits have made the program dormant in recent years. The rule will increase loan limits to be in line with current market prices and enable HUD to regularly update the limits in the future. To support this action, Ginnie Mae revised eligibility requirements for Issuers of its Manufactured Housing Mortgage-Backed Securities program. These actions are intended to reduce barriers to entry for Issuers and increase participation in its securitization program for Title I loans.

These actions build on steps HUD took earlier this year to publish a proposed rule for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program that emphasized the importance of considering the needs of manufactured housing communities during their planning process. HUD also recently updated the CDBG in Support of Housing Activities notice to clarify that communities may use CDBG funds for acquisition of manufactured housing units, services to homeowners of manufactured housing units, and investments in infrastructure and resilience for manufactured housing communities.

# # #

Federal Title I legislation in 1949 adopted the “write-down” approach, wherein local agencies would clear blighted urban plots and sell the land at a discount to housing developers.

Between 1949 and 1968, amid an acute postwar housing shortage, Title I was used to raze 425,000 housing units, with only 125,000 built as replacements. In Chicago’s “Black Belt” — named for the burgeoning African American population just south of the central business district — planners replaced slums with spaced-out project towers of mixed-income housing, several large interstate highways, and the campus of the Illinois Institute of Technology. Here, as in many cities, redevelopment powers meant to reduce poverty were instead used to tackle the perceived threat of that poverty to nearby downtown property values.

The Left [] should be wary of the revival of “supply-side liberalism” and its YIMBY branch in particular, which promise to carry on this market-based, elite-centric approach. We should resist the narrative offered by those who blame government regulation for our housing crisis (rather than market failure), and instead argue for public action to realize a housing policy that prioritizes social utility over the profit motive.

But the history of urban policy in the twentieth century suggests that such a program won’t be forthcoming unless labor or other movements of ordinary people (like tenants’ organizations, for example) can forge strong coalitions to articulate and push an alternative agenda. Those forces are likely the only ones that can stand up to capitalists’ pressures to design housing policy in their own interests.

— Eric Peterson, Jacobin  
<https://jacobin.com/2024/02/housing-policy-urban-renewal-deregulation>

In the last 40 years in the United States, the median purchasing power of family salaries hasn’t kept up with inflation and the increased cost of living. The Pew Research Center defines purchasing power as “real wages,” which they report has not increased in 45 years for median-income earners.

The definition of affordability is relative, and in this case, housing prices have been increasing over time while the average family’s purchasing power hasn’t. Taking all these factors into consideration, builders and developers shouldn’t be discouraged and should still strive to increase the viability of modular construction in the housing market. [emphasis added]

Source: <https://strucsoftsolutions.com/blog/5-modular-construction-myths/>

Gov. Gavin Newsom [promised to deploy 1,200 tiny homes](#) to help shelter the state's growing population of unhoused residents. Newsom unveiled his plans in March to deliver the [tiny homes](#) to Los Angeles, San Diego County, San José and Sacramento. The state has selected six companies to manufacture the dwellings:

- Pallet: a Washington-based company that makes small, fiberglass cabins specifically designed as temporary shelters for unhoused residents. Their dwellings have been used in several California cities, including Oakland, San José and Fresno.
- [Factory OS](#): A Vallejo-based company that makes modular units that can be stacked and turned into apartment buildings or used alone as tiny homes.
- Boss: A Montebello-based tiny home company.
- Irontown Modular: A Utah-based modular construction company.
- AMEG: An El Dorado Hills-based modular home builder.
- Plugin House Company: An Austin, Texas-based modular home company.

The contracts, awarded at the end of October, do not specify how many tiny homes or which tiny home models the state will buy from each vendor, nor how much the state will spend.

Source: <https://www.kqed.org/news/11972474/newsom-administration-makes-progress-on-tiny-home-promise>

why has prefabricated housing struggled to gain traction in the U.S.? Scandinavian countries use it for more than 40% of their housing production, whereas in the U.S. it's less than 4%, according to a 2023 report from consulting firm McKinsey. . . . Vallejo-based [Factory OS](#) has delivered close to 3,000 homes in the last five years and can now build up to 1,000 units per year.

Source: [https://www.instagram.com/kqed\\_forum/p/C2bBsMOvHPf/](https://www.instagram.com/kqed_forum/p/C2bBsMOvHPf/)

State Sen. Angus McKelvey, who represents West Maui, said he hopes the temporary group housing project does move forward, but with “dignified” modular homes — not “the next generation of trailers.” There may end up being enough direct lease units available to meet the number of eligible households, McKelvey said, but many are not located in West Maui.

“This is about keeping the community intact. It’s one of the locations that is suitable to do this,” he said. “And like it or not, that area is the new Lahaina. It’s going to take like 10 or 20 years with the way things are going for Lahaina to come back online.”

“This is the absolute last resort,” FEMA spokesman Victor Inge said Tuesday. “But when we go into a community where there’s been devastation, all the options are on the table.”

Inge said it would be “foolhardy” for FEMA not to make progress on the group temporary housing, just in case it is needed.

The temporary housing project would include: construction of individual pads for modular homes, roads, compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, concrete parking lots, facility lighting, a perimeter fence and water, sanitation and electrical utilities.

McKelvey sees a win-win for the community. He said it could help with the immediate need to house fire survivors while possibly setting up a longer term affordable housing opportunity for residents.

“As long as FEMA continues to be an active player in the rental market, we’re going to see exorbitant amounts of rents,” he said. “The idea should be to create this kind of housing now to basically take the pressure off the rental market in other areas of the island, too.”

— Civil Beat

[https://www.civilbeat.org/2024/01/fema-is-developing-a-last-resort-plan-to-house-maui-fire-survivors-in-kaanapali/?utm\\_source=Civil+Beat+Master+List&utm\\_campaign=bc3b9ac870-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2023\\_11\\_29\\_12\\_00\\_COPY\\_01&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_-82a4618625-%5BLIST\\_EMAIL\\_ID%5D&mc\\_cid=bc3b9ac870&mc\\_eid=45b24fb0d6](https://www.civilbeat.org/2024/01/fema-is-developing-a-last-resort-plan-to-house-maui-fire-survivors-in-kaanapali/?utm_source=Civil+Beat+Master+List&utm_campaign=bc3b9ac870-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2023_11_29_12_00_COPY_01&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_-82a4618625-%5BLIST_EMAIL_ID%5D&mc_cid=bc3b9ac870&mc_eid=45b24fb0d6)

California’s homeless population [increased](#) by 5.8% this year to a total of just over 181,000 homeless people. California also has a higher percentage of its homeless people living on the streets and sleeping outside (roughly 70%) than any other state. It is the worst of both worlds, and it comes even as California has [spent](#) \$17.5 *billion* on homelessness from 2018 to 2022.

In California, that money is funneled through government bureaucracies and homeless activist organizations. Texas spends just a fraction of what California does on homelessness and has seen a drop in homelessness in the past decade, while California’s population has only gone up. . . . Gov. Gavin Newsom (D-CA []) promised to end homelessness in San Francisco in 10 years exactly 20 years ago. . . .

— Zachary Faria, Washington Examiner

<https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/the-only-growing-population-in-california-is-its-homeless-population>

Homes for \$125K each

KAHULUI (HawaiiNewsNow) - Work is underway in Kahului to create a family village and give hope to survivors of [last month’s deadly and devastating wildfires](#).

“The day after the fire we started thinking about what we needed to do,” said [Family Life Center Chief Executive Officer Maude Cumming](#). “So, we started planning, preparing, and eventually came up with this idea.”

Cumming said 160 single-family shelters “with a home-like feel” have been ordered from Hungary to create [Ohana Hope Village](#) off Kuihelani and Maui Veteran’s Highways.

She said most units will double up to fit up to a family of four.

We looked for a product that would be as fire retardant as possible. So, these are metal walls with foam core inside, and they’re really built well. They’re sturdy,” she said.

In addition to a main living area, the pop-up homes will have kitchens, bathrooms and lanais attached to them.

The overall vision is to have playgrounds, gardens, even a community center.

“We’re really trying to be sensitive,” Cumming said. “It is very personal to us because we have friends and family who were impacted.”

The main mission of Family Life Center is housing people who are homeless. Cumming said they are doing their very best with what they have.

“Totally funded by private donations. We’ve raised about 10% that we need,” she said. “We haven’t had any government support to put this project up and we did that intentionally.”

“We want people to know that this is being set up specifically for them by the people.”

Family Life Center officials said the total cost of the project is approximately \$20 million. They said the effort has been funded by foundations, grants, private donors, even in-kind donations.

Their goal is to house approximately 350 people.

Once it’s up and running, they plan to expand.

They hope to have the first families move in by the end of October.

— Hawaii News Now

<https://www.hawaiinewsnow.com/2023/09/20/top-line-tiny-homes-available-hundreds-displaced-by-maui-wildfires/>

Paul Cheng \$50 m. for 1,000 units near Kapalua airport, affordable

<https://www.civilbeat.org/?p=1606301>

## **Steve Garvey**

[https://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2023/10/11/garvey\\_talks\\_baseball\\_common\\_sense\\_and\\_bipartisan\\_appeal\\_149879.html](https://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2023/10/11/garvey_talks_baseball_common_sense_and_bipartisan_appeal_149879.html)

Instead of funneling more taxpayer dollars to curb homelessness after the state has already spent \$20 billion on the effort under Newsom, Garvey said he would bring fresh ideas to the table, including private-sector solutions.

“I think the private sector should get involved in helping to solve the homelessness problem,” he said. “I think hedge funds could do a tremendous amount of good for this country and for the streets of California and the United States.”

Garvey suggested that the hedge-fund executives could voluntarily fund facilities to transition homeless people off the streets and into safe rehabilitation centers to help “stabilize their lives and address the real bottom line, and that’s drugs and mental health.”

The [NYC] plan’s proposal to permit “shared living” arrangements is solid. It would “adjust current rules that mandate larger unit sizes” and allow “more smaller-sized apartments,” whose residents would share kitchens and bathrooms. These are dormitories by another name, perhaps, but they will let tenants choose between lower rents and privacy. Such arrangements have a Gotham history: think of lower East Side tenements, whose residents relied on public baths. We need not go that far, but lower-cost arrangements create natural affordability: more units on the same real estate.

Adams would also encourage the construction of small residential buildings atop commercial enterprises—think of laundromats and pizza parlors. These kinds of arrangements are also part of the city’s history. In Brooklyn, between 1870 and 1940, developers built 45,000 one- to four-family structures with ground floor retail space. These were the places where immigrant entrepreneurs ran businesses downstairs and slept upstairs.

— Howard Husock, a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, is at work on a book about the history of American public housing.

<https://www.city-journal.org/article/new-york-city-needs-housing-variety>

**ALOHA Homes (Affordable Locally Owned Homes for All)**

“Attorney Scott Settle, Managing Principal of Settle & Meyer, joins producer/host Coralie Chun Matayoshi to discuss what progress has been made by Governor Josh Green and the Hawaii State Legislature which just adjourned this month.

“The ALOHA Homes concept, patterned after the Singapore model for affordable housing, has been on the table for several years and finally received passage as a pilot project this year. The program allows the Hawaii Community Development Authority (HCDA) to develop low-cost 99-year leasehold residential condominium units on state and county owned land in urban redevelopment sites within one mile of the Honolulu Rail Transit System. and sell them to qualified residents. The State would contract with a private developer to build the condominium and the developer would recoup costs through unit sales. Homeowners would pay monthly maintenance fees to maintain the property, similar to fee-simple condo ownership, and the state would regain ownership of all units at the end of the 99-year lease. This is a so-called pilot project because there were only minimal funds allocated to the program this year. This will allow HCDA to set up the rules for the initial program and seek from the Legislature additional funding and specific lands to be used in future years.”

— Coralie Chun Matayoshi

<https://www.khon2.com/whats-the-law/where-are-we-on-affordable-housing/>

Somebody who gets housing; Emily Hamilton, George Mason U.

<https://worksinprogress.co/issue/how-dc-densified>

CA population: 39.54 m.

HI population: 1.45 m.

Ratio: 27.25x

HI = 3.7% CA's size

to build social housing, [Alex] Lee pointed to separate state and regional affordable housing bonds, together potentially worth up to \$30 billion (HI=\$1.45b), that could come before voters in 2024. The proposed development agency could also be allowed to issue its own bonds and potentially take out loans from the state treasury. As for running the agency, Lee estimated that it would start out costing around \$1 million each year, with most of that money going toward a dozen staff members.

Lee's bill, AB 309, passed out of the state assembly last week and will be sent for approval to the state senate. . . .

— Ethan Varian, Bay Area News Group

<https://www.mercurynews.com/2023/05/30/can-social-housing-help-solve-californias-housing-crisis/>

Newsom . . . is urging local governments to permit more than 2.5 million new units over the next eight years.

— Ben Christopher, Alastair Bland, Julie Cart and Alejandro Lazo, Cal Matters  
<https://calmatters.org/environment/2023/05/gavin-newsom-ceqa-reform/>

In HI terms, that's 92,000 units in 8 years, or 11,500 a year.

Testimony by Galen Fox on Kuilei Place to McCully-Moilili NB (not given)  
June 1, 2023

I speak in **opposition** to the proposed Kuilei Place condominium project in Moilili. I work on low-cost housing with the Moilili-based Church of the Crossroads, where I am the moderator. I also work with the faith-based Faith Action's Housing NOW! group.

The people I work with are disturbed that while the vast majority of local residents cannot afford new homes, those better off gain special treatment from government. Honolulu, uniquely among major cities, considers people making from 120% to 140% of median income to need government help in gaining housing. Profit-seeking developers naturally prefer to help this privileged group.

Roughly 20% (2019 Table 13.24) of Hawaii households are upper class, the top fifth. Upper class begins at around \$155,000, or at 120% AMI (family of 4). Hawaii's defining 120%-140% AMI as "moderate" or "middle income" allows developers to price subsidized homes so high they sell to the upper class!

Government assistance should go first to households at 80% AMI and below, the employed ALICE (Assets limited, income constrained, employed) population, as well as households already in poverty. Homeless (including those living in cars and doubled up in single-family homes), plus families just 1-2 missed paychecks from joining the homeless — ALICE + Poverty — make up nearly 1/2 Oahu's households.

I went over the 487 testimonies offered in support of Kobayashi's Kuilei Place. Most testimony arrived in bulk, judging by the concentrated times of entry and parallel wording. A large number praised the Kobayashi Group's work by name, pointing to the bulk submissions' point of origin.

A striking number referred to the need for "young professionals" housing — a far cry from the population truly needing help. This elite group would enter Kuilei Place, then sell out 10 years later to move on up. One person said the project was perfect for her daughter, who herself mothers two Iolani students. Another said we shouldn't force couples earning \$170,000 a year to live in Ewa.

Then there are the testifiers applauding the removal of “half-century old walkaways” — housing people we know are desperate for anywhere to live — and taking out the “pot holes” fronting the units. They thanked Kobayashi in advance for fixing the sidewalks, “upgrading the neighborhood.” One testifier even applauded the “reasonable” price of an \$800,000, 3-bedroom unit.

Why should we allow such a tall, dense project to be dropped into Moilili? One hopes City Council will undertake serious modifications before approving the project. If worse comes to worse, the developer must house every family displaced by this monstrous project built with government help for “young professionals.” Nowhere in the world is it acceptable to make houseless low income families to benefit the wealthy.

Tenants resettled:

Rio de Janeiro

<https://news.trust.org/item/20130613152525-296ec/>

Beijing (temporary, temporary move under protest)

<https://www.refworld.org/docid/4f9a6741c.html>

Romania (resettlement, segregation)

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-romania-roma/rehousing-romanas-roma-signals-swing-to-extremes-idUKBRE85S0PC20120629>

Ahmedabad, India (poor excluded from planning)

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0956247815569128>

West Philadelphia (tenants eventually satisfied)

<https://why.org/articles/university-city-townhomes-affordable-housing-settlement/>

As [Scott] Wiener said: “In terms of more fundamental reform [to the CQEA], the politics are very, very difficult.”

Getting major CEQA reform past the finish line would require buy-in from two powerful Democratic Party constituencies: labor and environmentalists. The law has proven difficult to dismantle due to strong support from influential environmental groups, litigators and some of the state’s most powerful unions. California building and construction labor have been a major reform obstacle, fighting any measure to change CEQA that doesn’t include wage concessions or a requirement to hire union workers.

Amanda Brown-Stevens, executive director of Greenbelt Alliance, is part of an evolving movement within the environmental community that is working with housing advocates to pursue policies that both protect the environment and ease barriers to new housing. An example is Assembly Bill 68 — referred to as The Housing and Climate Solutions Act

— which would streamline approvals for new homes in areas that local governments have identified as a priority for infill housing. The legislation is co-sponsored by California YIMBY and The Nature Conservancy.

— Maggie Angst and Lindsay Holden, Sacramento Bee  
<https://www.sacbee.com/news/politics-government/capitol-alert/article274672131.html>

social housing [] would guarantee affordable housing for people across income ranges by adding to the national housing supply and offering new opportunities for vibrant, mixed-income neighborhoods.

governments can take on this task by building millions of homes themselves, particularly for poor and working class people, that private developers won't construct. These . . . social housing projects can ensure permanent affordability, support mixed-income neighborhoods, and bring new assets onto public balance sheets.

to prevent competition with the private sector, policymakers imposed income restrictions, which forced many tenants out of their units if they achieved higher wages and left public housing with a narrow and politically vulnerable population base. The federal government, having restricted public housing to just the poorest of the poor, eventually cut off funding for new projects altogether in the 1970s.

Low Income Housing Tax Credit[s support] more than 100,000 units of new and renovated affordable housing each year. But [tax credits are] complicated and expensive[. T]he government has failed to keep the program accountable as construction costs have risen; and subsidies are inadequate . . . for families with low incomes.

Vienna and even Singapore offer long-standing models for social housing, with the majority of each country's population in comfortable, high-quality, public, cooperative, or otherwise subsidized homes. . . . Montgomery County [has] a program to build mixed-income public housing that uses a cross-subsidy financing system: the market rents paid by more affluent tenants to subsidize affordable units in the same building. In Seattle, voters [approved a ballot initiative](#) to create a social-housing authority. . . . Legislation is currently under consideration to develop public or social housing in [Hawaii](#), [Maryland](#), Massachusetts, [California](#), and [New York City](#).

subsidizing public housing is one of the best possible uses of scarce government dollars during a downturn. . . . We already spend far more subsidizing wealthy homeowners through the mortgage interest tax deduction than we do funding affordable housing; we have an opportunity to flip the script. . . . housing is responsible for [roughly a fifth](#) of all

energy-related emissions in the United States: the public sector can [take the lead](#) in decarbonizing the sector by building zero-emissions homes.

— Daniel Denvir and Yonah Freemark, Slate  
<https://slate.com/business/2023/05/public-housing-upzoning-yimby-affordability-crisis.html>

It's almost impossible to “cater to the expectations of an existing constituency of middle-class homeowners without raising the barriers of entry for the rest of society,” Adkins and her colleagues write. “A middle-class politics of asset democratization has ended up undermining the conditions of its own viability.”

The spiral of overvaluation in housing, which makes the housing-haves rich and the have-nots desperately poor, has brought us to a point where only something radical can solve it. The problem with housing in the United States is that it has been locked in as a means of building wealth, and building wealth is irreconcilable with affordability.

In 2017, the United States spent \$155 billion on tax breaks to homeowners and investors in rental housing and mortgage-revenue bonds, more than three times the \$50 billion spent on affordable housing. . . . much of this money is misspent. . . . through inefficient private-public partnerships like the low-income-housing tax credit. . . . directly financing well-regulated public and limited-profit construction is the only way to mitigate speculation and hedge against ever-increasing housing costs.

Local social-housing programs, many of them inspired by Vienna, are underway in [Montgomery County, Md.](#); [Seattle](#); and [California](#)

— Francesca Mari is an assistant professor at Brown University who writes about housing. *NY Times Magazine*  
<https://dnyuz.com/2023/05/23/lessons-from-a-renters-utopia/>

### Cost of declining population

In. . . . “The End of Economic Growth?”, Stanford University economics professor Charles Jones models what might happen in a world of declining population. Rather than per capita growth chugging along, even as overall output declines, Mr Jones argues that living standards would stagnate as the population gradually vanishes.

He assumes that economic growth ultimately comes from new ideas, and the discovery of new ideas depends on the number of people researching them. If population began to decline at the global level, it would mean ever fewer people devoted to research and thus ever slower progress, at a time when new technologies already seem to have become harder to find.

Mr Jones’s work suggests falling population could cause slower growth in living standards. But there is an even more alarming possibility: a vicious cycle in which low fertility in one generation causes low fertility in the next, leading to a downward spiral in population. That is the scenario that demographer Wolfgang Lutz and colleagues call the “Low-Fertility Trap Hypothesis”.

They propose a set of mechanisms whereby low fertility can pass itself from generation to generation. In particular, they suggest that willingness to marry and have children depends partly on whether a couple can meet their material aspirations. But low fertility goes hand-in-hand with ageing populations and a rising tax burden to pay for pensions and healthcare.

In places with low housing supply, falling interest rates also lead to high house prices, putting even more pressure on the finances of the young. There is reason to suspect these mechanisms are already at work in suppressing fertility. In Japan, for example, almost all recent income growth for people of working age has been soaked up by tax rises and social insurance premiums.

— Robin Harding, Financial Times 1/14/20  
<https://www.ft.com/content/c017334e-36bb-11ea-a6d3-9a26f8c3cba4>



Tedorian Gallano would like to buy a house for his wife and three youngest children in Hawaii, but real estate prices soared so high eight years ago he moved his family back to his childhood home outside Honolulu — and last year, his older brother followed suit.

Now, eight members from three generations of Gallano's extended family share one bathroom in a house that's so packed they've jerry-rigged an extra bedroom in the garage. Buying a home is "pretty much unattainable for the average working family" in Hawaii, the 49-year-old carpenter said.

"We always seem to have these hot markets that drive the prices up, and then it's the hardworking local families that cannot buy houses who are kind of left out," said Gallano, who's a member of the carpenters' union that's been active on the issue.

Sen. Stanley Chang: "It really bothers me that we are saying to the young people of Hawaii, 'It's great that you might have been born and raised and educated here, but now that you've become an adult, you have to leave and you cannot come back.'"

Housing director [Nani] Medeiros. . . hopes her 20-year-old daughter will be able to do so when she's 40 and "my grandchildren hopefully, definitely will,"

— Audrey McAvoy, AP

[https://apnews.com/article/housing-shortage-costs-crisis-hawaii-174fe75cd86d83aad7c54483a57ef4e0?](https://apnews.com/article/housing-shortage-costs-crisis-hawaii-174fe75cd86d83aad7c54483a57ef4e0?utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=news_tab&mibextid=kdkkhi#lg18fpqso2ep6y8touq)

[utm\\_source=facebook&utm\\_medium=news\\_tab&mibextid=kdkkhi#lg18fpqso2ep6y8touq](https://apnews.com/article/housing-shortage-costs-crisis-hawaii-174fe75cd86d83aad7c54483a57ef4e0?utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=news_tab&mibextid=kdkkhi#lg18fpqso2ep6y8touq)

during a session that promised to address Hawaii's critical housing shortage, one thing has become clear: there is no miracle cure. [Bills] largely amount to an incoherent patchwork of solutions. Some focus on money for specific housing programs, others on infrastructure. "You definitely need both right now," Rep. Troy Hashimoto

there seems to be a consensus . . . that Hawaii faces a housing shortage. . . one of Green's bills, estimates Hawaii [needs] more than 50,000 units by 2025[, with] more than 90% . . . priced as affordable for . . . families of four earning [120% AMI] or less.

high housing prices . . . have caused many people to leave the state. The high cost of housing also makes it hard for employers to recruit and retain workers

[**Alternative** to Green/PRP/Carr/Hashimoto approach to housing:]

“social housing”. . . “limited-profit housing associations”. . . provide an alternative, Chang says, to the most commonly used system in which low-income housing developers use taxpayer money to develop rental housing owned by developers, with the potential to eventually reap large windfalls — [with] no requirement that the owners reinvest profits to develop more affordable housing. That’s a bad deal for taxpayers, Chang says.

The limited-profit housing associations could develop housing and even generate profits, but their primary purpose would be to provide long-term housing at below market rates, Chang said. Company assets, including equity, would have to be reinvested into housing.

Chang recently led a delegation to Vienna where Chang says such associations are used to provide subsidized rental housing to “over 60% of all city residents in attractive communities with impressive amenities.”

Chang [wants] a pilot to extend to 99 years from 65 years the time the state can lease property to private people for housing. A longer lease would encourage younger people to buy leasehold condominiums without fear of having to leave once they grow old, Chang said. “It gives buyers security that they won’t have to leave before they die,” he said.

— Stewart Yerton, Civil Beat

<https://www.civilbeat.org/2023/03/lawmakers-agree-on-the-need-to-address-hawaiiis-housing-crisis-but-not-on-how/>

some of these challenges are going to take a decade. The housing challenges, that takes a long time. But we can provide immediate relief to our working class people. Now. [via tax cuts?] And so that’s my commitment. We don’t have anything better to do than help people. That’s why we’re here.

[Waikoloa 100,000 acres] I want to give large tracts of land from DHHL to the Hawaiian homesteads. I want to expedite building.

— Gov. Josh Green

<https://www.civilbeat.org/2023/03/the-civil-beat-editorial-board-interview-hawaii-gov-josh-green/>

Galen Fox  
RE: CR-8, Resolution 22-298, CD1  
January 25, 2023

City Council Chair Waters and Members:

I am testifying in **opposition** to Council's authorizing exemptions from certain requirements relating to the proposed Kuilei Place condominium project in Moiliili. Although I work on low-cost housing with Church of the Crossroads and Faith Action's Housing NOW!, I testify as an individual.

The group I work with is disturbed that while the vast majority of local residents cannot afford new homes, those better off gain special treatment from county leaders. This happens because Honolulu, uniquely among major cities, considers 120-140% AMI to be "affordable housing." Profit-seeking developers naturally prefer to help this privileged group.

Government assistance should go first to households at 80% AMI and below, the employed ALICE population, as well as households already in poverty. Homeless (including those living in cars and doubled up in single-family homes), plus families just 1-2 missed paychecks from joining the homeless — ALICE + Poverty — make up nearly 1/2 Oahu's households.

I went over the 487 testimonies offered in support of Kobayashi's Kuilei Place. Most testimony arrived in bulk, judging by the concentrated times of entry and parallel wording. A large number praised the Kobayashi Group's work by name, pointing to the bulk submissions' point of origin.

A striking number referred to the need for "young professionals" housing — a far cry from the population truly needing help. This elite group would enter Kuilei Place, then sell out 10 years later to move on up. One person said the project was perfect for her daughter, who herself mothers two lolani students. Another said we shouldn't force couples earning \$170,000 a year to live in Ewa.

Then there are the testifiers applauding the removal of "half-century old walkaways" — housing people we know are desperate for anywhere to live — and taking out the "pot holes" fronting the units. They thanked Kobayashi in advance for fixing the sidewalks, "upgrading the neighborhood." One testifier even applauded the "reasonable" price of an \$800,000, 3-bedroom unit.

Testimony in opposition decried the exceptions allowing such a tall, dense project to be dropped into Moiliili. One hopes City Council will undertake serious modifications before approving the project.

Mahalo nui loa.

Each day without action means another family forced to move to the mainland, another child sleeping on the street, another local business closing, and another precious natural resource put at risk.

Safe, affordable, and stable housing is a human right, and it is more than just a place to live — it impacts our health, our identity, and sense of belonging.

1 billion dollars of new investment in housing. . . support major investments in the **Hawai‘i Public Housing Authority** to renovate and upgrade public housing units, to provide state rental subsidies to low-income families, and to boost financing for more affordable housing units through the **Hawai‘i Housing Finance and Development Corporation**.

We will propose a state match for a city affordable housing program, which will incentivize the development of more affordable housing units in urban Honolulu.

Mayor Blangiardi and I are already partnering on our approach to housing because the crisis is felt most intensely on O‘ahu.

This emergency proclamation streamlines the construction process for housing, removing unnecessary red tape and enabling our community partners to tackle homelessness and the housing shortage head-on.

— Gov. Green, State of State

<https://www.hawaiipublicradio.org/local-news/2023-01-23/gov-josh-green-delivers-1st-state-of-the-state-address>

Ref:

<https://www.spur.org/events/2023-01-10/social-housing-vienna-model-california>

Long discussion of Bay Area group that had visited Vienna. What lessons for CA?

- Land bank
- Plan needed housing construction
- demand a continuous stream of financial support
- Use a strong government/semi-public agency to drive production
- bring middle class and lower income households into same projects
- make housing beautiful — architecture and competitive bidding to reach best
- have government pay for infrastructure
- favor apartment living, smaller units next to public transit, balconies for bit of outdoors
- build garages separate from community housing, make car users pay to park
- create communities — communal activities, facilities, community planning (not mentioned: resident involvement begins even before construction)
- use massive construction to conquer homeless problem; everyone has affordable home they can keep for generations (maintenance, rehabilitation helps)
- try “social housing” model as an option over home as “grow wealth” vehicle

LA Mayor Karen Bass wants to house 17,000 of the city's 40,000 street-living homeless in her first year. Some in villages outside LA.

- 30% of the country's homeless live in CA;
- 50% of the country's unsheltered homeless live in CA;
- in 2021, homeless nationwide grew by 0.3%;
- in CA, homeless grew by 6+%.

"Housing in California, as well as in Oregon and Washington, is one of the country's greatest political and moral catastrophes. . . . A state that prides itself on its progressive social vision is now littered with housing encampments that, in many ways, are at least as dilapidated and dangerous as refugee camps on the edge of war zones."

"In the first 11 months of 2022, more than [200 people died](#) on the streets in San Francisco. In 2021, [more than 1,500 died](#) on the streets in Los Angeles County. More than [500 died](#) in San Diego County in the first 10 months of this year. Between January and July of this year, nearly [100 died](#) on the streets in Sacramento County [—] one-quarter . . . killed either intentionally or by accident,"

— Sasha Abramsky,, Nation

<https://www.thenation.com/article/politics/pregnant-workers-fairness-act-2/>

One basic problem with the current system, [Chang] said, is that taxpayers are asked to provide money for affordable housing at all, which he said is not necessary. Worse, he said, is that public money in the form of gap financing goes to developers to build housing projects that the developers, not the public, will own.

Chang points to models in places like Singapore and Vienna, where the government supports affordable housing that's revenue neutral. In other words, taxpayers don't have to fork out cash to subsidize it.

"Socialist Vienna — red Vienna — do you know how much the government puts in to construct new housing each year?" Chang asked in an interview. "Zero."

But perhaps more important when it comes to gaining popular support to subsidize housing, Chang says, is that affordable housing in Hawaii is typically available only for people earning far less than the average person or family. It's often 60% or lower than the area's median income.

Chang says one way to get more people to buy in to subsidizing housing is to make government housing similar to public schools: available to everyone, regardless of income. He calls such housing "income blind" and "social housing."

— [Stewart Yerton](#), Civil Beat

[https://www.civilbeat.org/?p=1523723&utm\\_source=Civil+Beat+Master+List&utm\\_campaign=a1b357e6d0-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2022\\_11\\_11\\_11\\_51&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_51c2dd3cf3-a1b357e6d0-401860225&mc\\_cid=a1b357e6d0&mc\\_eid=45b24fb0d6](https://www.civilbeat.org/?p=1523723&utm_source=Civil+Beat+Master+List&utm_campaign=a1b357e6d0-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2022_11_11_11_51&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_51c2dd3cf3-a1b357e6d0-401860225&mc_cid=a1b357e6d0&mc_eid=45b24fb0d6)

Chang/Keohokalole on Vienna (10/21/22)

<https://www.staradvertiser.com/2022/10/21/breaking-news/upcoming-livestream-hawaii-state-senators-join-the-honolulu-star-advertisers-spotlight-hawaii-to-discuss-affordable-housing-tune-in-at-1030-a-m/>

leaving California “a result of artificial housing shortages caused by widespread NIMBYism and paralysis in their one-party Democratic legislature.”

— *Washington Examiner* editorial

<https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/opinion/editorials/california-is-losing-residents-and-gavin-newsom-has-excuses>

Making housing culturally compatible with the target market (locals who can't afford homes) has to be done right or the whole effort will fail. This relates to my next point. Basically, people have to want to live there. Few people will want to say proudly to their families and friends, “Oh, we're going to go live in 'affordable' housing!” [My gosh: that's why so many 801 South St. sales went to rich flippers — never had to claim an address there!]

We had to create the ads and sell the homes before ground was even broken for them. We did it by creating a sense of community and identity in the ads that coincided with the wants and needs of the target market. . . . promises helped to create the kind of communities that the residents ultimately created and took/take pride in. I think the same thing needs to be done for any large scale public housing project. I would recommend commissioning a knowledgeable research firm like Omnitrak or SMS to do in-depth research of the locals we think we are targeting with these housing projects. What do they actually want? . . . it can't just be “housing.” It needs to be “community,” and the more people can take pride in their community, the more likely it is to be a successful project and not, as they are sourly referred to in New York, “The Projects.”

— Richard Tillotson, 6/28/22 email to John, Ellen, me

My real estate experience comes from advertising. Real estate has been the largest advertising category in Hawaii after tourism.

Amity Shlaes 12/21 (paraphrase) It's easy to write an op-ed or run for office. Real change takes education, beginning at least in high school. Discussing David Bahnsen, *There's No Free Lunch*.

blue states have in common [strict zoning laws] designed to protect both the environment and the character of elite neighborhoods. The result has been much less investment and construction, leading to soaring prices.

when liberals and the left do talk about housing and the need to build more of it, these conversations are almost always focused on the dependent poor. They often seem indifferent to the fact that most Americans aspire to home ownership. In elite left circles, there is a palpable antipathy for the American dream. Left-wing compassion seems to be totally compatible with pulling up the ladder to a middle-class lifestyle from their working-class neighbors

The housing market has long put home ownership out of reach for much of the working class.

— Batya Ungar-Sargon, Spiked!

<https://www.spiked-online.com/2022/08/04/the-american-dream-is-over/>

Comment: "middle class" is now two classes — college grads and working class. Dems are w/former.

News Release from [Cinch Home Services](#)

Moving to Hawaii is a dream many people have, and some are lucky enough to attain. Trying to find an affordable house in this housing market is difficult, but accounting for monthly HOA dues can make a difference in how much bang you get for your buck.

Cinch Home Services analyzed subReddit conversations about HOA fees and Redfin housing data to see the average HOA fees across the country.

Here's how Hawaii measures up:

- Hawaii ranks no. 2 for most expensive HOA fees in the country,
- On average, HOA monthly fees in Hawaii are about \$762 a month
- The national average HOA averages \$286, making Hawaii HOA fees \$476 above the national average.

Hawaii Free Press

<http://www.hawaiifreepress.com/Articles-Daily-News/ID/32848/July-25-2022-News-Read>

Daniel Orodener, executive officer of the LUC, said the 42,000 units Green references is the estimate of all of the housing approved by the LUC that has not yet been built. Some of

those projects were approved in the 1980s, 1990s and 2000s, and may have stalled or failed because of infrastructure costs or changes in the market or interest rates.  
(Translation: The 42,000 units are either already being built or they do not exist.)

Research shows it takes 10 years from the time a developer launches a major project until construction, and the LUC by law can take no longer than a year processing a project, he said. Projects do get stuck in state processes at times, but many of the problems are at the county level, which the new governor cannot simply fix with an order.

From Ellen:

The AEI article has [this quote](#), "According to a 2018 Demographia International Housing Affordability survey, Hawai'i has the highest median home price, second highest median rents, second highest rate of homelessness per capita and fourth highest rate of net out-migration in the US." A succinct statement of our housing crisis.

UC Berkeley researchers argued in a 2014 paper [that] "population-dense cities contribute less greenhouse-gas emissions per person than other areas of the country," and "the average carbon footprint of households living in the center of large, population-dense urban cities is about 50 percent below average, while households in distant suburbs are up to twice the average."

— Jerusalem Demsas, Atlantic

<https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2022/05/population-growth-housing-climate-change/629952/>

*HousingNOW Mission Statement:* Housing is a human right; therefore, the mission of Faith Action HousingNOW! is to end Hawai'i's housing crisis by building community power, and advocating for just, equitable solutions that ensure housing for whom the market is not serving.

*Obama:* [liberal NIMBYs](#) — the kind of people who believe in affordable housing until it's in their neighborhood. "The most liberal communities in the country aren't that liberal when it comes to affordable housing," [he said](#) last week to a crowd of 6,000 architects in Chicago, in [conversation with AIA president Dan Hart](#). A big reason for the country's housing ills, according to Obama? "Bipartisan resistance to affordable, energy-sustainable mixed-use and mixed-income communities."

Source: <https://www.curbed.com/2022/06/obama-aia-conference-housing-crisis-liberal-nimby-yimby.html>

THE STATE OF THE NATION'S HOUSING 2022

— JOINT CENTER FOR HOUSING STUDIES,

## 1.

the need for substantial, consistent investment in affordable rental housing[ — as of] 2019, some 7.8 million unassisted households with very low incomes had severe cost burdens, lived in severely inadequate housing, or both. Moreover, just one out of every four income-eligible renter households actually receives federal assistance. According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, there were 737,000 households on waiting lists at just 44 housing agencies in 2021.

Federal subsidies remain a vital way to expand the affordable supply and reduce the incidence of cost burdens among the nation's most vulnerable households. The vast majority of the 4.5 million households that HUD serves are older adults (39 percent), families with children (28 percent), and people with disabilities (21 percent). The subsidies bring down the average rent to just \$360, reducing the cost-burdened share of recipients to about 15 percent. By comparison, the average cost-burden rate for all renters with incomes below 30 percent of area median is 84 percent.

## 2.

the Biden Administration's new Housing Supply Action Plan would advance [market-rate housing production] by giving communities higher scores on competitive grants if they reduce exclusionary zoning and other regulations that severely restrict housing development the homebuilding industry could help to expand the market-rate supply by adopting more efficient construction methods.

## 3.

A 2019 University of Denver study found that using factory-built components reduced framing time by two to six days, saved a third of labor costs, and lowered waste of materials. But despite these impressive advantages, most homebuilders have yet to shift to off-site construction because of the significant upfront investment required and the logistical challenges of getting prefabricated components to building sites.

## 4.

The large supply of homes under construction should also help to meet demand, although do little to address the lack of housing affordable to lower- and middle-income households. The immediate concern, however, is that tightening monetary policy will rather stifle economic growth and even trigger a recession. With so many households financially stressed by high housing costs, a serious downturn could transform the recent uptick in housing insecurity into a wave.

This potential threat underscores yet again the need for more moderate-priced housing as well as expanded support for lowest-income households. Developing the policies and practices to meet this need will take concerted efforts by both the public and

private sectors. The Biden Administration's Housing Supply Action Plan makes a good start with a blueprint for reducing the severe shortfall in affordable housing. At the same time, states such as California and Oregon provide examples of how to reform land use regulations to help expand the supply of more modest units.

## Sen. Chang Plus (ALOHA+)

April 18, 2022

- Social housing — housing as a right, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, with legislative action laying out the means to execute those rights (see SB29 SD1, 2021).
- Environmental community mobilized to speak up in favor of our less-fortunate population, including the urban-blighting homeless living on our streets and in our parks, using high-density housing to fight the environmental damage from urban sprawl and related car culture.
- Labor unions, including public sector unions, to back social housing (labor, advocates, activists), understanding we help keep Hawaii residents remain here, stop driving our people to the mainland, realizing that resident housing is *pono*.
- ALOHA Homes Goal: housing supply to meet demand, minimum 20,000 units priced for 99-year lease owners at 60% AMI and below, financed through revenue bonds for residents who live in their units and own no other property.
- Homes sited in mixed-use structures with ground floor retail, all services within a 5-minute walk (1/2-mile-radius transit-oriented development area) constructed for \$400,000 (2 bedroom, 2 bath) or less, possibly using prefab modulars built in unionized local factories conforming to winning project designs incorporating community participation.
- Project financing holding median to 60% AMI can include up to 1/2 higher-priced, similar-designed units that subsidize lower-cost units; residents paying no more than 30% monthly income on their home. (CA AB 9)
- Needed infrastructure can be supported via Community Facilities District financing. Federal infrastructure funds also may be available. No new taxes required either for projects or supporting infrastructure. (Appleseed)
- Unit Resales will hold to original price plus 1% over annual inflation, with government retaining buy-back rights. (Appleseed)
- Native Hawaiian community (DHHL/OHA) could be guaranteed in perpetuity 20% of the units built on ceded land, with the right to repurchase these units as they pass from owner to owner. (new)
- Hawaii Housing Authority new or formed from HHFDC, HPHA, or HCDA, will by legislation have authority to build high-density projects on state land, in cooperation with the Native Hawaiian community in line with county ordinances. (See CA AB 9)

# Justice

## [Galatians 6:2](#)

Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

## [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) (Article 25)

Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, *housing* and medical care

## [United States Congress \(1949\)](#)

U.S. housing policy is "a decent home in suitable living environment for every American family."

Jimmy Carter's [Habitat for Humanity](#):

to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ, we must love and care for one another. Our love must not be words only— it must be true love, which shows itself in action. . . . When we act in response to human need, giving what we have without seeking profit or interest, we believe God magnifies the effects of our efforts. We refer to this perspective as “the economics of Jesus.”

## We Need Social Housing,

specifically, to amend Hawaii Constitution's Article IX, Section 6 on managing growth, to require the state to provide enough housing to meet demand, as provided by law.

(174 words)

## ALOHA Homes Preamble (Section 1) SB3261 (2022):

According to a 2015 report from the department of business, economic development, and tourism, the projected long-run estimate of demand for total new housing in Hawaii is between 64,700 to 66,000 for the 2015 to 2025 period. The legislature has responded through the passage of various legislation. During the regular session of 2016, the legislature passed a bill enacted as Act 127, Session Laws of Hawaii 2016, that, among other things, established a goal of developing or vesting the development of at least 22,500 affordable rental housing units ready for occupancy by the end of 2026.

## Least Recovery from Unemployment (March 2022 vs March 2020)

- 176. Lewiston, ME
- 177. New York, NY
- 178. Miami, FL
- 179. Honolulu, HI
- 180. Hialeah, FL

<https://wallethub.com/edu/cities-unemployment-rates/73647>

Highest business failure rate within 1 year: Hawaii, D.C., Kansas

Thirty-one states and the District of Columbia have a higher percentage of businesses that fail in the first year than the nationwide rate of 18.4%. Hawaii tops that list at 25.4%, followed by D.C. (25.1%) and Kansas (23.2%)...

<https://www.lendingtree.com/business/small/failure-rate/>

### Hawai'i Free Press

[Current Articles](#) | [Archives](#)

Tuesday, May 3, 2022

#### **Hawaii Most Expensive, but Ranks 24th in Earnings**

By Selected News Articles @ 3:48 AM :: 454 Views :: [Hawaii Statistics](#), [Cost of Living](#)

Rank	State	Per capita income in 2021 (\$)	Adults with a bachelor's degree or higher (%)
24	Hawaii	\$61,302	33.6

<http://www.hawaiifreepress.com/Articles-Main/ID/31473/Hawaii-Most-Expensive-but-Ranks-24th-in-Earnings>

## Candidate Forum:

It is not always practical for an organization to invite all of the candidates, especially if the number of legally qualified candidates for a particular office is very large. The IRS has indicated that a charity may invite fewer than all of the candidates if reasonable, objective criteria are consistently and non-arbitrarily applied to decide whom to invite (such as only those who have received a certain share of popular support as reflected in at least one recent recognized credible and independent poll).<sup>85</sup> The criteria cannot be designed to exclude a particular candidate.

## SYMM for HAR:

I support HB 1837. I co-introduced SB 3301, the Senate's companion bill. HB 1837's affordable housing working group should increase public awareness of existing barriers to expanded housing. We have a long way to go, however, before our housing crisis stops sending younger people, qualified graduates, and whole families elsewhere in search of homes they can afford. It's going to take government support to help pay for the tens of thousands of affordable units needed — state and county land, up-front state construction financing through revenue bonds repaid over time, and state infrastructure that offsets large-scale project costs the private sector and individual homebuyers cannot themselves cover.

## In favor of SCR 231.

We have a housing crisis in Hawaii, given the extreme gap between incomes and the homes people can afford. We can see the cost to our islands' ohana in the amazing outward migration of our people. The state's population fell by more than 10,000 in the year ending July 1, continuing a trend since 2017. State economist Eugene Tian attributes the downward trend in part to people moving to the mainland where housing is more affordable. Right now, more than half of local-born college graduates live on the mainland, as do more than half native Hawaiians.

Where would our lost *keiki o ka aina* rather live?

We need 57,000 affordable homes by 2025, according to state figures, to help our residents remain here. The least we can do is ask county planners to show our people how they might attack the crisis-level need for more affordable housing. Mahalo.

— Anita Hofschneider, Civil Beat  
<https://www.civilbeat.org/author/anita/>

House Housing Chair Nakamura has taken a hatchet to Senate Chair Chang's ALOHA Homes bill (SB3261, SD2). The bill was already compromised down to a working group look at the ALOHA Homes concept, along with a market study of Hawaii leasehold housing. Nakamura takes out everything about the ALOHA Homes concept, and uses the working group to study only leasehold housing, with money only for this truncated working group, and with the whole thing run by HHFDC, which earlier testified it was "unable to support" SB3261 SD1.

Anyway, my summary. Here's a link to Nakamura's committee report:

[https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session2022/CommReports/SB3261\\_HD1\\_HSCR1164-22\\_.htm](https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session2022/CommReports/SB3261_HD1_HSCR1164-22_.htm)

I attach a current list of bills related to affordable housing. It does not cover bills strictly dealing with homelessness, though of course building low-cost housing is the ultimate solution to homelessness.

Aloha, Galen

"Proceed as if success is inevitable." - Unknown

We support Chang's effort to build at least 20,000 homes within Transit Oriented Development (TOD) areas on government land, units priced for residents who can pay up to \$1500 a month for 2 bedrooms, and who qualify to buy or rent by living in their unit while owning no other real property.

We will listen to what Chang tells us about how to work together to achieve that goal.

ALOHA Homes and Appleseed

- no more \$300K
- no minimum density
- don't pre-empt county planning, ordinances

- ceded lands out (suggesting that's most state land) discussion?
- **works for 80% and above**
- invest in infrastructure
- resale price limits
- income limits as preferences
- additional subsidies possible
- connect to exist housing, e.g. waiting lists
- like “working group”
  
- Helsinki
- Study has one pro-forma on costs: \$418,000 for 2bdr/2bth 830sq/ft home

[http://dbedt.hawaii.gov/hhfdc/files/2021/10/ALOHAHomesStudy\\_Sept2021-FINAL.pdf](http://dbedt.hawaii.gov/hhfdc/files/2021/10/ALOHAHomesStudy_Sept2021-FINAL.pdf)

## Housing Scratches

Erik, Foo, John, Keith

David Shapiro's 2/6 column [said it all](#). The Wakai/DAGS-proposed “New Aloha Stadium Entertainment District” (shortened to NASED) is a disaster in the making on the scale of Rail. Shapiro writes their “propaganda campaign — including a grossly misleading drawing showing 20,000 affordable housing units surrounding a stadium in the ugliest possible light, ignor[es] more attractive ways to do it.” John tells us this disaster moves forward because state needs the money NASED will supposedly generate. But developers aren't stupid; money won't reach the state unless, as John says, state first “give[s] away the store to the developer.”

A good bill, SB2232, that would designate land for housing along the rail line was weakened in a joint Housing/Water Land hearing last week. Chang was forced to remove language that would have restricted buyers to residents who live in the property and own no other real estate.

The housing crisis is real. We need 1) a real solution, and 2) a gubernatorial candidate who will run on the single issue of building truly affordable housing on a massive scale. A real solution requires unit cost and financing figures so solid they can withstand a frontal assault from King Developer Stanford Carr. Such a solution is beyond my power to realize. But it is, IMHO, the only solution, and I am willing to work with anyone who can get those cost figures down and sell them to voters.

## **Helsinki**

“We know what works. You can have all sorts of projects, but if you don't have the actual homes ... A sufficient supply of social housing is just crucial.”

Helsinki owns 60,000 social housing units; *one in seven residents live in city-owned housing* (14.3%)\*. It also owns 70% of the land within the city limits, runs its own construction company, and has a current target of building 7,000 more new homes – of all categories – a year.

In each new district, the city maintains a strict housing mix to limit social segregation: 25% social housing, 30% subsidised purchase, and 45% private sector. Helsinki also insists on no

visible external differences between private and public housing stock, and sets no maximum income ceiling on its social housing tenants.

special teams to advise and help tenants in danger of losing their homes and halving the number of evictions from city-owned and social housing from 2008 to 2016.

“We own much of the land, we have a zoning monopoly, we run our own construction company,” says Riikka Karjalainen, senior planning officer. “That helped a lot with Housing First because simply, there is no way you will eradicate homelessness without a serious, big-picture housing policy.”

\* = 50,000 units Oahu. 55% subsidized or government run.

— John Henley, Guardian

<https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2019/jun/03/its-a-miracle-helsinki-radical-solution-to-homelessness>

Alex Lee CA Assembly (D-San Jose), AB 387 ('21) “A safe and affordable place to live should be a right, not a privilege – and that certainly hasn’t been the case in California,” said co-sponsor, Assemblymember Buffy Wicks (D-Oakland). The bill went nowhere.

<https://a25.asmdc.org/press-releases/20210202-assemblymember-alex-lee-introduces-bill-establish-social-housing>

Understanding OHA (SAM, 7/19/21)

Factions divided 5/4.

“The Girls”

Carmen “Hulu” Lindsey, leader and chair  
Lei Ahu Isa  
Kaleihikina Akaka  
Keilii Akina (m.)  
Luana Alapa (fm. w/Lingle, close to Akina)

The “Boys”

Dan Ahuna  
Brendon Kaleiaina Lee  
Keola Lindsey  
John Waihee IV

Factions about power, no policy factors important.

Approach through Ahuna, adding Akina and Alapa.  
Akina is rumored to be ill.  
Ahuna is for the people.  
Brendon Kalei Lee is brother of Brook Lee, son of Toni Lee.

Comments:

- Got to have an “A” last name, be related to a big shot, or be a Lindsey.
- Hulu trying to deliver wealth via condos for outsiders; Ahuna for the people.

Adler says. “Not whether it should, but how it should. And the how questions are always negotiable.”

#### ALOHA Homes: Where it Stands

“I am disappointed that our plan to end the housing shortage, ALOHA Homes, failed again this year. Even our bills to implement small parts of the vision have failed. Unfortunately, the urgency is just not there to make significant progress on this crisis.

“While the Legislature did not take major action on housing this year, we will not give up.

“Your feedback guides everything we do in our office.”

— Sen. Chang’s May 2021 Newsletter

#### Reasons for Hope

1. Sen. Chang’s ALOHA Homes, drawn from Singapore’s success, is a well-thought-out plan to build tens of thousands of units near rail that can be financed through sales of revenue bonds, which face no legislated ceiling.
2. The Honolulu Appleseed Center’s study of ALOHA Homes done for HHFDC improved the model by showing:
  - units 600 sq.ft. in size could be built here for \$300,000, using data from Helsinki and Vienna, cities that share with Honolulu high cost construction union labor.
  - how to finance needed housing infrastructure via “Community Facilities Districts.
3. Appleseed’s recommended improvements seem feasible:
  - as with Singapore, ALOHA Homes resales should be restricted to the same population that would qualify for the original purchases.
  - ALOHA Homes should specifically provide for sales to native Hawaiians.
 (In that regard, Sen. Chang’s most recent “Our Homes” webinar featured a discussion with DHHL Deputy Tyler Gomes that looked like a search for common ground. Also, Housing NOW! expressed approval last week for a proposal to charge each arriving visitor \$20 that would help fund housing for the 28,000 native Hawaiians on the DHHL waitlist.)
4. The proposed Aloha Stadium Entertainment District includes a housing component, just not enough, just not low cost.

Faith Action’s Survey on ALOHA Homes is “in the field,” as they say.

Faith Action’s Housing NOW! task force backed several bills advanced by senate housing chair Stanley Chang. None passed. Sen. Chang’s comprehensive ALOHA Homes housing plan is based on Singapore’s success in housing a population six times Oahu’s on an island less than half Oahu’s size. Chang’s bill would develop tens of thousands of homes near rail to be sold on State leased land targeted at \$300,000 to Hawaii residents who owned no other property and

who guarantee they will occupy the units. The proposal would be financed through revenue bond sales covered by the purchasers' monthly mortgage-like payments.

During the session, ALOHA Homes drew additional support from a State-subsidized study completed by the nonprofit Honolulu Appleseed Center. It found that both Vienna and Helsinki — with high-cost construction like Honolulu driven by strong unions — could build housing at the ALOHA Homes target price. The study also recommended financing needed housing infrastructure via “Community Facilities Districts.” Nevertheless, the House showed little interest in either ALOHA Homes or in several smaller bills that Sen. Chang pulled from ALOHA Homes and sent their way.

“I think we’ve only seen the tip of the iceberg when it comes to migration,” said Daryl Fairweather, chief economist at Redfin. “There are going to be more people who want to move once they get more clarity on what post-pandemic life will look like.” Those shifts — what Zillow economist Matthew Speakman called “the great reshuffling” — are taking place against a backdrop of over 70 million millennials reaching peak home-buying years.

— Katy O’Donnell, Politico

<https://www.politico.com/states/florida/story/2021/03/08/soaring-home-prices-are-starting-to-alarm-policymakers-1367423>

#### A. Sen. Chang’s bills in House (most connected to ALOHA Homes)

1. SB2 — HHFDC Public Lands. Passed out of first 2 House committees w/amendment. Rep. Nakamura pulled through. Real opposition from OHA side: 2 no’s from HSG+WAL and 2 W/R’s.
2. Rep. Nakamura will hear (Th, 9:15 am, all triple-referrals):
  - SB 7 — HHFDC right of first refusal to state lands
  - SB 29 — Constitutional amendment to match housing demand
  - SB 40 — Exempt income restrictions for housing projects (no more 140% AMI)
  - SB 749 — Allow HPHA to build non-subsidized housing
  - SB 1337 — Allow for block upzoning
3. She will also hear two non-ALOHA Homes bills on Sen. Chang’s list; both enjoy widespread support :
  - SB 36 — prohibit discrimination against Section 8 renters
  - SB 659 — loosen restrictions on LIHTC loans

#### B. ALOHA Homes and Appleseed’s “How to make housing affordable to local buyers: Lessons from the ALOHA Homes study”

1. How the study backs up ALOHA Homes
  - makes unit price work at \$300K for 600 sq.ft.
  - covers state financing of infrastructure (Community Facilities District)
  - supports workability of sales only to residents who live in unit and own no other property
  - counters “we’re NOT Singapore” by invoking Vienna and Helsinki examples — high construction costs, strong labor unions
  - recognizes need to work out arrangement with Native Hawaiian entities (Sen. Chang knows)

## 2. Study does identify problems

- resale should be at restricted price, not market price, otherwise affordable units lost
  - possible need to clarify that property shouldn't always be wealth gain source; Faith Action role?
- Native Hawaiian objection to 99-year leases must be overcome, possibly through OHA-DHHL-HHFDC negotiations
  - 99 year v. 65 year leases
  - carve out public lands for both OHA and DHHL projects
  - on DHHL compromise, Faith Action beneficiary help?

SB1, SD2 (201H-E (e)):

If the corporation does not exercise its right to purchase the ALOHA home, the ALOHA home may be sold by the owner to an eligible buyer; provided that the corporation shall retain seventy-five per cent of all profits from the sale, net of closing and financing costs, using the price at which the owner purchased the ALOHA home, plus documented capital improvements, as the cost basis.

from Galen Herz

<https://jacobinmag.com/2021/02/social-housing-public-affordable-california-maryland>

twenty-five years of UC construction financing . . . without regular use of public subsidy, they averaged around \$100,000 less per unit than their standard 'affordable housing' (LIHTC) counterparts. A sizable share of the savings derive from bypassing a [labyrinth of affordable housing funding streams that can slow down projects and therefore increase cost](#).

“one thing we've really had to do is make this practical for people. Make this seem reasonable, mundane, and commonsense, and not utopian.”

— Maryland House of Delegates and DSA member Vaughn Stewart

Labor should welcome social housing as a stable source of employment, in contrast to the private real estate sector's boom-and-bust cycles

Testimony on HB 286, filed 2/9/21:

In a time when the need for housing is critical for Hawaii residents earning below the median income, at a time when our young people are moving to find lower-priced homes on the mainland in such numbers that we lose population every year, at a time when state revenue is down and needs are up, it's time to demand that large corporations avoiding the Hawaii corporate income tax by filing as REITS pay their fair share. We should tax REITS as we do all other corporations enjoying the benefits of operating here. To do so, it would help to have accurate data on the size of the REIT tax avoidance revenue loss. HB 286 will give us the data we need. It will help close the REIT tax loophole. Please pass HB 286. Mahalo.

Senate Committee on Housing  
February 5, 2021 at 1:00 p.m.  
Conference Room 229

## **SUPPORTING SB 2**

Aloha Chairs Inouye and Chang, and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land and Housing,

Faith Action Housing NOW! supports SB 2, which clarifies that land set aside by the governor to the Hawaii housing finance and development corporation (HHFDC), lands leased to HHFDC by any other part of the State, or lands to which HHFDC holds title are exempt from the "public lands" definition. Such exemptions are in place for the University of Hawaii, the Department of Education, the Department of Agriculture, the Hawaii Technology Development Corporation, the Hawaii Community Development Authority, the Hawaii Public Housing Authority and others for whom title to land is necessary to carrying out the government entity's purpose. SB 2 provides that HHFDC's actions in relation to its land holdings must follow Chapter 171, and that HHFDC lands no longer needed for housing or related purposes go back to the department or agency that leased the lands to HHFDC.

All Hawaii residents should have access to adequate housing that is affordable to them. This principle is embodied in the housing objectives and policies of the Hawaii State Planning Act, which sets forth our long-range comprehensive plan. This plan includes the goals of building the number of homes needed to keep pace with Hawaii residents' housing needs.

HHFDC is the primary agency that oversees affordable housing finance and development in Hawaii. SB 2 will help HHFDC, consistent with the housing objectives and policies of the Hawaii State Planning Act, to develop the number of affordable homes the people of Hawaii need. According to a 2015 report from the department of business, economic development, and tourism, the projected demand for total new housing in Hawaii at all income levels is between 64,700 to 66,000 for the 2015 to 2025 period.

The housing need is greatest at levels where income is lowest — the 37% of residents in the Assets Limited, Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) population and the 11% below the poverty rate — 48% of us. The National Low Income Housing Coalition estimates that Hawaii's housing need at this income level is for more than 40,000 homes.

HousingNOW! supports passage of SB 2, which will help HHFDC build the homes we need.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Foo Pham  
Faith Action HousingNOW! Chair  
housing@faithactionhawaii.org

Progressive Caucus:

Reps. LoPresti, Sonny Ganaden, Cedric Asuega Gates, Greggor Ilagan, Jeanne Kapela, Bertrand Kobayashi, Nicole Lowen, Lisa Marten, Takashi Ohno, Amy Perruso, Jackson Sayama, Adrian Tam, Tina Wildberger and Chris Todd; and Sens. Stanley Chang, Jarrett Keohokalole, Joy San Buenaventura and Laura Acasio.

## Additional Bills for Housing NOW Consideration

### 1. Support these Sen. Chang ALOHA Homes spin-off bills:

- SB2 Clarifies that lands set aside for HHFDC are exempt from “public lands” definition.
- SB4 Bans inclusionary zoning for developments built for 1) Hawaii residents, 2) owner-occupants, 3) who own no other property.
- SB3: Promotes construction of high-density housing within 1/2 mile radius of rail and transit stations; streamlines process of providing homes for those who need it.
- SB5: Establishes a housing savings account program for all employees of Hawaii. It would allow workers to save money for down payments and security deposits, bringing housing within reach for more people. (Companion: HB605)
- SB7 Gives HHFDC right of first refusal for state lands redevelopment within 1/2 mile of rail station (similar to SB733, already on John’s list).
- SB 40 prohibits HHFDC from requiring income restrictions for for-sale projects. Requires owners of units in these projects to be Hawaii residents who occupy the housing units, and prohibits occupants to own any other real estate.
- SB725 Eliminates the income restriction found in HPHA definition of “housing.”
- SB 733 Designates State-owned lands within one mile of any rail station to develop housing priced at below market rate for owner-occupants who own no other real property.
- SB749 Allows HPHA to build non-subsidized housing.

Still more Sen. Chang bills at [this link](#).

### 2. Support these Sen. Chang bills taken from California Sen. Scott Wiener’s effort to expand low-cost housing in CA:

- SB 33 requires each county to create a housing supply plan.
- SB42 Restricts county from disapproving housing developments when county has failed to meet certain requirements.
- SB 779 penalizes the counties with a reduction in their allocations of revenue from the Transient Accommodations Tax if they do not meet specified numerical objectives for authorizing the construction of new housing units.
- SB 1278 allows the counties to permit 4-plexes to be built on land currently zoned for single-family homes.

### 3. Support these Sen. Chang bills that would put teeth into State Plan pledge to build homes needed to match population growth:

- SB11 Provides for private right of action against State for housing shortage.
- SB12 Require HHFDC/HPHA to produce enough housing to meet demand.
- SB28 Constitutional amendment for State to meet housing demand.

OR

- SB29 Constitutional amendment for State to meet housing demand in its management of population growth.

4. From John's list (not shown above):

a. Stadium Affordable Housing

SB 737 requires at least 100,000 housing units to be built on the Aloha Stadium site, as 40% of the site is not needed for the new stadium or affiliated parking. 80% of the housing units shall be sold or rented at prices that are affordable to individuals or families with incomes at or below 80% AMI.

b. Empty Homes Fee

HB 440 assesses a conveyance tax surcharge on properties that are vacant for more than half of a calendar year.

5. Additional

- SB143: (Kanuha) Establishes an affordable homeownership revolving fund within HHFDC to support nonprofit community development financial institutions and housing development organizations that develop affordable homeownership housing projects.

Email to Rep. Nakamura (check email for final text)

Aloha Representative Nakamura,

Thank you for your excellent presentation yesterday on the housing crisis we face in Hawaii, and your examination of proposed solutions.

Thank you as well for your and Rep. Hashimoto's suggestion that we meet with your committee members. We've had valuable visits with Reps. Ilagan, Kitagawa, and also FIN's CIP expert Rep. Yamashita, and we contacted the other HSG members twice.

I apologize for my being caught off-guard yesterday when my written question to you turned into a request that I deliver it orally, and I had to scramble for my mike.

From the series of webinars titled “Our Homes” jointly organized by Senator Chang and Faith Action, we have learned about San Francisco and California’s *bifurcated* housing market. High Silicon-Valley-style wages take care of the Bay Area people who need housing and can pay for it, causing the top tier to shift toward ever higher priced homes.

In the lower bracket, affordable homes are 100% occupied, scarce, overpriced — a situation that drives to other states those who can’t afford a home. People who stay behind, people needed to fill low-wage service jobs, face a nearly impossible situation. They should live near their work but must pay a terrible price to do so.

As *New York Times* reporter Conor Dougherty, one of the webinar speakers, [said](#) about San Francisco:

overcrowded housing [is] lower-income tenants . . . competing with each other by doubling, tripling, and quadrupling up for the scant number of affordable apartments. We now know that overcrowded housing is significantly more of a risk [for Covid-19] than, say, dense housing. If you live in a single-family home with 15 people in it, that’s a lot more dangerous than 40 apartments in a four-story building.

The situation in Hawaii is worse. Our people are in the lower part of California’s bifurcated market. Look at the entire population of those living in California and Hawaii combined. Only 3% of that total live in Hawaii. Our tiny housing market may seem isolated, but it is driven by California’s high wages (as well as Asia’s wealth). Our economy doesn’t come close to providing locals the funds needed to buy Hawaii’s upper-bracket homes. The top bracket homes we build in Kakaako and along Neighbor Island golf courses and beaches are for outsiders. Local housing needs are almost entirely in the bottom tier. And that need is unmet.

So we force emigration to the mainland at an even higher rate than California famously sends its households out of state!

The problem is so big. Shouldn’t the answer also be big? Sen. Chang’s ALOHA Homes bill doesn’t cost the state money. Housing sales would pay back revenue bonds. And supplying infrastructure via bond financing can help all counties, while booming construction lowers Hawaii’s high unemployment economy.

We are backing Sen. Chang’s ALOHA Homes bill, along with a bill he has introduced for us — 20,000 housing units at Aloha Stadium. We support your Covid Relief package, as Foo noted yesterday.

We very much appreciate your leadership in solving Hawaii's crisis-level housing shortage, your work on TOD housing near transit, and, as said, the opportunity to meet with you and your committee members.

Let's continue to work together!

Aloha, Galen

Email to Sen. Chang:

Aloha Senator,

Thank you for your excellent January newsletter, particularly your coverage of our housing shortage and the related loss of residents to the mainland. The webinar series on "Our Homes" enriched the search for solutions.

We know about San Francisco and California's *bifurcated* housing market. High wages draw people who need housing and can pay for it, causing the top tier to shift toward ever higher priced homes. In the lower tier, affordable homes are 100% occupied, scarce, overpriced, driving population away. Those who stay to provide needed low-wage service jobs face a nearly impossible situation. They should live near their work but pay a terrible price to do so.

As *New York Times* reporter Conor Dougherty, our webinar speaker, [says](#) about San Francisco:

overcrowded housing [is] lower-income tenants . . . competing with each other by doubling, tripling, and quadrupling up for the scant number of affordable apartments. We now know that overcrowded housing is significantly more of a risk [for Covid-19] than, say, dense housing. If you live in a single-family home with 15 people in it, that's a lot more dangerous than 40 apartments in a four-story building.

The situation in Hawaii is worse. Only 3% of those living in California and Hawaii combined live in this state. Our tiny housing market is driven by California's high wages (as well as Asia's wealth). Yet our economy doesn't come close to providing the income to buy the market's upper-tier homes. Actual housing needs are almost entirely in the bottom tier.

So, as you document, we force emigration to the mainland at an even higher rate than California famously sends its households elsewhere.

We at Faith Action appreciate your leadership on solving Hawaii's crisis-level housing shortage.

Aloha, Galen

Omitted from final text:

In my opinion, governments are inefficient, petty, controlled by special interests, prisoners of the status quo. They don't solve big problems, preferring to waste time and money on little things.

But sometimes, terrible conditions force governments to act. Witness Hong Kong in the 1950s. Red Vienna in 1919. Singapore's HDB. Founded in 1960 in the midst of crisis, HDB built 54,000 units in five years, and supplied sufficient housing for the island within another five.

HI has defined housing a a crisis. And you have outlined the solution:

- government control of land coupled to transit-related siting (Rep. Nakamura is on Hawaii's TOD Council and wants to help)
- The ALOHA Homes strategy, including revenue bond financing, low prices, and restricting sales to owner-occupied residents who own no other property
- "off the shelf" modular housing
- competitive bidding that rewards aesthetics along with cost

Dougherty hopes culture will change to defeat NIMBYism and support dense housing:

We were living in a world where if you went to a city council meeting and complained about a multifamily development near your single-family house, you were not accosted for trying to pump up your property values or hoard land in a prosperous city. You were seen as a defender of the neighborhood, a civically-minded person.

But now, he believes:

the cultural tide is changing. There is this whole group of younger people who have absorbed a new cultural value, which is that more dense housing, more different kinds of people, more affordable housing, more housing options, is good. It feels like the tide is turning culturally and the [YIMBY] movement is emblematic of that. I think that value shift will turn out to have been much more lasting than anything Scott Wiener ever does. Because the truth is, there are still going to be a bunch of local battles. Who shows up and how those places change from within probably will turn out to be more important.

As Dougherty concludes:

Housing is just a proxy for inequality, it's a way of us building assets for one group at the exclusion of another. It is an expression of the general fraying of American society.

We are Faith Action for Community Equity. We seek to build assets for the excluded.

We know about San Francisco and California's bifurcated housing market — high wages draw people who need housing and can pay for it, causing the top tier to shift toward ever higher priced homes. In the lower tier, affordable homes are 100% occupied, scarce, overpriced, driving population away. Those who stay to provide needed low-wage service jobs face a nearly impossible situation. They should live near their work.

As *New York Times* reporter Conor Dougherty says about San Francisco:

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The situation in Hawaii is worse. Only 3% of those living in CA and HI live in this state. Our tiny housing market is driven by CA's high wages (as well as Asia's wealth), but our economy doesn't come near providing the income to buy the market's upper-tier homes.

So, as you document, we force emigration to the mainland at an even higher rate than CA sends its households elsewhere.

In my opinion, governments are inefficient, petty, controlled by special interests, prisoners of the status quo. They don't solve big problems, preferring to waste time and money on little things.

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We are [Faith Action for Community Equity](#). We seek to build assets for the excluded.

Backup:

Most Expensive States To Live In 2020

Hawaii is [the most expensive state to live in](#) in the United States. Hawaii has a cost index of 192.9. The average home price in Hawaii is \$1,158,492 and the average monthly energy bill is \$388.65. Basic physical goods, such as a half-gallon of milk, cost more than anywhere on the mainland United States because they need to be shipped to the middle of the Pacific Ocean.

*Comment:* “average”, not “median”

*New York Times* reporter Conor Dougherty

you have is an [economy that has bifurcated](#) [with] fewer middle-income jobs, more lower-income service jobs, and more higher-end jobs in software and finance. . . . we have this housing market where one group of people have so much more money to spend than this other group.

. . . bifurcation isn't just that you have gross inequality, but that these people have to live next to each other. You cannot be someone's Uber driver and telecommute. You

cannot clean someone's house remotely. These lower-end service workers have to occupy the same general housing market as the super-high-end workers.

. . . one group of people is buying and expanding homes or lowering their home cost by refinancing, while another group are at income zero while trying to live in the same housing market with no demand for their services. When you see home prices booming and an eviction tsunami coming in the same newspaper

. . . the future of America [is] a more intellectual economy. . . where new productive industries are growing. I think it's an outrage that [rich cities] have these housing crises and it's considered some insane luxury to live there.

YIMBYism Dougherty's Solution?

[Democrats want to kick zoning] up to a higher level of government. We've always done this whenever we've had a problem that seems beyond local governance. Like voting rights: you kick it to a higher body when the local body can't or won't solve it.

[Sonja Trauss](#) [a leader of the Bay Area YIMBY group] told me she wasn't super concerned about passing new laws but that the larger issue was to change the cultural perception of NIMBYism. We were living in a world where if you went to a city council meeting and complained about a multifamily development near your single-family house, you were not accosted for trying to pump up your property values or hoard land in a prosperous city. You were seen as a defender of the neighbourhood, a civically-minded person.

. . . the cultural tide is changing. There is this whole group of younger people who have absorbed a new cultural value, which is that more dense housing, more different kinds of people, more affordable housing, more housing options, is good. It feels like the tide is turning culturally and the [YIMBY] movement is emblematic of that. I think that value shift will turn out to have been much more lasting than anything Scott Wiener ever does. Because the truth is, there are still going to be a bunch of local battles. Who shows up and how those places change from within probably will turn out to be more important.

two big ideas that you could pull from [Democrats' housing] plans. **First**, some kind of renter's tax credit. It is obscene that we live in a country where homeowners are allowed to deduct their mortgage interest, but renters aren't. It is obscene that we live in a world where homeowners get 30-year fixed mortgages that guarantee their house payment pretty much for life and renters don't.

homeowners are living in the socialist hellscape of government intervention and price controls. Renters are living in the capitalist dream of variable pricing and market forces. Homeowners think they're living in this free market, but actually they're in the most regulated market – there are literally price controls propping up their market mortgages.

*Comment:* Singapore-style homeownership via a long-term lease accomplishes the same income shift toward bifurcating-reducing equality that does a rental tax credit, while providing the additional benefit of ownership care for the occupied home.

**[Second,]** us[e] the power of the purse to incentivise people to more robustly develop their regions. You should have higher density housing in fancy school districts, near job centres, near transit. . . use the power of the purse to incentivise you, within the bounds of your own local rules, to do this right. Of course, that's what Donald Trump [opposes in his appeal for NIMBY suburban votes].

. . . overcrowded housing [is] lower-income tenants . . . competing with each other by doubling, tripling, and quadrupling up for the scant number of affordable apartments. We [now know that overcrowded housing is significantly more of a risk](#) [for Covid-19] than, say, dense housing. If you live in a single-family home with 15 people in it, that's a lot more dangerous than 40 apartments in a four-story building.

Housing is just a proxy for inequality, it's a way of us building assets for one group at the exclusion of another. It is an expression of the general fraying of American society.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 11:07:56 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
kailani ross	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of allowing residential housing for Native Hawaiians everywhere in Hawai'i nei and in Kaka'ako. Our State constitution requires it.

Mahalo,

Kailani

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 11:10:52 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Pualeilani Kamahoahoa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following :

-For the past 5 years, my family and I have called the community of Kaka'ako "HOME". As Native- Hawaiians, we sadly realized it was rare to see fellow Kanaka Hawai'i living in Kaka'ako, due to the rising housing expenses and the over development of foreign businesses. Quickly, we saw the Wahipana of Kewalo and the mo'olelo of our Kupuna disappear to high rises.

As Kanaka Hawai'i we believe SB534 will reveal the true Kaka'ako that we deserve to live for.. We are not trinkets of entertainment for visitors, that are forced to pay overpriced living expenses in a community that is no longer recognizable to the time of our elders. We believe with Kaka'ako Makai, we have the opportunity to connect, but also celebrate the 'Aina in the ways we should... thru education, culture, awareness and of course compassion.

-Kaka'ako Makai lands was agreed to OHA by the settlement of 2012. We would like to continue to believe that promises and commitments of honor is still upheld in the Hawai'i Government system. The plans of Kaka'ako Makai will bring value and enrich Kewalo, Kaka'ako and Ala Moana Blvd to a greater level.

-Most importantly, its very difficult to maintain housing in Kaka'ako. The cost of living is so expensive, but we truly believe Kaka'ako Makai will provide more affordable housing for many.. perhaps even our family.

In closing, please help to provide a better community for our families and consider Kaka'ako Makai a better home for our ohana. We believe in the plans the Office of Hawaiian Affairs to give back to the 'Aina and Kahakai with purpose, integrity and aloha.

Mahalo piha for your consideration,

Mrs. Pualeilani Kamahoahoa



January 28, 2025

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

Let this letter show that **I SUPPORT SB534** for the following reasons:

- I strongly believe that OHA should be given the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka'ako Makai. In 2012, this was originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature had reached a historic settlement of past due amounts. This settlement needs to be honored now.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka'ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement. It will also help to generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai'i's critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai'i. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai'i's median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai'i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Mahalo nui for taking the time to consider my testimony to support SB534.



*Rachelle Nam*  
323 Kamokila Road  
Kapaa, HI 969746  
(808)224-4245  
mitihi@gmail.com

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 11:36:24 AM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Gary Lum	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

oppose

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 12:02:34 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Maria Welvaert	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in strong opposition to SB 534.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 12:15:05 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Brady Welvaert	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support friends of Kewalos positions on this proposed development.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 12:23:51 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kealaaumoe Stibbard	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose the bill mainly due to concerns for the environmental impact and overdevelopment of the Kaka'ako Makai area. The Kaka'ako Makai area has been a brownfield for decades and drilling into that land, for the depth necessary to accommodate a 400 ft tower, would release multiple toxins into surrounding area risking the lives of people and wildlife and damaging the precious ecosystem. Development of the Kaka'ako Makai area would result in another Waikiki, Turtle Bay, or Ko'olina decreasing public open spaces for local people. In addition to this , allowing residential development of the Kaka'ako Makai land would result in displacing the Kewalo Marine Lab which is an essential research facility which studies biodiversity and the effects of human activity on our precious local marine environment. Truly affordable housing cannot be built on Kaka'ako Makai land due to it being a contaminated brown field and its premier location.

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 12:30:17 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Genaro Hale Gualdarama	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I SUPPORT THE BILL

**LATE**

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 1:33:27 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Rachel Bui	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

"Aloha Chair, members of the Commission, and City Officials,

My name is Rachel bui and I am here today to express my strong opposition to the proposed luxury condominium development at Kewalos.

As a member of this community, I have had the privilege of growing up surfing, swimming, and enjoying quality time with my ohana at Kewalos. This breakwater is more than just a surf spot - it's a cultural and spiritual hub that connects us to our heritage, our community, and our environment.

I urge you to consider the long-term consequences of this development. Kewalos is a rare and precious gem that deserves our protection and preservation. Let us work together to ensure that this sacred place remains accessible and enjoyable for generations to come.

Mahalo.

Sincerely,  
Rachel bui

**LATE**

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 1:36:32 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Stuart Burnham	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly oppose this measure. Public ownership and unfettered access to Kakaako Makai is critical to ensuring future generations can continue to enjoy outdoor recreation opportunities along the southern shoreline. Already access (parking, etc) to Ala Moana Beach Park and Kewalo Basin park can be restricted on busy weekends due overcrowding, leaving Kakaako Makai as the sole place where shoreline access can be convenient to the public. If the large parcel of Kakaako Makai is reclassified, sold, and developed, it will exacerbate an already significant access problem, likely resulting in the few priveledged residents of the new development having a monopoly on access to the shoreline.

Affordable housing is in the public's interest, but it should not come at the expense of future generation's ability to enjoy our bounty of natural resources.

**LATE**

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 2:04:02 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Denton Pang	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I hear by oppose the community development of Kakaako Makai for another high rise!

**LATE**

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 2:38:19 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Darryl Nordstrom	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I strongly oppose reversing the decades long law that prevented building residential housing and high rise condos in Kaka'ako Makai!

If this bill is allowed to pass this will obviously clear the way for more development of ultra luxury housing and condos. Kakaako already has the most expensive condos in the state. This will allow even more expensive ultra luxury housing that's even closer to our precious shoreline. This will create more crowding, more traffic, less access to the parks and ocean. I don't understand why OHA appear to be behaving the same way that mainland money hungry people, special interests and corporations behave. It appears that OHA's only goal with this bill is to make as much money as possible. Rather than preserving the land and developing the land in a way that is in balance with nature and people, they rather allow this land to be full of concrete buildings and turn it over to another Waikiki.

Lets preserve open spaces on this precious land near our ocean in town.

I strongly oppose this bill.

Darryl

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 4:56:32 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

**LATE**

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Maliny Soukhasem	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this. It will negatively impact the coast and open spaces for future generation. Please do a proper EIS as the location is over "brown lands"

**LATE**

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 5:24:18 PM  
Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha to all committee chairs and members,  
We strongly oppose to have residential in Kaka’ako Makai and not in favor of SB 534. We as local residents born and raised on the island of Oahu, we ask for your support in considering the local community, all the children and there children’s children when deciding the future plans of Kaka’ako Makai. We have too much residential development happening in Kaka’ako Mauka and there will be more development in the future. We do not want Kaka’ako Makai looking like a concrete jungle like Kaka’ako Mauka. Please have our concerns in your hearts, so we all and not to forget, all the children and there children’s children to have the opportunity to continue to enjoy this special land.  
Mahalo

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

I SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

- SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.
- Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.
- Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable and workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate.

I am a Native Hawaiian, born and raised on Oahu. Though I currently reside on the Continent, I am personally concerned about the housing crisis in Hawai‘i since all of my siblings and many other family members still reside on the island. We need to build more affordable housing for residents making less than 140% of Hawai‘i’s median income, and this bill does just that. At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Marlene Uilani Nihoa-Livesay  
338 Idaho Springs Road  
Clarksville, TN 37043  
[livesaymu@gmail.com](mailto:livesaymu@gmail.com)  
931-980-0882

**LATE**

**LATE**

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 7:49:00 PM  
Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gabrielle Chung	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, Chang, and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing, I am writing in strong support of SB534 for the following reasons:

This bill grants OHA the authority to develop residential housing on designated parcels in Kaka'ako Makai, aligning with the original intent of the historic 2012 settlement between OHA and the legislature regarding past-due amounts.

Additionally, by increasing residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, SB534 allows OHA to maximize the value of these lands as intended in the 2012 agreement. The revenue generated will expand OHAs programs and services, including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.

Beyond these benefits, SB534 plays a crucial role in addressing Hawaii's urgent need for affordable and workforce housing. By ensuring local families and essential workers have the opportunity to live and work in urban Honolulu, this bill helps create a more sustainable and inclusive community.

I am deeply concerned about the ongoing housing crisis in Hawai'i. We must prioritize the development of affordable housing for residents earning less than 140% of the state's median income. SB534 accomplishes this while preserving open space along the waterfront, dedicating funds for public infrastructure, and enhancing public access setting a model for future developments statewide.

In short, the passage of SB534 represents a major step toward systemic housing reform, equity in development, and honoring the commitments made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai'i. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to submit testimony.

**LATE**

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 9:13:29 PM

Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ruben Ongos	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am testifying in strong opposition of this bill!!!

*SENATOR STANLEY CHANG, CHAIR OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS.*

**SB 534**

**LATE**

DATE: Wednesday, January 29, 2025  
TIME: 1:00 PM  
PLACE: Auditorium State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

**IN OPPOSITION OF SB 534**

Dear Honorable Chair Senator Stanley Chang of the Senate Committee on Housing and Committee Members:

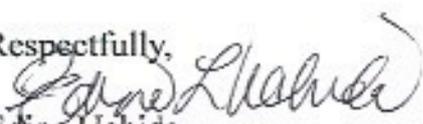
My name is Edine Uchida and I've lived in Honolulu for most of my 58 years of life and I'm testifying against SB 534.

I moved into the Kaka'ako area 9 years ago and lived and experienced a time of rapid development of massive concrete buildings and the congestion of humanity that comes along with it. There is an additional 11 high rises scheduled for development in the next 5-6 years and a potential 15,000 residents may overwhelm population density, traffic flow and the infrastructure of this 0.5 mile by 0.25 mile area of land. Kaka'ako makai and its beach park represents the last semblance of peace and tranquility in an over-developed area and another condo in Kaka'ako is not needed.

I also believe building any condo taller than 100 feet in Kaka'ako Makai may disrupt the potential toxic waste that have been buried in the area that was once a landfill. I'm afraid that drilling structural supports needed for a condominium 100 feet down into the fill could release toxic waste chemicals into the beaches of Ala Moana and Waikiki and pollute its water, damage its coral, destroy its beautiful sea life and Hawaii's world renown ocean activities.

We must protect Hawaii's beautiful natural resources and preserve low impact areas for the future generations to come. Please vote no to SB534.

Respectfully,

  
Edine Uchida  
600 Ala Moana Blvd.  
Honolulu, HI 96813

*SENATOR LORRAINE R. INOUE, CHAIR OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS.*

**SB 534**

**LATE**

DATE: Wednesday, January 29, 2025  
TIME: 1:00 PM  
PLACE: Auditorium State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

**IN OPPOSITION OF SB 534**

Dear Honorable Chair Senator Lorraine R. Inouye of the Senate Committee on Water and Land and Committee Members:

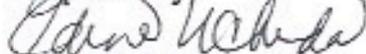
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Respectfully,



Edine Uchida

600 Ala Moana Blvd.  
Honolulu, HI 96813

*SENATOR HERBERT M. RICHARDS, III, CHAIR OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE  
ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS.*

**SB 534**

**LATE**

DATE: Wednesday, January 29, 2025  
TIME: 1:00 PM  
PLACE: Auditorium State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

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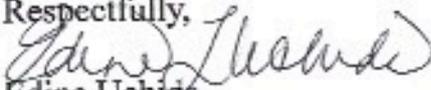
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**SB 534**

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415 South Beretania Street

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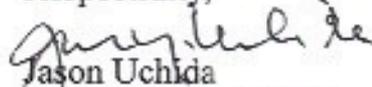
My name is Jason Uchida and I've lived in Honolulu for most of my 64 years of life and I'm testifying against SB 534.

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600 Ala Moana Blvd.  
Honolulu, HI 96813

*SENATOR LORRAINE R. INOUE. CHAIR OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS.*

**SB 534**

DATE: Wednesday, January 29, 2025  
TIME: 1:00 PM  
PLACE: Auditorium State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

**LATE**

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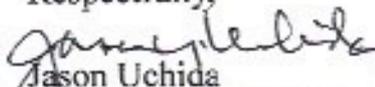
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**SB 534**

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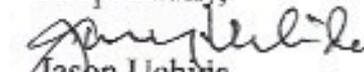
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Jason Uchida  
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Honolulu, HI 96813

**LATE**

**SB-534**

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 2:55:59 AM  
Testimony for WTL on 1/29/2025 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kealii Makekau	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Commercial development is what is needed, especially given the state of the economy and the environmental conditions that plague the area