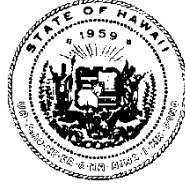


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR



DEAN MINAKAMI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM
HAWAII HOUSING FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
677 QUEEN STREET, SUITE 300
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
FAX: (808) 587-0600

Statement of DEAN MINAKAMI

Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation
Before the

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

January 29, 2025 at 9:15 a.m.
State Capitol, Room 430

In consideration of
H.B. 1325
RELATING TO HOUSING.

Chair Evslin, Vice Chair Miyake, and members of the Committee.

HHFDC has comments on HB 1325, which requires developers developing an affordable housing project under the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation (HHFDC) to assist certain tenants who are subject to displacement or eviction by the proposed project by: granting those tenants the right of first refusal of a comparable unit in the housing project at an affordable rate; establishing a fund to provide relocation benefits; providing information, either directly or through a contracted service, on how to obtain assistance and exercise the right of first refusal; and establishing procedures to maintain communication with those tenants.

HHFDC has rules in place (17-2017, HAR) for persons displaced by a state agency to receive relocation payments, although the rules do apply to projects developed by private entities that do not use state financing.

We note that this bill may stall certain projects, particularly for-sale developments, because it may not be financially feasible for developers to offer displaced tenants units in the new development at a rate no greater than what the tenant was paying.

We suggest that the developer have the option to offer the displaced tenant a unit in the new development at a rate the tenant was paying, **or** to fund relocation benefits and create a relocation program for displaced tenants.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT H.B. 1325

House Committee on Housing

January 27, 2025

Dear Chair Evslin, Vice Chair Miyake, and Honorable HSG Members,

On behalf of Tagnawa, I offer strong support for H.B. 1325.

Tagnawa was the first organization to provide Ilokano and Tagalog translations and resource navigation to survivors in the immediate aftermath of the 2023 Lahaina fire, and went on to conduct the largest needs assessment post-disaster of the Lahaina Filipino community to date. For your consideration, our study revealed that the top priority identified by Filipino survivors in the rebuilding was Lahaina lands in Lahaina hands—tied with job creation. Additionally, housing instability remains a pervasive issue, with many Filipino tenants uncertain about long-term housing (38%), waiting for lottery results for affordable housing (33%), facing imminent expiration of housing contracts in February 2025, and dependent on temporary support from FEMA and other agencies.

H.B. 1325 would help address these community concerns and protect Filipino survivors from permanent displacement. Accordingly, we ask that the Committee pass this crucial measure.

Mahalo,

Nadine Ortega, J.D.

Executive Director



HAWAII WORKERS CENTER

Defending and Respecting the workers of
Hawaii'i

(503) WORKERS ☎
(503) 967- 5377 ☎

hawaiiworkerscenter@gmail.com ✉

Mail: 2252 Puna St., Honolulu, HI 96817 ✉

hawaiiworkerscenter.org 🌐

January 28, 2025

**Executive Board
Committee**

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Board Chair

Mary Ochs
Vice Chair

Dr. Arcelita Imasa
Secretary

Kami Yamamoto
Treasurer

Board Members

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Innocenta
Sound-Kikku

Ray Catania

Justin Jansen

Leyton Torda

Kami Yamamoto

CJ Johnson

Executive Director

Sergio Alcubilla III, Esq.

Hawaii State House of Representatives

Committee on Housing

Rep. Luke Evslin, Chair

Rep. Tyson Miyake, Vice Chair

RE: STRONG SUPPORT for H.B. 1325 Relating to Housing

Dear Chair Rep. Evslin, Vice-Chair Rep. Miyake, and Members of the Committee on Housing:

The Hawaii Workers Center (HWC) envisions a Hawaii in which all workers are empowered to exercise their right to organize for their social, economic and political well-being. It is a resource of information, education, training and organizing for Hawaii's workers.

The HWC stands in strong support of H.B. 1325 which mandate that any 201H development completed with state or federal funds that results in the displacement of tenants making under 140% AMI: 1) provide relocation assistance to tenants, 2) provide right of first refusal to tenants at the completed development, and 3) provide services to maintain communication with tenants throughout the construction process.

Our primary office is currently located in the Towers of Kuhio Park, a large public housing complex here on Oahu. While the buildings are greatly in need of repair, the people that call them home are at the heart of the working class community of Kalihi. Many come from immigrant and migrant backgrounds and most have call this place home for year. Currently, there is a strong sense of uncertainty and fear as many are now forced to find alternative housing while the redevelopment is underway. We continue to hear from residents, some requiring reasonable accommodations due to a disability, unable to find alternative housing.

We believe H.B. 1325 will help avoid the consequences of such a scenario and will provide much needed relief to tenants now and in the future. Thank you for your willingness to support this important measure.

Sincerely,

Sergio Alcubilla
Executive Director



Hawai'i YIMBY

Honolulu, HI 96814

hawaiiyimby.org

info@hawaiiyimby.org

January 29, 2025

House Committee on Housing

Hawai'i State Capitol

Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: SUPPORT for HB 1325 - RELATING TO HOUSING

Aloha Chair Evslin, Vice Chair Miyake, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Hawai'i YIMBY, we are writing in **support of HB 1325** which would require assistance to tenants who are displaced by an affordable housing project. Our housing shortage is severe and will require us to redevelop many existing residential areas into more dense residential uses. However, in the process of redeveloping existing homes, we must ensure that those who currently live there are treated fairly, equitably and are allowed the opportunity to return to their community.

We believe in increasing housing stability. This involves protecting existing tenants from displacement and minimizing the effects of their home being redeveloped into more housing. We support the main points of this bill: (1) To give displaced tenants the right of first refusal and to return to a comparable unit at an affordable rate; (2) Provide relocation assistance to those displaced; (3) Ensure adequate education and communication about the existing tenant's rights during this process and the progress of the redevelopment.

We would like to offer a few comments on the current version of the bill:

(1) We fully agree that existing tenants should be offered the right of first refusal to a comparable unit in the new development. To emphasize, every effort should be made to ensure the existing resident is offered the opportunity to return and can afford to do so.



Hawai'i YIMBY

Honolulu, HI 96814

hawaiiyimby.org

info@hawaiiyimby.org

Whatever the mechanism that ensures the existing tenant is able to afford to return, it is especially important that an existing tenant is never put in the position where they return to a comparable unit and will pay more than 30% of their income.

(2) We fully agree that existing tenants should be offered some kind of compensation to temporarily or permanently relocate due to redevelopment. However, as currently written, the requirement of relocation benefits at “an amount equal to no less than three months’ rent,” seems inflexible. We would suggest that more options be added to help determine relocation benefits and the tenant chooses which benefit suits their situation best.

Option 1: Relocation benefits should include any *additional* monthly rent that the tenant will pay for a comparable unit while temporarily relocated, and certain associated costs with securing a temporary unit and moving there and back.

Option 2: Relocation benefits should include a lump-sum compensation calculated in relation to current rent, similar to the current written version.

Hawai'i YIMBY (*Yes In My Backyard*) is a volunteer-led grassroots advocacy organization dedicated to supporting bold and effective solutions for Hawai'i's devastating housing crisis. Our members are deeply concerned about Hawai'i's chronic and worsening housing shortage, which has caused home prices to rise much faster than incomes and pushes thousands of kama'āina out to the mainland or into homelessness every single year.

We ask your support for this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

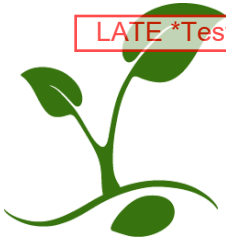
Damien Waikoloa

Chapter Lead, Hawai'i YIMBY

Edgardo Díaz Vega

Chapter Lead, Hawai'i YIMBY





HAWAII APPLESEED

CENTER FOR LAW & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Testimony of the Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice

Support for HB 1325– Relating to Housing

House Committee on Housing

Wednesday, January 30, 2025 at 9:15AM Conf. Rm. 430 and via Videoconference

Dear Chair Evslin, Vice Chair Miyake, and Committee Members:

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **strong support of HB1325**, which establishes a method of stabilizing residents who may be displaced by new 201H projects which may cause the displacement of residents. This thoughtful legislation creates a framework that addresses both our urgent need for new affordable housing, addresses community concern of new developments, while protecting our existing communities and their residents.

One of the primary concerns raised by community members about new housing development is the displacement of current residents and the disruption of established neighborhood bonds. This bill directly addresses these valid concerns by creating a clear process for displaced residents to return to their communities once development is complete. By guaranteeing residents the right of first refusal for comparable units at affordable rates, the bill ensures that new development serves both current and future residents of our communities.

The bill's provisions for relocation assistance and ongoing communication demonstrate a commitment to treating displaced residents with dignity and respect throughout the development process. The requirement to establish a fund providing at least three months' worth of relocation benefits will help ease the financial burden of temporary displacement, while the mandated communication procedures will help residents stay informed and connected to their community during the transition.

These protective measures transform what could be a traumatic displacement into a structured, supported transition with a clear path back to the community. **This approach helps build trust between developers and residents, potentially reducing opposition to much-needed housing development projects.**

Moreover, research from UCLA Lewis Center conducted a study on common rhetoric in opposition to new development and found that often the argument is distilled down to opposition to the developers themselves, not necessarily the development¹. Despite evidence to the contrary that new development actually slows the increase of housing cost in the area at scale and lowers displacement through providing more housing options², the feeling of change and actual displacement can lead to larger neighborhood opposition to new developments. This

1

<https://www.tandfonline-com.eres.library.manoa.hawaii.edu/doi/full/10.1080/07352166.2019.1623684#d1e127>

² <https://escholarship.org/content/qt7bx938fx/qt7bx938fx.pdf>



HAWAII APPLESEED

CENTER FOR LAW & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Testimony of the Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice

Support for HB 1325– Relating to Housing

House Committee on Housing

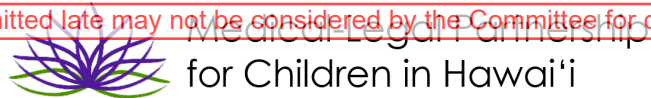
Wednesday, January 30, 2025 at 9:15AM Conf. Rm. 430 and via Videoconference

legislation builds on a model for redevelopment that acknowledges the human impact of housing construction while still moving forward with crucial affordable housing projects. By ensuring that current residents have the option to return to these new developments, we can build more housing while preserving the social fabric that makes our neighborhoods strong and resilient.

HB1325 addresses both our critical need for more affordable housing and our obligation to protect vulnerable residents who might otherwise be displaced without support or recourse. It represents a thoughtful solution that allows us to grow our housing supply while maintaining the stability and cohesion of our existing communities.

I urge you to support this important legislation that will help us build a more inclusive and equitable housing future for Hawaii.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



HB1325 RELATING TO HOUSING

House Committee on Housing

Jan. 29, 9:15am, Room 430

Aloha mai e Chair Evslin, Vice Chair Miyake and members of the Committee:

The Medical-Legal Partnership for Children in Hawai'i provides free, direct legal services to patients in community health settings. Many of our clients are low-income tenants and tenants in public housing projects. We testify in **STRONG SUPPORT** for **HB1325**, and offer some amendments to further strengthen the law to protect local families from permanent displacement.

Currently, there are almost no clear and enforceable state level displacement protections for tenants in projects that are being re-developed under state funded government schemes. Public Housing tenants, representing our most low-income and needy families at 30% AMI who are displaced to make way for "new" affordable housing redevelopment by private developers are left to cite [promises made in funding documents](#) and hope that they can return to their community. This has been made abundantly clear in the redevelopment of Kūhiō Park Terrace low-rise, where a private developer is implementing a \$200M+ project that will displace hundreds of current tenants -- tenants who are a month away from being forced to move, and many of whom have no clear options for housing despite assurances that they would receive relocation assistance and the right to return.¹

As our state moves to implement and build affordable housing – increasingly through public-private partnerships similar to the privatization and redevelopment of Kūhiō Park Terrace low-rise – new laws must be enacted to protect displacement of local tenant families. **Without HB1325, our displaced local families are forced to compete just to return to a community they lived in for generations.** HB1325 is needed to make clear that developers receiving state government subsidies must take the time to ensure that displaced families receive services, and a clear and operationalized right to return to the project in their community first.

To further strengthen and clarify the projects for which this applies, I offer the following amendments.

Amendment 1:

Clarify that the communication with tenants must be contracted to begin prior to relocation and must continue through construction up and until tenants are offered and exercise (or opt not to exercise) their right to return to the project.

“(iv) Establish procedures to track and maintain communication with displaced or evicted tenants starting prior to the 120 days

¹ Dillon Ancheta, “‘Help us’: Public housing redevelopment forces 60 Kalihi tenants to relocate,” available at <https://www.hawaiinewsnow.com/2025/01/24/public-housing-redevelopment-forces-60-kalihi-tenants-relocate/>



Medical-Legal Partnership for Children in Hawai'i

notice to vacate, maintain throughout the entire construction, and then offer and implement the right of return to tenants, ending only when all displaced tenants have either declined or exercised the right to return and are considered relocated only when moved into the new project.”

Amendment 2:

Clarify that projects re-developed in accordance with federal public housing redevelopment schemes also comply with and provide all tenant relocation assistance as required under federal regulations.

(v) Projects developed under federal redevelopment schemes that provide longer tenant assistance shall have the federal rules control and nothing in this section shall be construed to confer less protection to tenants.”

Accordingly I respectfully ask that you PASS HB1325 and consider the proposed amendments.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony in support.

Deja Ostrowski, Esq.
Medical-Legal Partnership for Children in Hawai'i
808-728-0004; dejao@hawaii.edu

HB-1325

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 11:21:43 AM

Testimony for HSG on 1/29/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Seth Kamemoto	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The overall intent of this bill is very good; helping those displaced by new developments. My concern is that landowners/developers can game this to the detriment of the tenants.

1. Prior to "official" proposal of a new project, they can raise rents to 141% AMI levels so these rules won't trigger. This will probably force tenants out (as they can't afford to stay) while not providing any of the assistance outlined in these clauses.

2. They could reduce rent to \$0, such that 3 months of rental assistance also becomes \$0, then give minimum notice to vacate (which is still probably less than 3 months), for a net "gain" for the developer.

Maybe tying the qualification to the security deposit (i.e. the rent when a tenant moved in), possibly indexed for inflation, would limit the ability to game the current rent levels?

It's also worth noting that market rents are very often less than 140% AMI levels (in 2024 for Honolulu, it's \$4,385 for a 2-bedroom), so this clause would trigger on most new redevelopment proposals that currently have renters, even at market-rate properties. Honest developers and landowners would be required to support such renters with relocation, even if they are market-rate renters that, by definition, should have decent mobility in the existing rental market.

Since this is mainly for rentals, maybe setting the AMI limit lower, to 100% or 80%, would focus this bill on only supporting those who would be less competitive in the open rental market.

HB-1325

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 3:19:21 PM

Testimony for HSG on 1/29/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bianca Isaki	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Please SUPPORT HB1325 to protect our local families.

· We need this bill to make sure local folks who have lived in an area for generations are not being displaced to make way for ‘new affordable housing’ development.

· We need this law change to ensure all tenants get comprehensive relocation assistance and the ability to move back to their community. KPT low-rise tenants want to make sure no one in Mayor Wright or other redevelopment projects face [the same struggles they are having](#). KPT low-rise residents have asked for the following to be explicitly required by law:

a. The right to return to the project, as promised by the developer when they were approved for LIHTC and RHRF subsidies [from HHFDC](#).

b. Individualized relocation counseling, which provides assistance locating and leasing up in comparable housing and follows tenants for the life of the redevelopment project. Unlike [promises made to received HHFDC funding](#), the developer has contracted a company from Los Angeles to only assist tenants during move out, and left tenants with no further support.

· We need this law change to make clear that developers that receive tax breaks, loans, subsidies and relaxed zoning and breaks from permitting and fees from government must give back to our community and not displace local residents then offer the newly constructed units to others.

· Requiring developers to offer the right to return to our local community displaced by development projects means we are making sure any proposed supposed affordable housing

project serves those most in need in our **local** community who have often lived in the area for generations.

- These protections will assist us in making sure new redevelopments in places affected by disaster do not permanently displace folks.

Yours,

Bianca

HB-1325

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 3:51:09 PM

Testimony for HSG on 1/29/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kayla Marie	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this measure

HB-1325

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 4:03:26 PM

Testimony for HSG on 1/29/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stacey Alapai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Giving displaced residents first chance at the new or redeveloped housing is the right thing to do.
Please support it.

HB-1325

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 5:48:31 PM

Testimony for HSG on 1/29/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keila Paahana	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support

HB-1325

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 6:35:05 PM

Testimony for HSG on 1/29/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Doneileen Willets	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am currently living under the Hawaii Public Housing and strongly agree with this Bill as KPT low-rise residents have asked for the following to be explicitly required by law:

a. The right to return to the project, as promised by the developer when they were approved for LIHTC and RHRF subsidies [from HHFDC](#).

b. Individualized relocation counseling, which provides assistance locating and leasing up in comparable housing and follows tenants for the life of the redevelopment project.

Unlike [promises made to received HHFDC funding](#), the developer has contracted a company from Los Angeles to only assist tenants during move out, and left tenants with no further support.

· We need this law change to make clear that developers that receive government benefits -- including tax breaks, loans, subsidies and relaxed zoning, and breaks from permitting and fees -- must give back to our community and not displace local residents then offer the newly constructed units to others.

· Requiring developers to offer the right to return to our local community displaced by development projects means we are making sure any proposed supposed affordable housing project serves those most in need in our **local** community who have often lived in the area for generations.

· These protections will assist us in making sure new redevelopments in places affected by disaster do not permanently displace folks.

Mahalo!

The Willets Ohana

HB-1325

Submitted on: 1/27/2025 10:43:10 PM

Testimony for HSG on 1/29/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sharde Freitas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I STRONGLY SUPPORT HB1325 to protect our local families.

We need this bill to make sure local folks who have lived in an area for generations are not being displaced to make way for ‘new affordable housing’ development.

We need this law change to ensure all tenants get comprehensive relocation assistance and the ability to move back to their community. KPT low-rise tenants want to make sure no one in Mayor Wright or other redevelopment projects face [the same struggles they are having](#). KPT low-rise residents have asked for the following to be explicitly required by law:

- The right to return to the project, as promised by the developer when they were approved for LIHTC and RHRF subsidies [from HHFDC](#).
- Individualized relocation counseling, which provides assistance locating and leasing up in comparable housing and follows tenants for the life of the redevelopment project. Unlike [promises made to received HHFDC funding](#), the developer has contracted a company from Los Angeles to only assist tenants during move out, and left tenants with no further support.

We need this law change to make clear that developers that receive tax breaks, loans, subsidies and relaxed zoning and breaks from permitting and fees from government must give back to our community and not displace local residents then offer the newly constructed units to others.

Requiring developers to offer the right to return to our local community displaced by development projects means we are making sure any proposed supposed affordable housing project serves those most in need in our **local** community who have often lived in the area for generations.

These protections will assist us in making sure new redevelopments in places affected by disaster do not permanently displace folks.

HB-1325

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 12:12:02 AM

Testimony for HSG on 1/29/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Wayne Tanaka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Evslin, Vice Chair Miyake, and Members of the Committee,

I STRONGLY SUPPORT HB1325, which will help to prevent the redevelopment of affordable housing projects from displacing and potentially rendering houseless those who these projects are intended to help.

Currently, there is a need for specific and enforceable protections for public housing tenants who are displaced to make way for "new" affordable housing redevelopment by private developers. This has been made abundantly clear in the redevelopment of Kūhiō Park Terrace, where a private developer is implementing a \$200M+ project that will displace dozens of current tenants -- tenants who are now a month away from being forced to move, and many of whom have no clear options for housing despite assurances that they would receive comprehensive relocation assistance.

Many of these working families are facing extreme housing uncertainty, and may even soon be rendered houseless - while the private developer that is displacing them receives millions in taxpayer dollars and entitlements.

Countless more individuals and families may similarly be displaced in future projects if we do not enact proactive protections such as the clear and comprehensive relocation assistance requirements found in this measure.

Accordingly I respectfully ask that you PASS HB1325.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

HB-1325

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 2:08:46 AM

Testimony for HSG on 1/29/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jhonalyn Cuestas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB1325 to protect our local families.

· We need this bill to make sure local families who have lived in an area for generations are not being displaced to make way for ‘new affordable housing’ development.

· We need this law change to ensure all tenants get comprehensive relocation assistance and the ability to move back to their community. KPT low-rise tenants want to make sure no one in Mayor Wright or other redevelopment projects face the same struggles they are having. KPT low-rise residents have asked for the following to be explicitly required by law:

a. The right to return to the project, as promised by the developer when they were approved for LIHTC and RHRF subsidies from HHFDC.

b. Individualized relocation counseling, which provides assistance locating and leasing up in comparable housing and follows tenants for the life of the redevelopment project. Unlike promises made to received HHFDC funding, the developer has contracted a company from Los Angeles to only assist tenants during move out, and left tenants with no further support.

· We need this law change to make clear that developers that receive government benefits -- including tax breaks, loans, subsidies and relaxed zoning, and breaks from permitting and fees -- must give back to our community and not displace local families then offer the newly constructed units to others.

· Requiring developers to offer the right to return to our local community displaced by development projects means we are making sure any proposed supposed affordable housing project serves those most in need in our local community who have often lived in the area for generations.

· These protections will assist us in making sure new redevelopments in places affected by disaster do not permanently displace families.

HB-1325

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 6:35:51 AM

Testimony for HSG on 1/29/2025 9:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha e,

I suppose bill HB1325, I believe you should support it too! As a Hawaiian raised on Maui, Lahaina who lost everything to the fires on 8/08/2023, find it hard for housing, getting denied from "low income" housing when I lost my job and my husband is the only one working to support our ohana of 5 it making it real difficult to rebuild and stay in Maui. With the prices of everything going up housing options are limited for us to afford. I'm afraid we don't be able to live here much longer.

We had to move to Makawao and are currently staying with family until we can get approval on a house we can afford.

It's also heartbreaking to hear, see and read of foreigners moving here almost daily and pricing us out of housing.

mahalo for your time,

Nalani A. From Lahaina

Chair Luke Evslin
Vice Chair Tyson Miyake

House Committee on Housing

Wednesday, January 29, 2025
9:15 AM

**TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 1325 RELATING
TO HOUSING**

Aloha Chair Evslin, Vice Chair Miyake, Members of the House Committee on Housing,

My name is Jun Shin. I am testifying as an individual in **STRONG SUPPORT** of **HB1325**, Relating to Housing. In the process of developing new affordable housing projects, tenants can be displaced/evicted, like we saw with Kuilei Place in the Mccully-Mo‘ili‘ili neighborhood and we are seeing now with Kuhio Park Terrace in Kalihi. When that happens, tenants must have rights and protections in place to ensure that they remain housed or can find new housing as soon as possible. The stability and community that housing brings must not be taken lightly, public resources must be put towards addressing the uncertainty that displaced/evicted tenants have to face.

Please **PASS** House Bill 1325 out of your committee.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify,

Jun Shin,
State House District 23 | State Senate District 12
Cell: 808-255-6663
Email: junshinbusiness729@gmail.com

HB-1325

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 9:17:20 AM

Testimony for HSG on 1/29/2025 9:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

This proposed measure is important to clearly define the process to build and obtain affordable housing. It is essential to ensure that the process has the most benefits as possible.

HB-1325

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 9:20:10 AM

Testimony for HSG on 1/29/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ashley Kaono	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I STRONGLY SUPPORT HB1325 to protect our local families.

- We need this bill to make sure local folks who have lived in an area for generations are not being displaced to make way for ‘new affordable housing’ development.
- We need this law change to ensure that tenants get comprehensive relocation assistance and the ability to move back to their community following displacement. Right now, KPT low-rise tenants want to make sure no one in Mayor Wright or other redevelopment projects face the same struggles they are having. KPT low-rise residents have asked for the following to be explicitly required by law:
 - a. The right to return to the project, as promised by the developer when they were approved for LIHTC and RHRF subsidies from HHFDC.
 - b. Individualized relocation counseling, which provides assistance locating and leasing up in comparable housing and follows tenants for the life of the redevelopment project. Unlike promises made to receive HHFDC funding, the developer has contracted a company from Los Angeles to only assist tenants during move out, and left tenants with no further support.
- We need this law change to make clear that developers that receive tax breaks, loans, subsidies and relaxed zoning and breaks from permitting and fees from government must give back to our community and not displace local residents then offer the newly constructed units to others.
- Requiring developers to offer the right to return to our local community displaced by development projects means we are making sure any proposed and supposed affordable housing project serves those most in need in our local community who have often lived in the area for generations.
- These protections will assist us in making sure new redevelopments in places affected by disaster do not permanently displace folks.

HB-1325

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 9:52:23 AM

Testimony for HSG on 1/29/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cardenas Pintor	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I support this bill.

Mahalo nui,

Cardenas (Cards) Pintor

HB-1325

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 10:28:02 AM

Testimony for HSG on 1/29/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James Logue	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill because it addresses several key road blocks that many people face.

HB-1325

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 10:57:32 AM

Testimony for HSG on 1/29/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leo Nahe Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a community member in Pearl City and I support bill HB 1325. Building affordable housing is necessary for the growing population of Hawai‘i, however, it should not be done at the expense of existing renters and their housing security. This bill will ensure reallocation assistance, waived rent fees, and more. This bill is necessary for the future of locals, ensuring that they can stay on their homeland and not be pushed out for the sake of development.

Na,

Leo Nahe

HB-1325

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 11:10:19 AM

Testimony for HSG on 1/29/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrew Grandinetti	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm supporting this bill because if we are going to solve the housing crisis we must protect the rights and needs of tenants. Too many individuals and families have been displaced and either have left the state or have become homeless. Housing is a human right, and a right to return is an essential part of that human right.

To Committee Chair Evslin, Vice Chair Miyake, and members of the House Committee on Housing:

My name is Kelsea Armstrong, and I am writing as an individual to express my strong support for HB 1325, which would provide essential protections for renters. This bill requires developers of affordable housing projects to assist tenants who are at risk of displacement or eviction due to the developer's project.

HB 1325 mandates that 201H affordable housing developments, which displace tenants, must provide relocation assistance, three months of waived rent, and the first right of refusal for a comparable unit in the new development. These protections are critical because Hawai'i has the highest cost of living in the nation, and without safeguards like these, many of our community members face financial and housing insecurity with little ability to prepare or recover.

When development proceeds without these protections, local residents suffer significant losses. A stark example of this is the 130 households that were displaced from Kapiolani Village Apartments to make way for the Kuilei Place development. This bill would establish a crucial standard to ensure that if tenants are displaced, their needs are met and their rights are respected.

Renters, especially those paying month-to-month, are especially vulnerable when their homes are quickly redeveloped. They are blindsided by rapid evictions, often find that the rent for available affordable units can be double what they were previously paying, and face the uncertainty of not knowing where to go next. Many residents are left worrying about their neighbors, forced to cohabitate, and are put at greater risk of homelessness. These are not just inconveniences—they are life-altering challenges.

Without the protections outlined in HB 1325, displaced residents will continue to suffer, even as new housing is built in our communities. This bill is a critical step toward protecting those who need it most and ensuring that redevelopment benefits everyone, not just developers.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kelsea R. Armstrong

HB-1325

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 12:36:54 PM

Testimony for HSG on 1/29/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sean-Joseph T.K. Choo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Evslin, Vice Chair Miyake, and members of the Committee on Housing,

Mahalo for all the work you do to kōkua homeowners and renters in our community. I'm a local theater artist and a new member of the Honolulu Tenants Union. Last night, I attended an event hosted by the union, and was saddened to hear most of the people in that circle (who live in Makiki and surrounding areas) have had horrible + abusive treatment from landlords. I expressed my frustration as a descendant of kanka maoli that the 'āina and its people is hard put in hosting and supporting kama'āina + mea kipa, (not even talking about Hawaiian people being able to sustain life on their own land!). The fact that people work multiple jobs and still cannot afford to make ends meet in our neighborhood while down the road mere minutes away tourists throw money at hotels, ogling at hula dancers, sipping cocktails, and enjoying the sunset makes me furious.

It is essential (as this bill states) that "The legislature believes that while the State must continue to prioritize the production of affordable housing, *it is equally important to ensure that these developments do not result in the unnecessary displacement of the communities*". We must all rally against that which would cause a "loss of social networks and economic stability", caring for mālama-ing our communities, not breaking them for the sake of profit. I think it is more urgent to care for our communities health, both mental and physical, in light of the last four years as our world dramatically shifted.

I do not need to remind you that housing is an essential need for people. This is a moral issue. Please join me in supporting Rep. Grandinetti (who I heard about this from Instagram) and the others who introduced this bill in supporting not just their cause, but the cause of all those who call Hawai'i, and struggle to maintain it as their home.

Mālama pono,

Sean-Joseph Takeo Kahāokalani Choo

HB-1325

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 12:59:04 PM

Testimony for HSG on 1/29/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacquelyn Perreira	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To Committee Chair Evslin, Vice Chair Miyake, and members of the House Committee on Housing:

My name is Jacquelyn Perreira, and I am writing as an individual to express my strong support for HB 1325, which would provide essential protections for renters. This bill requires developers of affordable housing projects to assist tenants who are at risk of displacement or eviction due to the developer's project.

HB 1325 mandates that 201H affordable housing developments, which displace tenants, must provide relocation assistance, three months of waived rent, and the first right of refusal for a comparable unit in the new development. These protections are critical because Hawai'i has the highest cost of living in the nation, and without safeguards like these, many of our community members face financial and housing insecurity with little ability to prepare or recover. When development proceeds without these protections, local residents suffer significant losses.

A stark example of this is the 130 households that were displaced from Kapiolani Village

Apartments to make way for the Kuilei Place development. This bill would establish a crucial standard to ensure that if tenants are displaced, their needs are met and their rights are respected.

Renters, especially those paying month-to-month, are especially vulnerable when their homes are quickly redeveloped. They are blindsided by rapid evictions, often find that the rent for available, affordable units can be double what they were previously paying, and face the uncertainty of not knowing where to go next. Many residents are left worrying about their neighbors, forced to cohabitate, and are put at greater risk of homelessness. These are not just inconveniences—they're life-altering challenges.

Without the protections outlined in HB 1325, displaced residents will continue to suffer, even as new housing is built in our communities. This bill is a critical step toward protecting those who need it most and ensuring that redevelopment benefits everyone, not just developers.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jacquelyn Perreira

HB-1325

Submitted on: 1/28/2025 8:08:12 PM

Testimony for HSG on 1/29/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christine Otto Zaa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm in strong support of HB1325. Our state needs a multifaceted approach to protecting and housing our local families.

Dina Shek
Honolulu, HI 96822

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

Rep. Luke A. Evslin, Chair

Rep. Tyson K. Miyake, Vice Chair

Hearing Date: January 29, 2025 at 9:15am (Room 430)

Re: SUPPORT for HB 1325, Relating to Housing

Dear Committee Members,

I offer this testimony in strong support of HB 1325 which would prevent further displacement of low-income residents impacted by affordable housing redevelopment. In my professional work as the Legal Director of the Medical-Legal Partnership for Children in Hawai‘i, I have seen the redevelopment of low-income housing result in the permanent uprooting of tight-knit local communities, with longtime resident families left to face further housing instability. This frequently occurs despite developers promising the “right to return” and relocation services.

As recently highlighted by [Hawaii News Now](#)¹, sixty Kuhio Park Terrace (KPT) Low-Rise units are set to be demolished in 30 days, yet most residents have not been provided adequate relocation services and there is no clear process to return. Despite a clear contractual obligation to provide a right to return, the developer of this project is using a [google form](#) to fulfill this obligation, and no contractor has been hired to monitor and communicate with the displaced residents following their displacement.

This exemplifies what occurs in the absence of meaningful enforcement – residents are left to self-advocate without clear requirements or accountability. HB 1325 is a critical step to prevent further displacement of local families, and to begin building accountability into future redevelopment projects in Hawai‘i.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 1325.

/s/

Dina Shek

¹ Dillon Ancheta, ‘Help us’: Public Housing Redevelopment Forces 60 Kalihi Tenants to Relocate, Hawaii News Now, January 23, 2025 at <https://www.hawaiinewsnow.com/2025/01/24/public-housing-redevelopment-forces-60-kalihi-tenants-relocate/>.

HB-1325

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 2:20:21 AM

Testimony for HSG on 1/29/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jordan Kapon Nakamura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha mai kakou, o Jordan Kapon Nakamura ko'u inoa and I'm a kama'aina worker in strong support of this bill. As someone who has gone through and deeply loves people enduring no-fault evictions and other forms of forced displacement, I know nothing can replace one's home, but anything to help with that process is a lot more than nothing. The cost to move one's entire life with speed and quality is high and rising and the high cost of moving should not also fall to the displaced. The offer of a spot in the building that is replacing their home, some waived rent, and financial help to relocate constitutes a bare minimum offer to someone who is being forced to upend their living situation. This bill creates a standard of respect for people caught in an already unbearably harsh housing landscape. Please consider the sacred rights of shelter that belong to every human alive, and what will bring us closer to honoring those rights and humanity in those who are still being forced to lose their homes against their will. Mahalo nui.

HB-1325

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 6:47:35 AM

Testimony for HSG on 1/29/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Demiliza Saramosing	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Demiliza Saramosing, and I was born and raised in Kalihi. My family, like many others in this community, has worked hard to build a life here, despite rising costs and the constant pressure of displacement. Kalihi isn't just a neighborhood, it's home. It's where generations of families have put down roots, where neighbors look out for one another, and where culture and history live in the everyday moments of our lives. But right now, families in Kalihi, Lāhainā, and across Hawai‘i are at risk of losing their homes, not because they can't afford to live here, but because the very projects claiming to provide affordable housing are pushing them out. That's why I strongly support HB1325.

This bill is crucial because it ensures that redevelopment does not come at the cost of displacing the very people it claims to serve. Right now, in Kalihi's KPT low-rises, 60 families--more than 100--have been forced out. They were promised assistance, but instead, The Michael's organization is only helping with their move-out, leaving them with no ongoing guidance or guarantee that they can return. We cannot let this pattern continue, especially when developers receive government benefits, subsidies, tax breaks, and relaxed zoning while failing to protect the communities most affected by their projects.

HB1325 is a necessary step to ensure fairness and accountability in affordable housing development. It establishes clear protections:

1. The Right to Return: Displaced tenants must be given priority to move back into the completed project. If a development claims to help local residents, then it must actually serve them, not replace them.

2. Comprehensive Relocation Assistance: Families should not be left to navigate displacement on their own. This bill requires individualized relocation counseling to help tenants secure stable housing and provides support throughout the entire redevelopment process, not just during move-out.

3. Accountability for Developers Using Public Funds: If developers benefit from government support, they must give back to the communities they impact. Affordable housing should be truly affordable and accessible to those who need it most.

This issue is about more than just housing, it's about preserving our communities, our sense of belonging, and the futures of the families who have helped shape Hawai'i for generations. We've already seen what happens when local families are priced out, pushed out, and forgotten.

HB1325 is a way to ensure that progress does not come at the expense of the people who call these places home.

I urge you to pass HB1325 to protect our local families and hold developers accountable to the promises they make. Affordable housing should not mean displacing the very people it is meant to serve.

Daghang Salamat for your time and consideration,

Demiliza Saramosing

HB-1325

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 8:25:20 AM

Testimony for HSG on 1/29/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pearl Sheck	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Talofa,

I am testifying in support of the bill HB1325. We need this bill to make sure our local folks and their families who have lived in an area for generations are not being displaced to make way for "new affordable housing" development. Yes, housing insecurities has been one of the major problems in Hawaii and many of the leaders believed that by creating more affordable housing is the key solution. But the question is at what cost? There is no denying of the fact that the low-income housing and public housing properties NEEDS to be rennovated (example, LOW RISE KPT) for many reasons especially for health. However, if the goal of the redevelopers and private companies are to make profit from these projects without the thought of the families that have lived their for many generations as well as the community altogether than we need laws to protect these communities. We need this law change to make clear that developers that receive tax breaks, loans, subsidies and relaxed zoning and breaks from permitting and fees from government must give back to our community and not displace local residents then offer the newly constructed units to others. We need this law to protect the families and the community from the consequences of the redevelopers projects. IF the redevelopers fails to meet all the promises made for the project the community and the famillies will face these consequences. They will be the ones recovering from it NOT the redevelopers or the private companies. Therefore, I humbly request the leaders please vote to PROTECT our community and the families that rely on us to protect them however we can.

HB-1325

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 11:41:56 AM

Testimony for HSG on 1/29/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jesse Lipman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I'm writing in support of HB1325. My testimony is the result of 25 years working in the Kalihi and KPT community, including intensive work with KPT residents over the past three years as the HPHA-Michaels Corp public-private affordable housing development has taken shape. During that time I've spoken with several hundred KPT residents and Kalihi neighbors and had six meetings with HPHA or Michaels staff. During this entire three year period residents have consistently said "we want to return" yet have never been provided a guarantee. I ask how are we fixing a housing crisis if we displace long time low income residents who could easily become the next wave of homeless? Their right to return should be fundamental to any redevelopment. In addition, the inclusion of impacted residents, neighbors and community organizations in the housing redevelopment processes is essential. These are the people who care about their community and many KPT residents have told me they believe the goal is more to displace them and their neighbors in the redevelopment footprint, than rebuild around them. I ask you to support this bill. It's a good start. In addition, people are also asking how this redevelopment will help Kalihi when there is no guarantee that Kalihi residents struggling with high housing costs will have priority tenancy in the new units? Will this development help our community if it removes stable long time neighbors and replaces them with people from somewhere else? Therefore, I suggest strengthening this bill by adding measures that prioritize new taxpayer funded affordable housing for residents of that community. There are big plans to rebuild our public housing to address the housing crisis. Please use your power to listen to the community, solidify legal requirements to keep people home, and remember this is about the needs of local people not just the creation of new housing units at the expense of neighborhood cohesion and stability.

HB-1325

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 11:45:14 AM

Testimony for HSG on 1/29/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
pahnelopi mckenzie	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill

HB-1325

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 11:57:54 AM

Testimony for HSG on 1/29/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alicia Turlington	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I STRONGLY SUPPORT HB1325 to protect our local families.

I am a pediatrician in Kalihi where many of my patients are already being affected by the redevelopment of the housing project known as "KPT low-rise" by the families who have lived their for generations. The chaos that this has caused to parents, many with limited English proficiency and already busy working multiple jobs and raising children, is tremendous.

Besides the toll this stress is taking on parents, I'd like to share the view of a pediatrician and how this affects my patients, children. Since I cannot share identifying medical information with you, I will tell you about a fictional story of a patient that reflects what I am seeing. A child with autism, a teenager, let's say, is attending school at Farrington High School. He has been attending this school for years and is used to his routine of catching his school bus, being met by aides and teachers he knows when he gets to school, learning and preparing for life after high school, and then getting his bus home. A child with autism is especially sensitive to change and transitions. New people are challenging, not understanding the triggers and needs of the child. New environments can provoke sensory sensitivities than can lead to behavioral problems including self-harm and non-stop crying. Discomfort can lead to elopement. Why should this child be forced into a new school district, new people, new sensory challenges, at the whims of a housing developer? Why should a parent be forced to make a housing choice that does not put their child's needs first?

It should be a right that parent being forced to leave their housing be guaranteed that their child can at least attend the same school. When we say comparable housing, it must include allowing the child to attend the same schools. We know that moving schools can be disrupted for neurotypical children who may lose learning progress or be introduced to a classroom learning material they didn't yet see in their old class, leading to gaps in learning that can never be filled. Imagine the impact on children with special needs who have Individualized Education Plans developed with parents and their schools?

Lastly, I want to introduce to you the concept of the medical home. This concept was championed by a Hawai'i pediatrician, the late, great Dr. Calvin Sia. In Kalihi, my clinic serves as a medical home to many families. I cherish the relationships that I have formed with families over 17 years of practicing. A medical home means that you value your patient, you put their needs at the center of all that you do, but they are the decision makers and we work collaboratively to improve health. A medical home must also be accessible. What that means is

that families can get to the clinic when they need it. If families are forced to move, many who do not have transportation, they may no longer be able to access the medical home of their choice. They may be forced to lose the relationships they've developed for years with their health care providers.

We need this bill to make sure local folks who have lived in an area for generations are not being displaced to make way for 'new affordable housing' development. We need this law change to ensure all tenants get comprehensive relocation assistance and the ability to move back to their community. KPT low-rise tenants want to make sure no one in Mayor Wright or other redevelopment projects face [the same struggles they are having](#). KPT low-rise residents have asked for the following to be explicitly required by law:

- a. The right to return to the project, as promised by the developer when they were approved for LIHTC and RHRF subsidies [from HHFDC](#).
- b. Individualized relocation counseling, which provides assistance locating and leasing up in comparable housing and follows tenants for the life of the redevelopment project. Unlike [promises made to received HHFDC funding](#), the developer has contracted a company from Los Angeles to only assist tenants during move out, and left tenants with no further support.

I have heard of meetings that have not offered language support. I have not heard any discussion of how children can be kept in their same school districts. I have heard of tenants being shown units that are boarded up and not even habitable. How is this relocation assistance?

We need this law change to make clear that developers that receive tax breaks, loans, subsidies and relaxed zoning and breaks from permitting and fees from government must give back to our community and not displace local residents then offer the newly constructed units to others.

Requiring developers to offer the right to return to our local community displaced by development projects means we are making sure any proposed supposed affordable housing project serves those most in need in our **local** community who have often lived in the area for generations. These protections will assist us in making sure new redevelopments in places affected by disaster, like the Lahaina Fire do not permanently displace folks.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I hope that you will support HB1325.

Main Problems with Relocation Process

- (1) **Grossly Inadequate Housing Options:** Seneca, TMO's contractor, has repeatedly offered residents housing "options" that are **not comparable to their needs**, including 2-floor and walk-up units for people with disabilities, units outside children's school districts, uninhabitable units, units unsuitable for pets, and completely unavailable units.
- (2) **Incorrect Information:** The 90-day Notices from HPHA to residents included misordered pages, duplicate unit listings, unavailable units, and incorrect contact information for Seneca that led to an uninvolved party's personal cell phone.
- (3) **Poor Communication:** Seneca staff is frequently **off-island at important times** and **absent for community meetings**. Residents who have been able to regularly communicate with Seneca have still deal with **lack of responsiveness to specific housing needs**, especially disability access for elders.
- (4) **Lack of Language Access:** Many informational documents **have not been translated for residents** and many community meetings hosted by Seneca and TMO have been conducted **without interpreters**.
- (5) **Other issues:** Unrealistic parking in new development, No clear right to return process

What's Needed Now

- **Additional Support:** Contract with a local organization to monitor and support residents through the entirety of the relocation and return processes, not just initial move.
- **Additional Community Meetings:** Additional community meetings should be held by TMO and Seneca so residents can voice their concerns and receive answers.
- **Right to Return** - TMO has promised residents in good standing a "right to return"
 - **Guaranteed in Writing:** All residents should be given a clear, guaranteed right to return in writing. TMO has promised residents a right to return in multiple meetings and documents.
 - **Good standing:** TMO and HPHA should allow residents to be considered in "good standing" for purposes of relocation and return if they are actively engaged in payment plans and are otherwise making good faith efforts to comply with the rules and standards.
 - **Right to Return Assistance:** Improved monitoring of resident's coordinated return to the new development. Website is insufficient and unusable by most seniors: TMO should provide proactive assistance (i.e., have a point person to monitor the return) and not place the burden on residents.

HHFDC Requirements and TMO Promises

Michael's promised the following in order to receive funding from the HHFDC in its January 2024 Funding Agreement with the HHFDC:

"An individual relocation plan will be developed for each of the 64 households and will include specific relocation needs as determined through multiple household surveys and ongoing communication; relocation options; and a coordinated move schedule to the relocated unit and back to the Project when construction is complete."

"...Specific relocation issues will be carefully monitored and addressed for the relocated families, including reducing disruption to affected children by identifying relocation options in the same DOE district whenever possible; translation services to ensure all residents understand the relocation process and their rights, regardless of disability or limited English language proficiency; protecting all resident rights related to relocation; and regular and ongoing communication with each household before, during, and after relocation to ensure issues, concerns, questions, and changing circumstances and needs are addressed."

Quotes from the TMO's Redevelopment FAQ on Right to Return:

Post Construction & Lease-Up Questions (Phase 1) - continued

- **How can I receive information on my right to return after construction is completed?**
 - A spot to report the address of where you are living post relocation will be created on the project website www.kuhiopark.com so those residents that wish to be notified of the process for returning to the new construction can be tracked. In addition, you can continue to check back on the project website for more information on construction progress and lease-up timing.
- **Is there a specific person/process to oversee maintaining the records of the tenants who want to return?**
 - During the relocation process, SRS is gathering information on residents who express an interest to return. Residents relocating from Phase 1 will have their information collected and will be contacted prior to construction completion. This is why it is very important for you to report your current address and contact information on the Kuhio Park website portal if you want to return to one of the new units.

KPT LOW RISE REDEVELOPMENT ISSUES

The same poor quality units have been offered to multiple families



KPT LOW RISE REDEVELOPMENT ISSUES

The same poor quality units have been offered to multiple families



Lenda Tominiko
1459 Ahonui Street, Apt. 8C
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96819
(808) 372-7353

September 19, 2024

Hawai'i Public Housing Authority
Kuhio Park Homes
1002 North School Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817

Re: Request for Consideration of Resident Concerns

Dear Members of the Hawai'i Public Housing Authority Board,

We, the undersigned residents of the Kuhio Park Homes and Low-rise, are writing to bring several concerns to your attention that are affecting our quality of life in the complex. As residents, we believe these issues require immediate attention and would appreciate the board's support in addressing them.

Our Concerns Include:

- Families who relocate during Phase 1 of the redevelopment would like to be guaranteed the ability to return to Kuhio Park and move into the new apartments.
- Residents who will be relocated during Phase 2 & 3 of the redevelopment would like to be guaranteed the ability to move into the new apartments.
- Will residents who are in the various phases be able to return if they do not qualify for Section 8 Vouchers.
- Residents need a clear definition or clarification of how a tenant remains in good standing. This definition should be written in the primary language of the resident.
- With the recent delays in finalizing the redevelopment contracts, the limited inventory of available homes for families to move into, and the upcoming holidays, can final move out and start of construction start in March of 2025
- The residents who are being asked to relocate during redevelopment construction requests the relocation team that helps with the move out, be able to maintain records that will follow the families so they will receive all documents to return to the new building after construction is completed.

We believe that by working together with the housing board, we can find solutions that benefit the entire community. Our hope is that these concerns can be addressed in a timely and constructive manner, improving the living conditions for all residents.

Our Request: We respectfully request that the housing board consider these concerns and propose a plan of action to resolve them. We are open to further discussion and would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to explore solutions.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to your response and to working together to improve our living environment.

Sincerely,

Lenda Tominiko
Kuhio Park Home Resident

On behalf of the undersigned residents
[Signature lines for additional residents, if needed]

January 13, 2025

Dear Governor Josh Green,

We appreciate your efforts to build and sustain affordable housing. Sadly, monthly rents at the affordable projects are way too expensive for many residents living in Hawai'i Public Housing Projects. Currently, they are trying to redevelop the public housing low rise units at Kuhio Park Terrace, which is leading to displacement and possible homelessness of some of the residents.

The agreement for the Kuhio Park redevelopment project was made between Micheals Development and the Hawai'i Public Housing Authority. The agreement stated that during constructions families would be relocated to comparable homes while the new buildings are being built. They were also told that they would have the ability to return to the new building once it is completed.

Unfortunately, the relocation process has been less than humanitarian. The residents have been getting sent to homes that are dilapidated, units that are not ADA ready for bedridden or wheelchair bound residents, or families have been directed to Section 8 homes where the landlords have outright told them children are not allowed. About one third of the 60 families/units being asked to relocate have found a place to live. Many of them are leaving the state to live with family on the continent. Others who are being told to relocate by January 31, so construction can begin around March 31, 2025, still have not been suitably re-housed.

This poorly unfolding plan for redevelopment should be halted until the State and the Developer can follow through with the agreement they made with little, to no, input from the residents. This is the first of many redevelopments plans for the residents of various public housing projects and it behooves the State to do it right starting with this first project.

A group of residents who are being affected by this poorly executed project would like to meet with you and discuss possible solutions. It is important that we meet with you as soon as possible. We will make ourselves available at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

Lenda Tominiko, Resident at Kuhio Park Low-rise, (808) 372-7353

June Talia, Resident at Kuhio Park Low-rise, (808) 781-9449

Redevelopment

From the viewpoint of a student at Dole Middle School

(anonymous)

1)How do you feel about the redevelopment?

I don't really like how they're doing this knowing some people have been here most of their lives, creating memories for generations. To us this is home.

2)How do you think it'll affect you and you family?

One thing I know it'll affect is our accessibility to school, work and other resources. We mostly rely on the bus for transportation and here we live in close range to bus stops. Our current location is in walking distance to my school, my dad's work and the pact resource center which has been very helpful to my mom.

3)What are some worries that you and your families have regarding the redevelopment?

My parents are worried about having to start over, not having transportation to my dad's job and my mom not knowing where to go for help/resources in a new place. They also like that here we have our own yard as well as our own washing machines which we may not have at the next place we get moved to. We also don't like the idea of moving away from our neighbors. We have come to love them and we're afraid we may not have that same bond with neighbors if or when we move.