

**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS,
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**
KA 'OIHANA HO'OMOHALA PĀ'OIHANA, 'IMI WAIWAI
A HO'OMĀKA'IKĀ'I

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR

JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA
DIRECTOR

DANE K. WICKER
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

No. 1 Capitol District Building, 250 South Hotel Street, 5th Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawaii 96804
Web site: dbedt.hawaii.gov

Telephone: (808) 586-2355
Fax: (808) 586-2377

Statement of
JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA
Director
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Tuesday, March 11, 2025
3:02 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 016

In consideration of
HB 1406, HD1
RELATING TO GOVERNMENT PROCEDURES.

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

I am writing to express my support for HB 1406, HD1 which seeks to establish the Intergovernmental Task Force for Permit Simplification within the House of Representatives, to include a representative from the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, among others. This initiative is a significant step toward streamlining the permitting process across various government agencies in Hawaii.

The current permitting system can often be complex and time-consuming, posing challenges for businesses and individuals alike. By creating this task force, HB 1406, HD1 aims to identify inefficiencies and develop strategies to simplify and expedite the permitting process. This will not only enhance governmental efficiency but also foster a more business-friendly environment, encouraging economic growth and development within our state.

Moreover, a simplified permitting process can lead to increased transparency and accessibility, ensuring that all stakeholders have a clear understanding of requirements and procedures. This is particularly beneficial for small businesses and entrepreneurs who may lack the resources to navigate a convoluted system.

In conclusion, I believe that HB1406, HD1 represents a proactive approach to improving our state's permitting system. I urge the committee to pass this bill, as it will contribute to a more efficient, transparent, and supportive environment for businesses and residents in Hawaii.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
465 S. KING STREET, #103
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

LEODOLOFF R. ASUNCION, JR.
CHAIR

NAOMI U. KUWAYE
COMMISSIONER

COLIN A. YOST
COMMISSIONER

Telephone: (808) 586-2020
Facsimile: (808) 586-2066

Website: puc.hawaii.gov
E-mail: puc@hawaii.gov

Testimony of the Public Utilities Commission

To the
Senate Committee on
Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs

March 11, 2025
3:02 p.m.

Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Committee:

Measure: H.B. No. 1406, H.D. 1
Title: RELATING TO GOVERNMENT PROCEDURES.

Position:

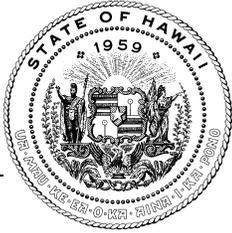
The Public Utilities Commission (“Commission”) offers the following comments for consideration.

Comments:

The Commission appreciates the intent of this measure to streamline state and intergovernmental permit processes by convening a task force for permit simplification.

In our regulatory oversight of public utilities, the Commission has heard firsthand how slow and/or convoluted permitting processes can negatively impact developers. In some cases, permit time alone can obstruct otherwise viable projects. The Commission is willing and able to commit staff time to attending and participating in this task force in the capacity outlined in the bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



HAWAII STATE ENERGY OFFICE STATE OF HAWAII

235 South Beretania Street, 5th Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawaii 96804

Telephone:
Web:

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR

MARK B. GLICK
CHIEF ENERGY OFFICER

(808) 451-6648
energy.hawaii.gov

Testimony of
MARK B. GLICK, Chief Energy Officer

before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Tuesday, March 11, 2025
3:02 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 016 and Videoconference

Providing Comments on
HB 1406, HD1

RELATING TO GOVERNMENT PROCEDURES.

Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Committee, the Hawai'i State Energy Office (HSEO) respectfully provides comments on HB 1406, HD1, which establishes the Intergovernmental Task Force for Permit Simplification to identify actions taken, challenges encountered, and legislative measures necessary to facilitate, expedite, and coordinate state and intergovernmental development permit process.

HSEO candidly acknowledges the well-documented challenges with the permitting processes at the state and county levels throughout the Hawai'i. These challenges have impeded the progress of renewable integration that is essential to thwart the harmful impacts of oil price volatility and make Hawai'i more energy secure. Electricity ratepayers everywhere - residents and businesses, schools and hospitals, INDOPACOM facilities and first responders, will all be grateful.

HSEO has made permitting process improvements a priority and strongly supports the establishment of an intergovernmental Task Force dedicated to simplifying and streamlining the permitting process. We respectfully note, however, that the current draft of HB1406, HD1, does not explicitly specify HSEO as a member of this Task Force despite HSEO's statutory role under HRS § 196-72(15) to: "Facilitate the efficient, expedited permitting of energy efficiency, renewable energy, clean transportation, and

energy resiliency projects by: (A) Coordinating and aligning state and county departments and agencies to support, expedite, and remove barriers to deployment of energy initiatives and projects; and (B) Identify and evaluate conflicting or onerous policies and rules that unreasonably impede project development and deployment and propose regulatory, legislative, administrative, or other solutions to applicable stakeholders.”

Given HSEO’s expertise in energy-related permitting matters, we respectfully request that the bill be amended to include HSEO as a member to provide guidance and support in addressing these critical issues.

The Task Force objectives and activities are also directly related to HSEO’s and state agency duties outlined in Executive Order No. 25-01 (“Order”), signed in January of this year.¹ The Order requires HSEO to work on multiple objectives related to accelerating the energy transition. Further, it requires all agencies to provide priority handling and processing for all state permits required for renewable energy projects”. HSEO’s participation in this working group could aid in achieving this objective of the Order.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

¹ State of Hawai'i, Office of the Governor. (2025). *Executive Order No. 25-01: Accelerating Hawai'i's transition toward 100 percent renewable energy*. https://governor.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/2501085_Executive-Order-No.-25-01.pdf

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

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

March 11, 2025 at 3:02 p.m.
State Capitol, Room 016

In consideration of H.B. 1406 HD1 RELATING TO GOVERNMENT PROCEDURES.

Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Chang, and members of the Committee.

HHFDC **supports** HB 1406 HD1, which establishes the Intergovernmental Task Force for Permit Simplification within the House of Representatives to identify actions taken, challenges encountered, and legislative measures necessary to facilitate, expedite, and coordinate state and intergovernmental development permit processes. It also appropriates funds. HHFDC supports the measure so long as it does not adversely impact priorities identified in the Executive Budget Request for FY 2026.

The permitting process is often time-consuming due to the understaffing of resource-constrained agencies, the complexity and multiplicity of requirements, the sequential and contingent nature of reviews, and the potential for legal challenges, among other things. The entitlement and permitting process can take over five years, creating significant delays and uncertainty for housing projects, increasing carrying costs and capital market risks, and deterring investment in affordable housing.

HHFDC is named as a member of the task force and supports efforts to streamline the permitting process across various government agencies.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



Testimony of
Pacific Resource Partnership

Hawai'i State Legislature
Senate Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs (EIG)
Honorable Chair Glenn Wakai and Honorable Vice Chair Stanley Chang
Tuesday, March 11, 2025

Subject: Comments on HB1406 HD1 – Relating to Government Procedures

Aloha Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Committees:

On behalf of Pacific Resource Partnership (PRP), which represents 6,000 unionized carpenters and more than 250 contractors across Hawai'i, we offer the following comments on HB1406 HD1, which would establish the Intergovernmental Task Force for Permit Simplification.

This initiative is a critical step toward streamlining development permit processes, facilitating efficient project delivery, and ultimately benefiting Hawai'i's economy, housing market, and infrastructure development.

The creation of this task force represents a proactive approach to address longstanding challenges in the permitting process. By bringing together representatives from key state and county agencies, as well as federal offices, the task force will be well-positioned to identify obstacles, propose solutions, and create a more predictable and transparent permitting system. This will not only reduce delays but also enhance collaboration among stakeholders.

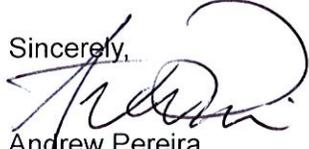
We respectfully request that the membership of the task force include a representative from a nonprofit construction advocacy organization to ensure that the voices of private homebuilders, contractors, and union members are considered. Such representation would provide valuable insights from the construction industry and contribute to a well-rounded and effective task force.



(Continued From Page 2)

Mahalo for the opportunity to share our support.

Sincerely,



Andrew Pereira
Director of Public Affairs
Pacific Resource Partnership



March 11, 2025

The Honorable Glenn Wakai, Chair

Senate Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs
State Capitol, Conference Room 016 & Videoconference

RE: House Bill 1406, HD1, Relating to Government Procedures

HEARING: Tuesday, March 11, 2025, at 3:02 p.m.

Aloha Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Lyndsey Garcia, Director of Advocacy, testifying on behalf of the Hawai'i Association of REALTORS® ("HAR"), the voice of real estate in Hawaii and its over 10,000 members. HAR **supports** House Bill 1406, HD1, which establishes the Intergovernmental Task Force for Permit Simplification to identify actions taken, challenges encountered, and legislative measures necessary to facilitate, expedite, and coordinate state and intergovernmental development permit processes. Appropriates funds. Effective 7/1/3000.

Housing is impacted by numerous state-level permits, such as Special Management Area permits, Land Use Commission district boundary amendments, individual wastewater system permits from the Department of Health, State Historic Preservation Division reviews for historic properties, approvals from the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation for affordable housing projects, and permits from the Hawaii Community Development Authority.

At the county level, according to the 2024 UHERO's Hawaii Housing Factbook¹, Hawaii's permitting process takes nearly three times longer than in other states, despite efforts by counties to improve efficiency. Processing times for single-family home permits on average range from 141 days in Hawaii County to 315 days in Kauai County. For multifamily housing projects, approvals take even longer—318 days in Hawaii County and up to 427 days in Kauai County. In addition, the City & County of Honolulu faces a significant backlog, further delaying both residential and commercial projects.² These delays can significantly increase project costs, create uncertainty, and slow or disincentivizes the construction of much needed housing. As time passes, rising interest

¹ UHERO. (May 20, 2024). The Hawai'i Housing Factbook. <https://uhero.hawaii.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/HawaiiHousingFactbook2024.pdf>

² Blair, Marcel. (December 12, 2023). "Honolulu's Building Permit Delays: A Nightmare Decades in the Making." Honolulu Civil Beat. <https://www.civilbeat.org/2023/12/honolulus-building-permit-delays-a-nightmare-decades-in-the-making/>.



 808-733-7060

 808-737-4977

 1259 A'ala Street, Suite 300
Honolulu, HI 96817

rates, increasing material or labor costs, and other market factors can render previously viable projects financially unfeasible.

As such, HAR supports efforts to streamline, expedite, and improve efficiency in the various permitting processes to help address Hawaii's housing challenges.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.



March 11, 2025, 3: 02 p.m.
Hawaii State Capitol
Conference Room 016 and Videoconference

To: Senate Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs
Sen. Glenn Wakai, Chair
Sen. Stanley Chang, Vice Chair

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

RE: HB1406 HD1 — RELATING TO GOVERNMENT PROCEDURES

Aloha Chair Wakai, Vice-Chair Chang and other members of the Committee,

The Grassroot Institute **supports** [HB1406 HD1](#), which would establish the Intergovernmental Task Force for Permit Simplification with the goal of identifying and analyzing ways to streamline and coordinate state and intergovernmental permit processes.

This bill deserves praise for encouraging thoughtful permitting reform.

In addition to slowing housing growth, Hawaii's notorious permit delays add significantly to the price of housing in our state. According to "The Hawai'i Housing Factbook," produced by The Economic Research Organization at the University of Hawai'i, the median permit processing time between mid-2018 and mid-2023 across the state was 161 days.¹

A recent report from the Grassroot Institute, "[Seven low cost ways to speed up permitting in Hawaii](#)," provides a potential road map for commonsense permit reform.² In particular, we suggest that the task force consider increasing permit exemptions, utilizing third-party approvals and adopting a meaningful "shot clock." The task force should also consider implementing a program that would grandfather existing dwellings that were built without permits.

¹ Justin Tyndall, Daniela Bond-Smith and Rachel Inafuku, "[The Hawai'i Housing Factbook](#)," The Economic Research Organization at the University of Hawai'i, June 28, 2023, p. 19.

² Jonathan Helton, "[Seven low cost ways to speed up permitting in Hawaii](#)," Grassroot Institute of Hawaii, October 2024, p. 14.

It might be possible to reduce permitting delays with more staff or better software, but ultimately only reform of the permitting regulations themselves will make lasting inroads into resolving our housing crisis.

We urge the Committee to pass HB1406.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Ted Kefalas
Director of strategic campaigns
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

Written Statement of
Jeannine Souki
Senior Manager – Government & Regulatory Affairs

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
March 11, 2025, 3:02 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 016, Videoconference

SUPPORT FOR:

H.B. 1406, H.D. 1 – RELATING TO GOVERNMENT PROCEDURES

To: Chair Wakai, Vice-Chair Chang, and Members of the Committee

Re: **Testimony providing support for HB1406, HD1**

Aloha Honorable Chair, Vice-Chair, and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB1406, HD1, which aims to streamline the state and intergovernmental development permitting process.

Hawaiian Telcom supports the intent of this measure, as Hawai'i's state and county permitting processes are more challenging, time-consuming, and costly than those in other states, causing significant delays to essential projects. This bill seeks to address these onerous procedures by establishing a task force within the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) to streamline permitting and propose legislative initiatives for a more efficient, transparent, and user-friendly experience, ultimately boosting economic development for our state.

Since Congress approved \$65 billion in 2021 to provide states and U.S. territories with federal grants to close the digital divide through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) programs, the State of Hawai'i has been awarded over \$300 million in federal funding. This funding will be matched with state and private sector investments to build broadband infrastructure and deliver high-speed internet services across the state. Additionally, Hawaiian Telcom was one of 36 projects awarded a highly competitive federal Middle Mile Grant to build a new interisland broadband fiber cable connecting Kaua'i, O'ahu, Moloka'i, Mau'i, and Hawai'i. These federal projects share a highly defined timeline for delivering services, which must contend with the complexities of our state and intergovernmental permitting processes. Streamlining regulations, including permitting, will help stimulate and maximize private and public sector investments in constructing fiber-enabled broadband networks.

While these federal dollars provide a temporary infusion of funding for broadband infrastructure and services, the investments will yield significant economic and technological benefits for our state for generations to come. They will enhance the capacity and resiliency of our broadband networks and extend broadband connectivity throughout the state.

Hawaiian Telcom supports initiatives like this to improve state and intergovernmental development permitting processes. We stand ready to work with your Committee, the DBEDT, other state and county agencies, and stakeholders to find solutions to long-standing issues and enable greater economic competitiveness within the state.

Thank you for the opportunity to support HB1406, HD1.

**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Economic Development and Tourism
Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair
Senator Stanley Chang, Vice Chair**

**Tuesday, March 11, 2025, at 3:02PM
Conference Room 016 & Videoconference**

RE: HB1406 HD1 Relating to Government Procedures

Aloha e Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Sherry Menor, President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber"). The Chamber supports House Bill 1406 House Draft 1 (HB1406 HD1), which establishes the Intergovernmental Task Force for Permit Simplification to identify actions taken, challenges encountered, and legislative measures necessary to facilitate, expedite, and coordinate state and intergovernmental development permit processes.

HB1406 HD1 aligns with our 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii: An Economic Action Plan, specifically under the policy pillar for Small Business. This bill promotes policies that drive economic growth, enhance workforce opportunities, and improve the quality of life for Hawaii's residents.

There is a critical need to simplify and expedite Hawaii's development permit processes, prompting the creation of an intergovernmental task force within the House of Representatives. Chaired by a House member appointed by the Speaker, its membership includes representatives from key state offices and agencies such as the Office of the Governor, the Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism, and several others. The task force is designed to coordinate efforts, address permit delays, and ensure that local development processes are more efficient, with its initial meeting scheduled no later than 60 days after member designation by October 1, 2025.

In addition to establishing the task force, the bill appropriates funds from the State's general revenues for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 to cover staffing and administrative costs, ensuring the task force has the necessary resources to operate effectively until it ceases on June 30, 2027. The funding and collaborative structure aim to reduce bureaucratic obstacles and promote faster project approvals, thus enhancing economic development. The Chamber supports this initiative because it is expected to significantly streamline permitting, reduce delays for critical development projects, and foster a more responsive regulatory environment that benefits local communities.

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii is the state's leading business advocacy organization, dedicated to improving Hawaii's economy and securing Hawaii's future for growth and opportunity. Our mission is to foster a vibrant economic climate. As such, we support initiatives and policies that align with the 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii that create opportunities to strengthen overall competitiveness, improve the quantity and skills of available workforce, diversify the economy, and build greater local wealth.

We respectfully ask to pass House Bill 1406 House Draft 1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

March 11, 2025

TO: Chair Wakai and members of the Senate Committee on Energy & Intergovernmental Affairs
RE: HB1406 HD1, Relating to Government Procedures

Dear Chair Wakai and Committee Members,

Housing Hawai'i's Future is a nonprofit dedicated to creating opportunities for Hawai'i's next generation by ending the workforce housing shortage.

We support HB 1406.

At the state level, inefficient and/or antiquated permitting processing systems across departments create delays, fostering distrust and impeding the realization of affordable workforce housing projects.

The Intergovernmental Task Force for Permit Simplification will convene relevant agencies and branches across state government to engage in seemingly mundane—but fundamentally crucial—conversations about their permitting processes and procedures.

If it is not already clear to those stakeholders outlined in HB1406, their roles are critically interconnected, if not conflicting, for those people navigating their permitting policies and procedures.

Fewer delays, greater efficiency, and increased government transparency are needed to increase affordable workforce housing inventory across our islands. The task force will identify obstacles and provide tangible policy solutions for the State Legislature's consideration.

Let's continue this conversation and advance HB 1406.

Thank you,



Lee Wang
Executive Director
Housing Hawai'i's Future
lee@hawaiifuture.org



Perry Arrasmith
Director of Policy
Housing Hawai'i's Future
perry@hawaiifuture.org



1050 Bishop St. PMB 235 |
Honolulu, HI 96813
P: 808-533-1292 | e:
info@hawaiiifood.com

Executive Officers

Maile Miyashiro, C&S Wholesale Grocer, *Chair*
Kit Okimoto, Okimoto Corp., *Vice Chair*
Jayson Watts, Mahi Pono, *Secretary/Treasurer*
Lauren Zirbel, HFIA, *Executive Director*
Paul Kosasa, ABC Stores, *Advisor*
Derek Kurisu, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*
Toby Taniguchi, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*
Joe Carter, Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii, *Advisor*
Eddie Asato, Pint Size Hawaii, *Advisor*
Gary Okimoto, Safeway, *Immediate Past Chair*

TO: Committee on Energy and Environmental Affairs

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: March 11, 2025

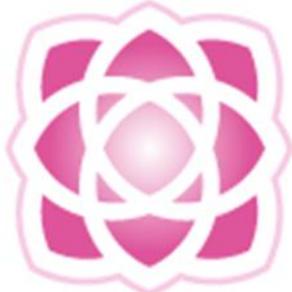
TIME: 3:02pm

RE: HB1406 HD1 Relating to Government Procedures

Position: Support

The Hawaii Food Industry Association is comprised of two hundred member companies representing retailers, suppliers, producers, manufacturers and distributors of food and beverage related products in the State of Hawaii.

HFIA is in support of this measure. Many businesses, including those in the food industry, have endured unnecessary delays and added expenses as a result of the permitting process. This includes businesses like food and drink manufacturers that want to build new facilities and expand production, and food retailers that want to install energy generation and storage systems. Fixing the permitting process will promote economic growth and diversification, and have other positive impacts for businesses and our state. We encourage the Committee to pass this measure and we thank you for the opportunity to testify.



MAUI

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

VOICE OF BUSINESS

**HEARING BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL
AFFAIRS**

HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, SENATE CONFERENCE ROOM 016

Tuesday, March 11, 2025, 3:02 P.M.

To The Honorable Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair
The Honorable Senator Stanley Chang, Vice Chair
Members of the committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs

SUPPORT HB1406 HD1 RELATING TO GOVERNMENT PROCEDURES

The Maui Chamber of Commerce **SUPPORTS HB1406 HD1** which establishes the Intergovernmental Task Force for Permit Simplification to identify actions taken, challenges encountered, and legislative measures necessary to facilitate, expedite, and coordinate state and intergovernmental development permit processes.

Housing remains a top priority for the Maui Chamber of Commerce, particularly as the crisis deepens in the aftermath of the wildfires, directly affecting businesses and our economic recovery. Even before the wildfires, Maui faced an urgent need for over 10,000 housing units by 2025. That need has only intensified with the loss of 3% of Lahaina's housing stock, a major factor driving the continued rise in housing prices.

The permitting process is often lengthy and cumbersome, primarily due to understaffed resource-constrained agencies, complex and overlapping requirements, sequential and contingent reviews, and potential legal challenges. On average, entitlement and permitting approvals can take over five years, causing significant delays and uncertainty for housing projects. This, in turn, increases carrying costs, elevates capital market risks, and discourages investment in affordable housing.

For these reasons, we **strongly SUPPORT HB1406 HD1**.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap
President

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

LATE

Charter Communications
Testimony of Rebecca Lieberman, Director of Government Affairs

SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Hawaii State Capitol
Tuesday, March 11, 2025

SUPPORT FOR H.B. 1406, H.D. 1 – RELATING TO GOVERNMENT PROCEDURES

Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of H.B. 1406, H.D. 1, which establishes an intergovernmental task force for permit simplification to streamline development permit processes.

As the largest broadband provider in the state, Charter understands the challenges businesses face due to complex and time-consuming permitting processes. Streamlining these procedures will not only benefit economic development but also accelerate the deployment and repair of critical broadband infrastructure, ensuring more communities have access to high-speed internet. Charter believes that every Hawaii resident should have reliable access to the Internet. An efficient permitting process will allow us to continue to help bring the benefits of broadband and access to the internet to those who need it most without unnecessary delays. Additionally, this measure will also support the ongoing recovery efforts in Lahaina by expediting permitting and infrastructure development, ensuring that the community can rebuild efficiently with improved connectivity and essential services.

We appreciate the bill's focus on collaboration across government agencies to identify and address inefficiencies. Charter looks forward to working with the task force to improve connectivity across the state.

In 2023, Charter extended its network to reach an additional 9,000 homes and small businesses in Hawaii, investing \$96 million across the state. Charter participated in the FCC's Emergency Broadband Benefit Program (EBB) and Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP), which helped connect over 59,000 eligible households in Hawaii with high-speed broadband. Broadband internet access is more important than ever and Charter offers a variety of affordable high-speed internet packages to meet all the connectivity and budget needs of our customers. With Spectrum Internet Assist, qualifying low-income families and seniors can receive high-speed internet for only \$25 per month.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of H.B. 1406, H.D. 1.