

**STATE OF HAWAII  
OFFICE OF PLANNING  
& SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE  
LT. GOVERNOR

MARY ALICE EVANS  
DIRECTOR

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Statement of  
**MARY ALICE EVANS, Director**

before the  
**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER & LAND**  
Thursday, February 6, 2025, 9:00 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 411

in consideration of  
**HB 1503**  
**RELATING TO DISASTER RECOVERY.**

Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Lamosao, and Members of the House Committee on Water & Land:

The Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) respectively offers **comments** on HB 1503 as follows:

HB 1503 aims to expedite the reconstruction process for lawfully established structures destroyed by the 2023 Lahaina Wildfire. HB 1181 and its companion SB 830 appear to share the same intent, and best support the legislature's desired outcome in an effective manner utilizing existing processes.

As noted in our testimony for HB 1181 and its companion SB 830, OPSD, the lead agency of the Hawai'i Coastal Zone Management Program, recommends the following amendment to the proposed language in those bills related to SMA Permitting:

SECTION 1. Section 205A-22, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, is amended by adding a new definition to be appropriately inserted as subsection (2)(W) and to read as follows:

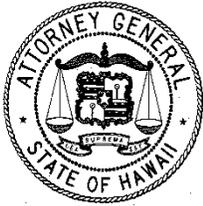
“Development”:

(2) Does not include the following:

(W) Reconstruction of any lawfully established structure that was damaged or destroyed in a disaster proclaimed by the governor or a mayor to constitute a state of emergency or local state of emergency under chapter 127A; provided that the structure is not situated on a shoreline parcel or a parcel that is impacted by waves, storm surges, high tide, or shoreline erosion, and the reconstructed structure shall be similar to its original footprint or overall dimensions that were existing or

permitted, and in compliance with the requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



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

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**ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:**

H.B. NO. 1503, RELATING TO DISASTER RECOVERY.

**BEFORE THE:**

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER & LAND

**DATE:** Thursday, February 6, 2025      **TIME:** 9:00 a.m.

**LOCATION:** State Capitol, Room 411

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

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Chair Hashem and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments.

The purpose of this bill is to exclude the reconstruction of structures in the Lahaina National Historic Landmark District that were destroyed by the August 8, 2023, wildfires from the definition of "development" in section 205A-22, Hawaii Revised Statutes, subject to certain conditions.

Article XI, section 5, of the Hawai'i State Constitution requires the State to legislate over its lands or lands under its control through general laws as opposed to special laws. A general law is a law uniformly applying to a class of persons or things having a reasonable and just relationship to the regulated subject matter. Att. Gen. Op. No. 2007-02. On the other hand, a law is special "if it operates upon and affects only a fraction of persons or a portion of the property encompassed by a classification, granting privileges to some and not others." *Id.* A statute relating to particular places is a special law, not a general law. *See id.*

As currently drafted, this bill may be subject to a potential challenge as special legislation because it grants an exemption to the requirements of chapter 205A, HRS, to structures in the Lahaina National Historic Landmark District that were destroyed by the August 8, 2023, wildfires, which includes state lands.

To avoid any potential challenge on this basis, we recommend the following revision proposed by the State Office of Planning and Sustainable Development in their

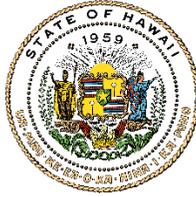
testimony before the Senate Committee on Water and Land on a similar bill, Senate Bill No. 1296, replacing the wording on page 7, lines 1 to 11, with the following:

(W) Reconstruction of any lawfully established structure that was damaged or destroyed in a disaster proclaimed by the governor or a mayor to constitute a state of emergency or local state of emergency under chapter 127A; provided that the structure is not situated on a shoreline parcel or a parcel that is impacted by waves, storm surges, high tide, or shoreline erosion, and the reconstructed structure shall be similar to its original footprint or overall dimensions that were existing or permitted, and in compliance with the requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

P.O. BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

DAWN N.S. CHANG  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT

RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE  
FIRST DEPUTY

CIARA W.K. KAHAHANE  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES  
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT  
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS  
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES  
ENFORCEMENT  
ENGINEERING  
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

Testimony of  
DAWN N.S. CHANG  
Chairperson

Before the House Committee on  
WATER & LAND

Thursday, February 6, 2025  
9:00 AM

State Capitol, Conference Room 411 & Videoconference

In consideration of  
HOUSE BILL 1503  
RELATING TO DISASTER RECOVERY

House Bill 1503 proposes to exclude from the definition of "development" for purposes of coastal zone management restrictions, the reconstruction, under certain circumstances, of structures destroyed in the August 8, 2023, wildfires in Lahaina, Maui. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure and recommends an amendment.**

The Department supports this measure's proposed exclusion from the definition of "development" in the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) the reconstruction of structures as previously existing prior to the August 8, 2023, wildfires via the addition of a new subsection (W) to section 205A-22(2), Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS). The Department believes that this properly balances the need for protection of Lahaina's natural, cultural and historical resources with facilitating the social and economic recovery that is essential for Lahaina. However, in addition to an exclusion to the CZMA, the Department believes that an exemption from legislative and governor approval for submerged land leases required in section 171-53(c), Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) for the same types of structures contemplated in this measure is also appropriate. With respect to the commercial properties along the Front Street seawall, a lease of submerged lands would be required along with a conservation district use permit (CDUP), to reconstruct any of piers or commercial structures in a manner that existed prior to the wildfires. Therefore, the Department recommends the following amendment to section 171-53(c), HRS.

(c) The board, with the prior approval of the governor and the prior authorization of the legislature by concurrent resolution, may lease state submerged lands and lands beneath tidal waters under the terms, conditions, and restrictions provided in this chapter; provided that the authorization of the legislature shall not be required for leases issued under chapter

190D; and provided further that the approval of the governor and authorization of the legislature shall not be required for any grant of easement or lease of state submerged lands or lands beneath tidal waters used for moorings, cables, ~~or pipelines~~, or structures excluded from the definition of “development” as defined in section 205A-22(2)(W); provided further that this exemption shall not apply to easements for cables used for interisland electrical transmission or slurry pipelines used for transportive materials, mined at sea, or waste products from the processing of the same.

The Department stresses that this amendment would not alleviate any applicant from conservation district use requirements including obtaining a CDUP, or a submerged land lease/easement, both of which are subject to approval by the Board of Land and Natural Resources (Board) in a public meeting. However, the submerged land leasing process can be time consuming as it may take up to a year after approval of the lease/easement from the Board to obtain these approvals, even after all other requirements such as preparation of a survey map and description and an appraisal to determine fair market value are completed. This delay could have a detrimental impact on the ability to reconstruct the previously existing structures. Therefore, the Department believes that this amendment would assist in recovery while preserving the Board’s public land trust fiduciary obligations.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 2:35:14 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Russell Tsuji	Department of Land and Natural Resources	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

DLNR Testimony for HB1503 was submitted and requesting a Zoom Link for additional staff to provide backup at the hearing.



# MAUI

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

VOICE OF BUSINESS

**HEARING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER & LAND  
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM 411  
Thursday, February 6, 2025 AT 9:00 A.M.**

To The Honorable Mark J. Hashem, Chair  
The Honorable Rachele F. Lamosao, Vice Chair  
Members of the Committee on Water & Land

### **SUPPORT HB1503 RELATING TO DISASTER RECOVERY**

The Maui Chamber of Commerce **SUPPORTS HB1503** which excludes from the definition of "development" for purposes of coastal zone management restrictions, the reconstruction, under certain circumstances, of structures destroyed in the August 8, 2023, wildfires in Lahaina, Maui.

The Chamber agrees that the wildfires of August 8, 2023, devastated Lahaina's heritage, economy, and sense of place, deeply impacting housing, businesses, jobs, and treasured resources. If the area is not rebuilt in a deliberate, coordinated, and expeditious manner, it may struggle in the long term, further affecting the well-being of the land, its people, and the economy.

This bill provides an opportunity to rebuild Lahaina, preserving and reintroducing its valued resources in a way that reflects the values and priorities of its residents and businesses while addressing future challenges, including climate change and affordable housing.

For these reasons we **SUPPORT HB1503** and respectfully ask that it be passed.

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.

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 1:55:41 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Alison Pearce	Square Feet Management LLC	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**House Committee on Water and Land**

**Chair Mark Hashem**

**Vice Chair Lamosao**

**DATE: February 6th, 2025**

**TIME: 9:00am**

**PLACE: Conference Room 411**

**State Capitol**

**415 South Beretania Street**

**TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB1503**

**Aloha e Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Lamosao, and members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of HB1503**

**I am an owner of 632 Front Street, the former Paia Fish Market that was sadly burnt to the ground in the August 8th, 2023 fires. My family and I were supported by the rental income from Paia Fish Market. We adored our tenants, the owners of the restaurant, who also own other restaurants here on Maui. They provide many jobs for locals including fishermen, cooks and wait staff.**

**I strongly support this bill because it will help my family rebuild and provide a space for a local Maui business in the heart of Lahaina. We have been paying high loans on a property that used to provide income. Our family is suffering financially and the longer it takes to rebuild, the less likely we will be able to afford to rebuild. HB 1503 is another step closer for us.**

**I humbly ask for your support for our community and pass this bill.**

**Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.**

Mahalo,

Alison Pearce

Square Feet Management, LLC



House Committee on Water and Land  
Chair Mark Hashem  
Vice Chair Lamosao  
DATE: February 6th, 2025  
TIME: 9:00am  
PLACE: Conference Room 411  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

**TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB1503**

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Lamosao, and members of the committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of **HB1503**.

I am the owner and President of Lahaina Brewery, dba Koholā Brewery. We were in the West Maui center mauka of Honoapiilani HWY in Lahaina. Our location there was our only production facility and was producing about 3000bbls a year making us one of the largest craft breweries in the state. We also had our only taproom there that consistently hosted local events, artists and musicians.

We have been brewing and hosting both locals and visitors alike since 2016. We were proud to be the most award winning brewery in the state and provided living wages to our staff of over 20 people. I am a strong supporter of small business and our local entrepreneurs. Lahaina was the heart of the entrepreneurial community in Maui and with the devastation of the fires, this group of extremely hard working people have been severely impacted.

Retuning to Lahaina to rebuild is my ultimate goal. I look forward to this committee's support in those efforts.

I humbly ask for your support for our community and pass this bill.  
Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Mary Anderson  
President/Owner Lahaina Brewery Inc.  
910 Honoapiilani HWY #55  
Lahaina HI 96761

808-303-9491  
mary@koholabrewery.com

LAHAINA  
RESTORATION  
FOUNDATION

House Committee on Water and Land  
Chair Mark Hashem  
Vice Chair Lamosao

DATE: February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025  
TIME: 9:00 am  
PLACE: Conference Room 411  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

**Testimony in strong support of Bill HB1503**

Aloha e Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Lamosao, and members of the committee

I have lived and worked in Lahaina for 39 years and been executive director of Lahaina Restoration Foundation (LRF) for 17 years. LRF is now in its 63<sup>rd</sup> year of preserving Lahaina's historic sites and structures and bringing history to life in our little historic town. Please support HB 1503 so we can begin restoring the 8 historic buildings damaged or destroyed in the fire.

Lahaina Restoration Foundation is in strong support of **Bill HB1503**

After the fire we were forced to lay off 14 employees, cancel all public programs except one, and open a temporary office on the other side of the island. We also lost all operating income from our paid parking lot and have had to revert to full-time fundraising. We **NEED Bill HB 1503** to pass so we can begin the permit process to rebuild!

Please support the Lahaina community by passing **HB1503**.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of **Bill HB 1503**

Mahalo,



Theo Morrison  
Executive Director  
Lahaina Restoration Foundation  
[theo@lahainarestoration.org](mailto:theo@lahainarestoration.org)  
808-661-3262



The  
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Honolulu, Hawaii 96813-5391  
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Fax: (808) 591-2039  
E-mail: mail@abcstores.com

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February 4, 2025

House Committee on Water and Land  
Chair Mark Hashem  
Vice Chair Lamosao  
Conference Room 411  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

**Re: Testimony in Strong Support of HB1503**

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Lamosao, and members of the committee.

My name is John Mark Mageo, Employee Relations and Government Affairs Manager of ABC Stores. I appreciate this opportunity to testify on behalf of our company. ABC Stores **Support HB1503**.

We currently have three stores, which is part of the 600 businesses that were impacted by the wildfires. Until today, our three stores are yet to reopen.

The proposed amendments will allow for the reconstruction of our stores and other local businesses to better serve our Lahaina community. This is a vital step in helping our community recover more swiftly and effectively from such events.

Any step forward is a step in the right direction, and this bill will help make that possible. We deeply appreciate your time and attention, and we thank you for considering this important measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Mageo', written over a horizontal line.

John Mark Mageo  
Employee Relations and Government Affairs Manager  
(808) 597-3312  
jmageo@abcstores.com

House Committee on Water and Land

Chair Hashem

Vice Chair Lamosao

DATE: February 6th, 2025

TIME: 9:00 am

PLACE: Conference Room 441

**TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB1503**

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Lamosao, and members of the committee.

Maui Hotel and Lodging Association is in **strong support of HB1503** because it will allow family businesses to rebuild and serve their Lahaina community, it gives them hope that they will be able to return to the place they love so much, and it gets them moving in the right direction to some sense of normalcy through all of the chaos they have endured. It is an important step towards the economic recovery of beloved Lahaina town.

We humbly ask for your support for our community and pass this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

John Pele

Executive Director- Maui Hotel and Lodging Association

808-658-5114

[john.pele@mauihla.org](mailto:john.pele@mauihla.org)

**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Labor and Technology  
Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Chair  
Senator Chris Lee, Vice Chair**

**Monday, February 3, 2025, at 3:30 PM  
Conference Room 224 & Videoconference**

**RE: SB1503 RELATING TO WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

Aloha e Chair Aquino, Vice Chair Lee, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Sherry Menor, President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber"). The Chamber supports Senate Bill 1503 (SB1503), which requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to develop and implement training programs, public-private partnerships, funding opportunities, and recruitment strategies to develop a local workforce to meet the growing demand in defense-related personnel and promote economic diversification.

SB1503 aligns with our 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii: An Economic Action Plan, specifically under the policy pillar Military & Defense. This bill promotes policies that drive economic growth, enhance workforce opportunities, and improve the quality of life for Hawaii's residents.

Hawaii must invest in workforce development to prepare residents for higher-paying defense jobs. With \$9 million in defense spending in 2022 and 10,000 new jobs starting from 2018, demand is growing for skilled professionals in cybersecurity, data science, and advanced manufacturing. This Act establishes training programs, public-private partnerships, funding initiatives, and recruitment efforts to build a strong workforce.

The bill directs the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to collaborate with schools and industry partners on specialized training and upskilling. Private sector partnerships will create internships and apprenticeships, while grants and tuition assistance will support education in high-demand fields. Program success will be tracked, with \$1 million allocated annually for 2025-2027. Taking effect on July 1, 2025, the Chamber supports this initiative to strengthen the workforce, attract investment, and keep Hawaii competitive in defense industries.

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 Senate Bill 1503. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

House Committee on Water and Land  
Chair Mark Hashem  
Vice Chair Lamosao  
DATE: February 6th, 2025  
TIME: 9:00am  
PLACE: Conference Room 411

State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

#### TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB1503

Aloha e Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Lamosao, and members of the committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of HB1503. 632 Front Street, known by many employees, residents and tourists as Paia Fish Market, was a cornerstone of our community, providing quality jobs and playing a vital role in supporting the local economy. Not only did it offer employment to many, but it also attracted tourists, becoming a top-recommended restaurant for many visiting the area. After the devastating Lahaina fire that reduced our restaurant to ashes, we are now asking for your support to rebuild as quickly as possible. Rebuilding Paia Fish Market is an essential part of getting our community back on its feet and welcoming visitors once again. The success of this business supported my family financially, and we are left scrambling to keep our dream of rebuilding it a reality, as we await for these bills to be passed.

I humbly ask for your support for our community and pass this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Chelsea Maxson  
5936 Highplace Drive  
San Diego, CA 92120  
chelseamaxson619@gmail.com

Senate Committee on Water and Land  
Chair Hashem  
Vice Chair Lamosao

DATE: February 6, 2025  
TIME: 9:00am  
PLACE: Conference Room 411  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB1503  
Testimony of Jeffrey Ueoka

Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Lomasao, and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB1503. I am a land use attorney on Maui assisting Front Street Recovery (a coalition of business owners dedicated to rebuilding and revitalizing Front Street). HB1503 will support the expedient and efficient rebuilding of Front Street. The proposal is measured in that it is limited to the Lahaina National Historic Landmark District, and it only allows for reconstruction of what was there before the fire, which will not result in an increased impact to the special management area. While there will be many more challenges and hurdles to overcome while rebuilding, HB1503 provides some desperately needed relief from a very complicated regulatory process.

I humbly ask that you support Front Street Recovery's efforts to rebuild and pass this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill.

Jeffrey Ueoka  
2145 Wells Street, Suite 406, Wailuku, Hawaii 96793  
(808) 481-4210  
jeff@wslmaui.com

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 8:39:55 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Dora Atwater Millikin	Lahaona Restyoration Foundation	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support the passage of Bill HB1503. Mahalo for drafting it. Excluding the definition of “development” for the purposes of coastal zone management restrictions for our Lahaina businesses destroyed by the August 8th fire is a good thing to help us rebuild. We all just want a vibrant Lahaina again.

Mahalo for supporting and passing Bill HB1503.

# PACIFIC RIM LAND INC.



House Committee on Water and Land  
Chair Mark Hashem  
Vice Chair Lamosao

DATE: February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2025  
TIME: 9:00 am  
PLACE: Conference Room 411  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

## TESTIMONY IN **STRONG SUPPORT OF HB1503**

Aloha e Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Lamosao, and members of the committee.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony. My name is Ryan Churchill, representing Pacific Rim Land. I am here today to offer our strong endorsement of HB1503.

Our company lost a building on Front Street on August 8. We are planning on rebuilding the same structure in the same location but, due to the SMA process, we expect it to take over a year to secure an SMA permit for the rebuild. Passage of HB1503 is crucial for enabling the expedited reconstruction of buildings on Front Street as it will exempt the SMA permit requirement for rebuilds that are no greater in size than the building that existed prior to August 8.

This legislation offers essential measures to streamline the rebuilding process, ensuring that we can swiftly restore the infrastructure necessary to support local businesses and jobs. By facilitating timely reconstruction, HB1503 will not only help us recover from the recent disaster but also contribute to the revitalization of Front Street, a cornerstone of the Maui economy.

We commend the Legislature for considering this critical bill and urge its swift passage. The support provided by HB1503 will not only assist landowners in rebuilding but will also serve as a beacon of hope for our community as we strive to recover and thrive once again.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Ryan Churchill  
President

Feb. 6, 2025, 9 a.m.  
Hawaii State Capitol  
Conference Room 411 and Videoconference

**To: House Committee on Water and Land**  
**Rep. Mark Hashem, Chair**  
**Rep. Rachel Lamosao, Vice-Chair**

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

RE: HB1503— RELATING TO DISASTER RECOVERY

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice-Chair Lamosao and other members of the Committee,

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii **supports** [HB1503](#), which would exempt any structures in the Lahaina National Historic Landmark District that were damaged or destroyed by the Aug. 8, 2023 wildfires from needing a special management area minor permit or use permit — provided that such structures are rebuilt no greater in size than they existed prior to the wildfires, and that the rebuilding begins no later than Aug. 8, 2028.

This measure is critical for Lahaina's comeback. Gov. Josh Green provided multifamily dwellings an exemption from SMA rules in an October emergency proclamation, in addition to the exemption that already exists in statute for most single-family homes.<sup>1</sup> But without a streamlined SMA process, Lahaina's businesses will face an uphill battle to return to their community, since obtaining an SMA use permit from Maui County could take years.

Typically, this involves an application to the Maui Planning Department and a hearing from the Maui County Planning Commission. Over the past decade, since Jan. 1, 2015, the Maui Planning Commission has issued only 41 SMA use permits.<sup>2</sup> At the rate of four per year, it would take the county decades to approve all the permits needed for Lahaina's businesses to rebuild.

<sup>1</sup> ["Eighteenth Proclamation Relating to Wildfire,"](#) Office of the Governor, Oct. 8, 2024, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> ["Maui's Automated Planning and Permitting System,"](#) accessed Jan. 31, 2025. Plan type: SM1 - Special Management Area Use Permit - Maui. Status: Approved. Applied date: From 1/1/2025.

If businesses cannot return to Lahaina in a timely manner, there will be fewer entrepreneurial and job opportunities for residents, and the town could lose much of its community, and certainly its historic charm and character.

We ask the Committee to advance this measure to give Lahaina's people a better chance to rebuild and thrive.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Ted Kefalas  
Director of Strategic Campaigns  
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 1:00:27 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
snehal Patel	LahainaTown Actio	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Written Testimony in Strong Support of HB1503

House Committee on Water and Land

Chair Mark Hashem

Vice Chair Lamosao

DATE: February 6, 2025

TIME: 9:00 AM

PLACE: Conference Room 411, State Capitol, 415 South Beretania Street

**TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB1503**

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Lamosao, and members of the committee,

My name is Sne Patel, and I am the President of the LahainaTown Action Committee (LAC) and a longtime resident of Lahaina. I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of HB1503, which is vital to ensuring that Lahaina's historic structures can be rebuilt following the devastation of the August 8, 2023, wildfires.

The fires wiped out generations of family-run businesses, homes, and cultural landmarks that shaped the identity of our town. Today, many property owners remain in limbo, facing the overwhelming burden of underinsurance, rising rebuilding costs, and a lack of clear direction on how to move forward.

For me, this bill represents more than just policy; it represents a lifeline for the people of Lahaina who are waiting for clarity and a path forward. Over the past year and a half, I have dedicated my time to recovery efforts, sitting in countless meetings, advocating for solutions, and working alongside residents who simply want the chance to rebuild. But at every step, we encounter delays, bureaucracy, and uncertainty. Without legislative efforts such as this bill, Lahaina risks losing its identity forever, as the spaces that once housed generations of businesses and families could remain empty lots indefinitely.

HB1503 allows property owners to restore what was lost without unnecessary barriers. It ensures that structures can be rebuilt within their original footprint, preserving Lahaina's character and history while giving residents and business owners a realistic chance to recover. This is not about expansion or redevelopment but about allowing people to return home, reopen their businesses, and reclaim what was taken from them in the fires.

The road to recovery has been long and filled with setbacks. We cannot afford further delays. I urge you to pass HB1503 and provide the certainty that our community desperately needs.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Sne Patel

President, LahainaTown Action Committee

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 1:24:12 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marc D Godt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Kakahiaka House Water and Land Committee,

My family and I are residents of Lahaina and we all are in complete SUPPORT of Bill HB1503. While we did not suffer any deaths or property losses in the August 8 Lahaina Fire, our lives have been drastically altered. Many of our dear friends and of course most of our commerical and favorite businesses suffered catastrophic losses.

With the many interests competing to define Lahaina and the future of the Valley Isle, it is important to consider those of us who actually live here... and plan to spend the rest of our lives here. Lahaina can and should be rebuilt.... as close to how it was. Modern design and building methods of course make the new structures much safer. And historic architecture will make it beautiful.

If Front Street in particular is not allowed to rebuild Makai side... then not only will massive financial costs be involved, the character of our little historic town will be dealt her death blow.

We, the people of Maui, will incorporate not only the recent history of Lahaina, but also the ancient history of Lahaina. While no one knows what the King or Queen or Ali'i would have done, I assure you they would ensure Lahaina continues to thrive and support its inhabitants. Historical and cultural places must be accessible in order to learn from them.

Allowing buildings to REBUILD in the similar footprint, location, etc.. .as to what existed before the fire is the ONLY and the BEST path forward. Lahaina will Rise again if you, our elected leaders listen to the people and allow us to do so.

PLEASE emphatically SUPPORT HB1503... and any other bills that help Lahaina rebuild as she was.... and please encourage your fellow legislators to follow suit.

Mahalo Nui for your time

Marc Godt & Family

godtco@alumni.usc. edu

Lahaina



**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 1:51:47 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha WAL committee ,

Lahaina desperately needs your support and consideration to allow the town to properly rebuild itself. The commercial and Historical Districts of Lahaina remain in limbo due to numerous rules limiting any meaningful movement forward. Please assist us by passing this bill forward.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 1:56:51 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lisa Berg	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Lamosao and Members of the Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of HB1503.

I have a condo at Lahaina Shores Beach Resort that has been inoperable since the fires. It is one of the few remaining buildings in historic Lahaina Town and has served the community as a place to celebrate and work for 50 years. Our staff has been multigenerational and there are fond memories of kids growing up playing on property or the beach. We have raised money and found jobs for our staff and hope they will all return when we are finally open sometime in 2025.

We have hundreds of employees and independent contractors who are counting on coming back to work and need to have our town revitalized to make this happen. We are Maui residents and our unit was our sole source of income before the fire. We were able to employ others to help maintain and update our unit as well. We hope to be able to house workers who will rebuild our town but know that we also need shops, restaurants and other services to make this feasible for these folks.

The Westside, all Maui and Hawaii has been impacted by the loss of Lahaina town and it is vital that we help bring her back as soon as possible so that so many residents and business owners can get back to work and stop struggling financially.

This bill is one step towards being able to rebuild based on current regulations we are facing. We're not asking for change but to rebuild on the same footprint and soon. We cannot wait! We need our community back for the sake of Hawaii and for all those who have suffered through this terrible time.

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony.

Mahalo and aloha,

Lisa Berg

475 Front Street #205

Lahaina, HI 96761



**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 2:20:59 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Adel jobran	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Lamosao, and members of the committee.

My name is Adel Jobran and I am here to testify in support of HB1503

My Family owned and operated Paradise Lahaina on front st it has been in our family for generations, our family of employees have been working with us before the fire for generations aswell and we all were supported by this business. Our Family and employees families depended on front street for supporting and providing for our families. We took over the business in 1991 from another family that ran it for years before us at 718 Front street. We really hope we can get this bill passed and support it 100%.

Mahalo for your time and consederation

Adel Jobran

19 N iwa pl

Lahaina, HI 96761

808-339-1677

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 3:11:04 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Debbie Wyand	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Lamosao, and members of the committee.

My name is Debbie Wyand of Lahaina.

i am in strong support of HB1503

It has been a year and a half since the fire hit Lahaina . At this moment in time, I am not sure what the future holds for Lahaina . Businesses that supported friends and family need to be rebuilt ASAP without unnecessary and time consuming permits. California has removed much of the unnecessary regulation and review process so businesses and people can get their lives back.

This bill gives us hope, piece of mind, and motivation to look forward to restoring our livelihoods.

i strongly support this bill and urge you to vote YES! Things must be rebuilt quickly. No more footdragging and delays.

House Committee Water And Land  
February 6th, 2025  
Conference Room 411  
State Capitol  
415 South Beretania Street

### TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF **HB1503**

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Lamosao, and Members of the Committee,

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **strong support** of **HB1503**. I am submitting this testimony on behalf of the Lahaina Town Action Committee and the Front Street Recovery Organization.

This bill is critical to helping the community rebuild from the devastating impacts of the Lahaina Wildfires. Property owners within the Special Management Area face not only the loss of their homes and businesses but also an overly complex and time-consuming rebuilding process that threatens their ability to restore their livelihood; all of which are vital to Lahaina's recovery.

HB1503 is not about creating new developments. It simply allows property owners to rebuild what previously existed within the same permitted footprint, ensuring that the environmental and structural impact remains consistent with what was there before. This bill provides a practical, balanced approach to recovery while maintaining the integrity of our coastal areas.

The ability to rebuild without unnecessary delays will help these businesses reopen, create jobs, and contribute to our local economy, benefitting both Maui County and the state. Without this relief, many property owners may be forced to sell, leading to further outmigration and the erosion of our community fabric—a trend we cannot afford to continue.

Nearly a year and a half has passed, and despite the debris removal, progress has been slow. With the proposed sunset date of August 8, 2028, HB1503 provides a clear, time-sensitive pathway to help families and businesses rebuild before it's too late.

I respectfully urge your **support** for **HB1503** to protect the future of Lahaina and help the community recover.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Haloa Dudoit

Karey Kapoi LLC

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 9:00:30 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Keahi Ho	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**February 4, 2025**

**House Committee on Water and Land**

**Chair Mark Hashem**

**Vice Chair Lamosao**

**MEETING DATE: February 6th, 2025**

**TIME: 9:00am**

**PLACE: Conference Room 411, State Capitol, 415 South Beretania Street**

**TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB1503**

**Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Lamosao, and members of the Committee,**

**Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of HB1503.**

**We are a Lahaina firefighter family who lost our home and our lovingly modified sailing vessel, GungHo. Our business, GungHo Sailing, has operated out of Lahaina Harbor since 2015. Previous to that Keahi's father ran charter boats out of Lahaina Harbor and he grew up in Lahaina harbor dreaming of owning a sailboat and business there, a dream that eventually came true over 30 years. GungHo Sailing had 6 employees, including our daughter, and we truly loved sharing authentic sailing off of West Maui with locals and visitors alike.**

**Although we still have a firefighting job, the additional income streams to support our family are gone. We are temporarily operating part-time out of Ma'alea Harbor, until we can get back to Lahaina Harbor and re-employ our staff. Our business currently generates 25% of the revenue we did in Lahaina and all income is going towards the build of a new vessel and the survival of our business.**

**We are in strong support of Bill 1503 because we believe that the Lahaina commercial district should be given every opportunity to rebuild. A mega fire took out the town, not a tsunami or anything related to sea level rise or erosion. Unlike other areas on Maui suffering from erosion, Lahaina sits protected by a barrier reef. The devastation of losing everything, and then being told we may not be able to rebuild our homes or businesses is unfair and cruel. Allow the commercial district to be rebuilt. Most of the commercial building owners in Lahaina are local small businesses and many of them lost both a home and a business like us.**

**Rebuilding Lahaina town and Lahaina Harbor will bring back small businesses. Lahaina is built up of primarily small businesses which is the backbone of the community of Lahaina, in contrast to the large corporate entities of Ka'anapali.**

**We ask for your support for our community and to pass this bill.**

**Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.**

**Keahi Ho and Ali Grimes**

**432 Ilikahi Street, Lahaina, HI 96793**

**808-727-0094**

**gunghosailing@gmail.com**

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 9:01:21 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Ali Grimes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**February 4, 2025**

**House Committee on Water and Land**

**Chair Mark Hashem**

**Vice Chair Lamosao**

**MEETING DATE: February 6th, 2025**

**TIME: 9:00am**

**PLACE: Conference Room 411, State Capitol, 415 South Beretania Street**

**TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HB1503**

**Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Lamosao, and members of the Committee,**

**Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of HB1503.**

**We are a Lahaina firefighter family who lost our home and our lovingly modified sailing vessel, GungHo. Our business, GungHo Sailing, has operated out of Lahaina Harbor since 2015. Previous to that Keahi's father ran charter boats out of Lahaina Harbor and he grew up in Lahaina harbor dreaming of owning a sailboat and business there, a dream that eventually came true over 30 years. GungHo Sailing had 6 employees, including our daughter, and we truly loved sharing authentic sailing off of West Maui with locals and visitors alike.**

**Although we still have a firefighting job, the additional income streams to support our family are gone. We are temporarily operating part-time out of Ma'alaia Harbor, until we can get back to Lahaina Harbor and re-employ our staff. Our business currently generates 25% of the revenue we did in Lahaina and all income is going towards the build of a new vessel and the survival of our business.**

**We are in strong support of Bill 1503 because we believe that the Lahaina commercial district should be given every opportunity to rebuild. A mega fire took out the town, not a tsunami or anything related to sea level rise or erosion. Unlike other areas on Maui suffering from erosion, Lahaina sits protected by a barrier reef. The devastation of losing everything, and then being told we may not be able to rebuild our homes or businesses is unfair and cruel. Allow the commercial district to be rebuilt. Most of the commercial building owners in Lahaina are local small businesses and many of them lost both a home and a business like us.**

**Rebuilding Lahaina town and Lahaina Harbor will bring back small businesses. Lahaina is built up of primarily small businesses which is the backbone of the community of Lahaina, in contrast to the large corporate entities of Ka'anapali.**

**We ask for your support for our community and to pass this bill.**

**Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.**

**Keahi Ho and Ali Grimes**

**432 Ilikahi Street, Lahaina, HI 96793**

**808-727-0094**

**gunghosailing@gmail.com**

House Committee Water and Land  
Chair: Rep. Mark J. Hashem  
Vice Chair: Rep. Rachele L. Lamosao

**HOUSE BILL 1503 Hearing**

DATE: February 6, 2025  
TIME: 9am via videoconference  
PLACE: Hawaii State Capitol Conference Room 411  
415 S. Beretania St., Honolulu, HI

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT of HB1503**

Aloha, Representative Hashem, Representative Lamosao and Committee members

Mahalo for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB1503.

Like so many of Lahaina residents, I was born and raised in Lahaina and proud of our historic town and of its many people who have come before us through its many eras and “built” Lahaina to what it was ... up until the horrific wildfires of August 8<sup>th</sup> which destroyed its core.

Lahaina landowners need HELP NOW so they can rebuild and collectively return “home” to, as close as possible, the Lahaina that existed before which residents and visitors alike loved. TIME is not on their side. This bill would allow the reconstruction under certain circumstances of many of Lahaina’s structures, exempting them from SMA requirements. And, surely there were diverse, quirky, nonconforming buildings up and down Front Street besides in its greater Lahaina residential areas, yet this gave Lahaina its unique character and sense of place which people were attracted to and which has generated much business, and contributed to the County and State revenue stream as well. Let’s give Lahaina the SUPPORT it needs NOW AND FAST to ensure that Lahaina’s heart and soul and its economic vitality be returned. Let’s help these landowners rebuild safely, following the look and design of the buildings sadly destroyed by the wildfire.

I urge you all to support HB1503 and ask that you pass this bill.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Louisa Shelton  
20 Alaeloa Place Apt 20, Lahaina, HI 96761  
RLJKOhana@aol.com

## **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB1503**

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Lamosao and members of the committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB1503.

My family is the fee simple owner of the Pioneer Inn property adjacent to Lahaina Harbor. The Pioneer Inn, which my great grandfather opened for business in 1901, was the oldest continuously operating hotel in Hawaii until it was destroyed in the August 8, 2023 wildfire. It is one of the few contributing buildings to the National Historic Landmark and has been an integral part of Lahaina history and community for 122 years. The hotel, restaurant, and retail businesses located at the Pioneer Inn provided hundreds of jobs.

Our hope is that our building will be able to be rebuilt to its former scale, appearance, and use as it existed prior to the wildfire.

Approval of HB1503 is necessary for Lahaina to be rebuilt in its historic, small-town character.

Please support the rebuilding of historic Lahaina by passing HB1503.

Mahalo,

G. Warren Freeland

46 Leiohu Circle

Makawao, HI 96768

(808) 276-5999

[gwarrenfreeland@gmail.com](mailto:gwarrenfreeland@gmail.com)

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 10:27:39 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Dr. Jeffrey Rosett	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm a full-time physician working at Maui Memorial Medical Center to help the people of Maui. We lost our family home in the Lahaina wildfire. We continue to pay our mortgage there but we have not been permitted to rebuild our home. We support HB1503 so our rebuild process can hopefully be expedited.

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 11:31:16 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Laurie Lowson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As an owner of two Front St commercial properties, the time to rebuild is NOW. I have lived and worked in Lahaina since 1977. We lost our 3 commercial properties in the Lahaina Wildfires. Please pass HB1503 to support business and land owners in Lahaina. We are here ready to build and need your help.

PLEASE help.

With Aloha, Laurie Lowson 744 Front St. , 626 Front St. and 1087 Limahana property owner.

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 1:45:10 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Thomas Staubitser	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My wife and I are in support of Bill 1503. It has been 11/2 years since the devastating fires that took our home and thousands of structures in Lahaina. When looking on MAPPS web site our permit application is only 14% complete. The current process is taking too long and costing homeowners, Lahaina and Maui valuable time and money. This bill would help homeowners rebuild efficiently and allow us to move on with our lives.

We respectfully request that all legislators support this bill and continue to work towards a more timely and efficient recovery for the homeowners on Maui.

Thank you.

Thomas and Marlene Staubitser

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 4:56:14 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Matthew Moog MD	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Hawaii, state legislators, I fully support this bill to rebuild Lahaina.

My name is Matt Moog, MD. I left my mainland practice and obtained my medical license and staff privileges at Maui Memorial in 2023. We sold our home in Wyoming that summer so we could make our permanent home in Puamana. We arrived to enroll my son in school August 6th, and lost everything two days later. My son and I are Lahaina fire survivors. Since my family had to rent Upcountry, we see every day Maui's economy worsening since the fire. We've seen Maui's doctors leaving for the mainland. Letting us rebuild Lahaina may not completely solve the housing shortage, but it's a start. I spent my entire life working to pay for our destroyed townhome, and we haven't gotten much hope that this waiting will end.

I can't work in Maui without our house, and I know physicians on the mainland aren't coming if they see what happens to homeowners there. We were going to live in our house in Lahaina, not rent it out, and we didn't have a place on the shoreline. We just heard our entire neighborhood had its permitting shelved. Governor Newsom suspended all shoreline permit regulations while the LA fire was still burning. Rebuilding will demonstrate Maui is a safe place to trust a lifetime of sacrifices it takes to live here.

Passing this bill could help Maui's housing, economy, and even doctor shortages right away. Or Maui county will go down with a sad history of burned out, scraped lots where Lahaina once drove Maui's economy as a vibrant and historic place. For that matter, the businesses of Lahaina need to rebuild as soon as possible. It's been a year and a half and only one home has been rebuilt, while homeowners and families go bankrupt, residents leave the island and businesses lose their ability to come back. Please help all of the homeowners rebuild, this process has been incredibly complex and time consuming, and we haven't been able to get anybody in our neighborhood and community through the process to get a building permit.

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 5:00:21 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jeffrey James	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill.

Please support all legislation that streamlines the building process. Including shoreline properties.'

Wells Fargo has issued a Shortsale notice on my property. I need to get it rebuilt asap.

Thank you

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 5:19:26 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Leslie Piazza	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello ~ I am a homeowner in Lahaina. My family has owned 57-1 Pualoke Place Lahaina (part of the Puamana development) since 1986. I strongly support HB 1503 and HB 1181. These bills will help families rebuild their properties, regain their livelihoods and bring a sense of normalcy back to everyone in Lahaina. We cannot let the land languish for months and years and take a slow approach to rebuilding. The rebuilding process must begin as soon as possible. People need their homes rebuilt, their communities restored and their livelihoods and families brought back together. That is what Lahaina is about. We need to keep people on the island working and living together in harmony. Please do all that is possible to move forward with HB 1053 and HB 1181.

Thank you,

Leslie Piazza

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 5:55:43 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

As a longtime homeowner in Lahaina, I strongly support HB1503 which will help property owners in their efforts to rebuild following the wildfires by streamlining the permit and approval process. Thank you for recognizing the urgent need for this bill to help Lahaina recover from such a disastrous event. Lives and livelihoods depend on your leadership.

We are homeowners in Lahaina, and we strongly support **HB1503** and **HB1181**. The rebuilding process has been stalled by the current, very complicated permitting process. We are not asking for new development, just the ability to rebuild what we lost in the fire in a timely and efficient manner. The complex and time-consuming permitting process has taken such a toll already, both financially and emotionally on so many of us who just want the ability to rebuild our homes, businesses, and community. We are not any closer to getting our permits approved today than we were a year ago when we started the process. The longer the permitting process remains so difficult to navigate, the more people are going to give up hope that Lahaina can ever be rebuilt. It is hard to explain how frustrating it is, after losing everything in an afternoon including our beloved Lahaina community and sense of safety, we are still waiting, 18 months later, to see IF there is a path forward to rebuilding. I humbly urge you to not only support **HB1503** and **HB1181** but do everything in your power to help all affected homeowners and businesses, including those with shoreline properties, rebuild now.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Tom and Carrie Rolfes  
40 Puakukui Place  
Patrick Rolfes  
668 Luakini St

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 6:26:53 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jeffrey Gregory	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a homeowner whose property was completely destroyed in the Lahaina Wildfires on Aug 8, 2023. While I understand that physical recovery will take time, I've been disappointed by the slow pace of rebuilding thus far. I want to be able to return to the home that I miss so much.

To help get Lahaina back on its feet, we need a rebuilding process that is less time-consuming and difficult.

I strongly support HB1503 as it will help enable property owners to rebuild without further unreasonable delays.

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 6:27:04 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Steve Plant	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am the owner of a Lahaina home that blessedly was not destroyed in the fire. I am writing in support of my fellow Lahaina homeowners to urge passage of both Bill 1503 and Bill 1181. I feel that it is only right to try to make permitting and approvals more smooth for the many people who have lost so much and are already greatly stressed.

Furthermore, I urge that once these bills are passed (please!), that shoreline properties also be addressed.

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 6:34:46 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Adrian Utsch	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I lost my home in the August 2023 Lahaina wildfire. The debris from my home has been cleared since March of 2024 but I have been unsuccessful in obtaining permits to rebuild my home. I urge the Legislature of Hawai'i to do all it can to clear away unnecessary obstacles that prevent me and my neighbors from rebuilding our homes. I pay a mortgage and HOA fees for a plot of land that I cannot build on. I urge you support and pass HB 1503 and all legislation that speeds up the process for fire affected victims to rebuild their homes. I support legislation that allows all fire affected property owners to rebuild whether there are on the shoreline or set back from the shore. Anything that slows or outright prevents homeowners from rebuilding only leads to more losses and suffering for Lahaina residents.

Mahalo,

Adrian Utsch

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 6:49:06 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

We highly support HB1503. To expedite the rebuilding process would mean that we could have our beautiful community once again. There are so many that are struggling to build back what they once had. We ask that you please help us in this effort.

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 6:49:56 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michele Long	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Hawaii State House. My name is Michele Long and I own property at 21 Kai Pali Place in Lahaina, which was a personal home (not a rental). Thank you for considering this bill. All of Maui and visitors from all over the world have lost a historic venue with the burning of Lahaina. We have been so grateful for FEMA and the Army Corps of Engineers for clearing all of our lots. They were amazing, hard working teams of people and we loved supporting them in all of their efforts, which were significant and took much time. Now that the lots have been cleared for many months, we are all anxious to move forward with our lives and reinvest in Maui's stability and economy. With rebuilding comes healing for both the individuals who lived and worked in Lahaina, along with the community as a whole.

I have appreciated many county planning and update meetings to keep property owners in the loop about next steps and to involve property owners in the planning process for the rebuild. Even though the county is making a great effort to "plan" and "rebuild the right way", the length of time it is taking to plan is hindering rebuilding and healing for this community. Also, the planning efforts and skewed assessment of available shoreline data are causing roadblocks to be put in place for a huge percentage of property owners, specifically anyone on the shoreline which includes a large percentage of the business owners. (See an informative article by Lynn Barr about this inaccurate data usage) If business owners are unable to rebuild Lahaina Town, then all the residents who lived and worked there will not have jobs to support them, even if they are able to rebuild their homes. Many property owners, personal and business, had insurance and want to rebuild. Every month we delay this process, the insurance funds depreciate. So even if a property owner had sufficient coverage to rebuild, the ability to actually do so continues to be eroded by time. In addition, many foreign investors are reaching out to fire victims offering to purchase their property. Most of us have said no so far, but as rebuilding with the insurance funds received becomes less and less likely, the purchase offers become more and more attractive. As great as it is to plan, if the delays in the planning process result in Lahaina town being owned by China or other non-US citizens, I don't think we will end up with the town we are planning on, even if the planning efforts are stellar. Current owners should be allowed to rebuild immediately, which is why we very much appreciate this bill.

There are so many of us who want to reinvest in Maui. We want to move forward, heal, rebuild and recreate the amazing Lahaina Town that we all love. Please help us do so by passing HB1503 so that property owners can rebuild without further roadblocks and delays. Mahalo,

Michele Long

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Laura Sue Peterson. I am a homeowner in Lahaina (35-1 Pualoke Place) and my residence was completely destroyed by the 2023 Lahaina fire. I am writing to state that I strongly support HB 1503 and HB 1181.

Firstly, thank you for your hard work to date for our community. It is greatly appreciated. Home and business owners have taken the brunt of this terrible tragedy. We all deserve a response that is in our best interests as we are the foundation of the community, as residents and business owners, and economically (tax revenue, etc.). As currently contemplated, the rebuilding process is unbelievably complex and time-consuming. We are being met with delays at every turn. This is not fair to Maui's own.

My understanding is that these bills would streamline the permit and approval process. This is essential for making it easier for families to restore their homes.

I urge you to **support HB 1503 and HB 1181** to aid in Lahaina's recovery. Please continue working toward solutions that include all affected homeowners, including those with shoreline properties. Your leadership in passing these bills will make a real difference in our community's ability to rebuild.

Mahalo!

Sue Peterson

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 6:56:36 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Leah Johnston	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of HB 1503. We need it to aid in Lahaina's recovery. Please continue to work toward solutions that include ALL affected homeowners, including those with shoreline properties. Please pass in this in order to rebuild all affected properties.

Sincerely,

Leah Johnston

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 7:20:49 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Nancy Guju Collins	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Hawai'i legislators,

I am writing in support of Bill 1503. I am a townhome owner with my sister who is a Lahaina resident of 40+ years. Our Ohana townhome was burned to the ground. This is the townhome where my niece and nephew were born and raised. They, also are residents of Lahaina and are now raising children of their own in the community. We are asking for your decisive action to find a path to rebuild the community. PLEASE help us move forward, there is much to do.

Mahalo for your assistance,

Nancy G Collins

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 7:37:32 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Please allow our community to rebuild!!! Please please please!

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 7:54:47 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
elise strong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Aloha and thank you for your service and commitment to our community.**

**I'm writing in strong support of HB1503. We were one of the families who had our home, car and all of our belongings burn to the ground in the Lahaina fires and since then we have been living on the mainland and waiting to be able to return. Please support HB 1503 and other measures that will help us speed the process of rebuilding. As we struggle to pay our mortgage and condo fees for a home that doesn't exist, our financial situation gets scarier by the day. Lahaina has much recovery to do. It is all so hard. Please help us to be able to come home- and to have a home again -as soon as possible. I don't know how long we can afford these bills with no home to live in.**

**Mahalo for attendtion and consideration, Elise Strong**

**808-344-0407**

**Formerly of 35-4 Pualoke Place Lahaina Hi 96761**

**Currently residing at 1554 Windrow Dr. Bozeman Mt 59718**

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 7:59:00 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Cathy Medina	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support HB 1503. This bill is essential to the recovery of Lahaina’s homes and businesses.

Delays in permitting are crippling the rebuilding process and adding unnecessary stress and anxiety to fire victims who have already endured so much. Bill 1503 would provide a much-needed path forward, expediting the process and allowing us to restore the unique character of Lahaina that made it so special.

I lost my home in the fire, and every day that passes without progress weighs heavily on me. Like so many others, I am desperate to rebuild—not just my house, but my community. The ability to return home should not be delayed any further.

I strongly urge you to pass Bill 1503. Lahaina’s recovery depends on it.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Cathy Medina

355 Front Street

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 8:18:32 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Elizabeth Schusser	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support HB 1503 and HB 1181 to aid in Lahaina's recovery and continue working toward solutions that include all affected homeowners.

Your leadership in passing these bills will make a big difference in our community's ability to rebuild. Mahalo, Dr. Betsy Schusser, Lahaina wildfire victim.

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 8:19:55 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Tambara Garrick	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Lamosao, and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **support** of HB1503.

Small businesses are the backbone of Lahaina—they are run by our neighbors, they employ our families, and they shape the identity of our town. Without urgent action, we risk losing not just storefronts, but the people who make Lahaina special.

I humbly ask for your support in passing HB1503 to help provide a necessary part of the framework needed to rebuild and restore Lahaina’s economy. This bill is essential in ensuring that small businesses can return and that our community members can get back to work. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Tambara Garrick<sup>[SEP]</sup>

(808) 269-8457<sup>[SEP]</sup>

tambarag@gmail.com

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 8:53:16 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Dudley Millikin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support the passage of Bill HB1503. Mahalo for drafting it. Excluding the definition of “development” for the purposes of coastal zone management restricts for our Lahaina businesses destroyed by the August 8th fire is a good thing to help us rebuild. This legislation will help us all be able to come home sooner. We all just want a vibrant Lahaina again.

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 8:55:58 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Steven Lecon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Lamosao, and members of the committee,

My name is Steven Lecon and I am writing a letter regarding **HB1503**.

I am a resident of Lahaina and I have specialized in restoration projects regarding hotels and restaurants for 50 years. I am looking forward to the restoration of Front Street and I have made suggestions to Front Street Restoration Organization on a pro bono basis. It is my conclusion with consultation from structural engineers and civil engineers that the oceanside of Front Street can be rebuilt upon without using piers. My idea is to use a horizontal support system to cantilever over the water. Therefore, there's no limitation to rebuild Front Street as it existed before the fire.

I humbly ask for your support in passing this bill. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 8:57:55 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jason Toth	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

My name is **Jason Toth**, and I am a resident of Lahaina, a survivor of the **August 8, 2023 wildfire**, and a **homeowner directly impacted by the devastation**. My family lost **our home, our rental property, and our business**, and we are struggling to rebuild what we had. The process has been overwhelming, not just because of the financial burden, but because of the excessive permitting and bureaucratic red tape that continues to slow down recovery.

**I strongly support HB1503**, which ensures that legally built structures lost in the fire can be **rebuilt without unnecessary coastal zone management restrictions**.

Lahaina’s recovery **must be about rebuilding, not roadblocks**. Families and business owners who lost everything are **already struggling** to return home, only to find themselves **trapped in a web of permitting, zoning, and historical restrictions** that should not apply under these circumstances. Before the fire, these structures **existed without issue**, and it is only right that they be **allowed to return without additional barriers**.

This bill is a **necessary step to streamline the rebuilding process** and ensure that those who have lost everything **are not further punished by slow-moving bureaucracy**. **We need help**. The permitting system has become an obstacle instead of a solution, and **HB1503 must be passed** so that Lahaina can **move forward and rebuild the homes, businesses, and community spaces that were lost**.

**Mahalo for your time and consideration.**

**Jason Toth, Lahaina, HI**

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 9:02:21 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Caleb Hopkins	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Caleb Hopkins. I am one of the owners of Mala Ocean Tavern and Coco Deck Kitchen Lahaina. Both businesses survived the fire and are located on Front Street.

I strongly support this bill to help Lahaina rebuild. We have re-opened and have hired back nearly half the staff at each establishment, so around 100 jobs for local residents. We are hopeful to get survive long enough for Lahaina to re-open fully. We are currently struffling to make it and it is crucial that it is done as quickly as possible.

Mahalo for your consideration.

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 9:07:51 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Robin Kean	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Written Testimony of Robin Kean  
Front Street, Lahaina Commercial Landowner  
In Support of Hawaii House Bill 1503  
Before the House Committee on Water & Land  
Hearing Date: February 6, 2025**

Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Lamosao, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Robin Kean, a commercial landowner on Front Street in Lahaina. I lost multiple properties in the devastating August 8, 2023, wildfires. I strongly support HB 1503, which ensures that rebuilding destroyed structures is not unnecessarily delayed by coastal zone management regulations.

The Lahaina community and local businesses cannot afford bureaucratic roadblocks in our recovery. HB 1503 provides a critical path forward, allowing property owners to rebuild efficiently while still respecting responsible development practices. Without this legislation, delays in reconstruction will prolong economic hardship and hinder the revitalization of our town.

I urge you to pass HB 1503 to support Lahaina's recovery and ensure that property owners can help restore our community.

**Respectfully submitted,**  
Robin Kean

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 10:41:15 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
David W Medina	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of HB1503.

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 2:45:43 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Thomas Mulvihill	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you so much for supporting HB1503. Walking through the fire zone in Lahaina is like reliving a horrible nightmare that never ends. This bill will greatly help end that nightmare by simply streamlining our rebuilding permits and approvals. Many of us who are direct victims of the fire have begun to feel that our government no longer cared about us or rebuilding our community. That is not so! You do care! And we are forever grateful. THANK YOU!!!!

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 2:55:44 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Loera	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of HB1503  
My 42 year old family business Maui Toy Works was destroyed in the Lahaina fire.

My wife and I were working that day no warning all  
Half of my 10 employees not only lost there jobs with me but also there homes.  
This business was my livelihood and the revenue generated is how i supported my family, My  
store was located on Front Street in the Pioneer Inn across from the Banyan tree. After Covid  
my store was doing its best in all those years. Revenue was over 1,5 million a year. The store  
itself was my best ever with over \$100,000 in improvements to the interior. A 15 foot \$25,000  
glass chandelier the focal point of the store, Crown wood molding new air conditioner, wood  
floors and a custom 12 foot counter in the shape of whale.  
I am in strong support of this bill because the funding will  
allow my family business to rebuild and serve our Lahaina community once again. , it gives us  
hope that we will be able to return to the place we dearly love so much, as well as gets us  
moving in the  
right direction to some sense of normalcy through all of this chaos we have endured.  
I humbly ask for your support for our community and pass this bill.  
Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.  
Name Robert Loera  
Address 100 Ridge Road 2514 Lahaina Hawai'i 96761  
Phone [808 385-5753](tel:8083855753)

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 2:57:27 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Soren Carlsen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

**Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,**

I am a Lahaina homeowner and a Maui physician with many patients, friends, and family deeply affected by the delays in reconstruction following the Lahaina fire. I am submitting testimony in **strong support of HB 1503 and HB 1181**, as these bills are essential in helping property owners rebuild efficiently and expeditiously.

**Why These Bills Matter:**

- The current rebuilding process is overly complex and time-consuming, leading to unnecessary delays for families who desperately want to restore their homes.
- HB 1503 and HB 1181 would be a much needed step towards streamline permitting and approval processes, providing a clear pathway for reconstruction while maintaining necessary oversight.
- Although shoreline properties are excluded from these measures, the bills still serve the broader Lahaina community by expediting recovery efforts for the majority of affected homeowners.
- Supporting these bills is critical to ensuring a more efficient and timely recovery for families struggling to rebuild their lives.

**Concerns About Maui County’s Role and Opposition to Tamara Paltin’s Proposed Amendment:**

Maui County has accepted, as part of a legal settlement, some degree of responsibility for the cause of the Lahaina fire. Given this, there is a **significant conflict of interest** in allowing the County to delay permits or use the rebuilding process as an opportunity to change zoning or restrict property rights.

The proposed amendment by Councilmember Tamara Paltin to exclude transient vacation rentals from continuing as nonconforming uses after a disaster would unfairly penalize property owners, many of whom lost everything in the fire. The County should not exploit this disaster to impose stricter zoning or revoke longstanding property rights.

Instead, I support a **counterproposal** that would protect property owners' rights to rebuild, repair, or reinstate their property to its original state and use. This includes adhering to Governor

Green's 18th Proclamation regarding the suspension of Coastal Zone Management rules, ensuring that homeowners can reconstruct without unnecessary delays or overreach by County entities. Less than a week into the LA fires, Governor Gavin Newsom signed an executive order to suspend permitting and review requirements under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the California Coastal Act to allow victims of the recent fires to restore their homes and businesses faster. We need this for Maui now. We needed this 17 months ago.

**Request to Legislators:**

I urge you to pass HB 1503 and HB 1181 to streamline the rebuilding process and protect property owners' rights. I also ask that you reject any measures, such as Tamara Paltin's proposed amendment, that would hinder recovery efforts or infringe on homeowners' ability to restore their properties to their original use.

Time is of the essence, and these bills are critical to helping our community heal and rebuild.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Soren Carlsen, MD  
Lahaina Homeowner and Maui Physician

**HB-1503**

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 6:12:56 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/6/2025 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Judy Sturgis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in support of HB 1503

, Our family has owned our waterfront home located at 11 Kamala Circle, just south of Baby Beach since 1970. For the past 55 years we have enjoyed our beautiful home and the life that Lahaina has provided for our family and dear friends. We are all very devastated by the fire damage to our neighborhood and town. Needless to say, we are hoping to rebuild our homes as soon as possible without unreasonable demands from the County. Passage of HB 1503 will show us the County is working towards streamline the overall rebuild process in our community which hopefully will also include waterfront properties.

Judy Sturgis