



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

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:
H.B. NO. 1, RELATING TO BUILDING CODES.

BEFORE THE:
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

DATE: Friday, January 31, 2025 **TIME:** 9:15 a.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 430

TESTIFIER(S): Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or
Stella M.L. Kam, Deputy Attorney General

Chair Evslin and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments on this bill.

This bill would amend the duties of the State Building Code Council (SBCC) to repeal its authority to adopt state building codes and, instead, would authorize the SBCC to: (1) conduct a financial analysis of all proposed new codes; (2) determine which codes are for the protection of public safety and which are not; (3) hire or appoint persons who are not members of the SBCC to conduct the financial analyses of the proposed new codes and standards; (4) consult with commercial and residential project developers as well as general building contractor associations and building trade associations to gather information and recommendations on construction practices, training, and cost implications relating to building codes and standards; and (5) provide recommendations and financial analyses to the governing body of each county on which building codes and standards should be adopted, amended, or updated by the county within two years of the official publication date of the code or standard. Under this bill, the governing body of the counties would adopt the building codes pursuant to chapter 92, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) (i.e., at a public meeting), and be exempt from the requirements of chapter 91, HRS (administrative rule-making process). If the SBCC does not make a recommendation to the county within the two-year time period, the

governing body of the county may consider that the SBCC recommended adoption of the code.

Although the bill would repeal the SBCC's authority to adopt state building codes currently set forth in section 107-24(c), HRS, it does not repeal the wording in section 107-24(a), HRS, which states that "[a]ny law to the contrary notwithstanding, the council shall establish the Hawaii state building codes." To avoid conflicting subsections within section 107-24, HRS, subsection (a) must also be repealed to coordinate with the repeal of the authority to adopt state building codes in subsection (c). In addition, the following provisions in chapter 107, HRS, need to be amended to reflect the proposed change to the SBCC's authority: section 107-21 (definition of "Hawaii state building codes"); section 107-26; section 107-27(a); and the last sentence in section 107-28(a).

We respectfully ask the Committee to consider these recommended amendments.



SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOSUING

January 31, 2025

9:15 AM

Conference Room 430

In **OPPOSITION** to **HB1**: RELATING TO BUILDING CODES

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

On behalf of our over 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **OPPOSES HB1**, which would burden residents, first responders, taxpayers, and our society at large with the significant, long-term costs of delayed or foregone building code updates, for the short-term benefit of building industry interests.

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

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

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

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

Moreover, by eliminating the State Building Code Council's authority to update the state building code and removing the provision that keeps our state codes up-to-date in the case of Council inaction – such as during the Governor's emergency proclamation on housing – this measure would directly delay code updates, potentially indefinitely, creating significant opportunity costs and avoidable vulnerabilities for local residents that may persist for decades.



SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

Rather than advancing a measure that so substantially compromises the public interest, the Sierra Club urges the Committee and the Legislature to instead explore and directly address the noted causes of building permit review delays, namely the chronic understaffing of and lack of timely training for county planning departments, including through assessments of staff salaries and conditions affecting worker retention. In addition, we respectfully recommend an assessment of other much more significant barriers to local residents accessing housing, including water availability and sewer infrastructure; land, labor, energy, and material costs; land and real estate speculation including by real estate investment trusts and private equity firms; and interest rates that limit financing opportunities.

Accordingly, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i respectfully but strongly urges the Committee to **HOLD** HB1. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Testimony of
Pacific Resource Partnership

Hawai'i State Legislature, House Committee on Housing
Chair Luke Evslin and Vice Chair Tyson Miyake
Friday, January 31, 2025

Support for HB1 relating to building codes

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

Pacific Resource Partnership (PRP) represents thousands of unionized carpenters and hundreds of general contractors across Hawai'i and strongly supports HB1, which seeks to streamline the State Building Code Council's (SBCC) adoption process to ensure efficiency, consistency, and responsiveness in Hawai'i's construction standards.

Hawai'i's housing crisis requires urgent action to reduce regulatory delays that hinder development and substantially increases costs. By refining SBCC's duties, this bill will improve efficiency, enhance stakeholder engagement, and ensure that building codes balance safety with economic feasibility.

The current cycle of building code review and adoption significantly impedes the construction of much-needed homes across all of Hawai'i.

These delays not only escalate construction costs but also deter developers from initiating new projects as new codes often require more expensive materials and make it more difficult to plan long-term investments. In short, the current processes of the SBCC exacerbate Hawai'i's housing shortage and have a detrimental impact on affordability. Reforming the building code adoption process to be more efficient is essential to facilitate the rapid development of housing and address the pressing housing needs in our communities.

HB1 requires the SBCC to "conduct a financial analysis of all proposed new codes and standards," which is desperately needed as the cost of housing in Hawai'i continues to increase. This is evidenced by the latest Consumer Price Index (CPI) for urban Honolulu which was released in December and shows prices for shelter have increased 6.4 percent over the past year.

HB1 also requires the SBCC to "determine which codes and standards are for the protection of public safety and which are not," which will help stabilize soaring costs. Furthermore, HB1 increases "home rule" by affording the counties greater flexibility when considering which new codes and standards to adopt.

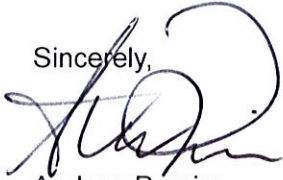


A more modernized, predictable process for the consideration and adoption of new building codes and standards will allow the construction industry to deliver the 50,000 housing units that Hawai'i desperately needs at a faster rate and at lower costs.

We urge the committee to pass HB1 to support responsible development and help Hawai'i's people afford the housing that will keep them here in the islands.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Andrew Pereira
Director of Public Affairs
Pacific Resource Partnership



*Expanding the range of opportunities for all by
developing, managing and promoting quality
affordable housing and diverse communities.*



Testimony of EAH Housing | Hawai'i Region
RELATING TO HB 1

Wednesday January 31, 2025 at 9:15 AM
Written Testimony Only

Committee on Housing

Chair Luke Evslin, Vice Chair Tyson Miyake
Members Elle Cochran, Tina Nakada Grandinetti, Darius Kila,
Lisa Kitagawa, Trish La Chica, Christopher Muraoka, and Elijah Pierick

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB1, which improves the efficiency and effectiveness of the State Building Code Council (SBCC). The bill streamlines the adoption process for building codes, ensuring a more responsive and balanced approach to addressing Hawaii's housing crisis.

Hawaii faces some of the highest housing costs in the nation, driven in part by delays in adopting updated building codes and standards. The current two-step process, requiring both SBCC and county approval, results in unnecessary delays that increase construction costs and hinder the timely development of much-needed housing. HB1 removes inefficiencies by refining the council's role and expediting the adoption of critical codes.

Furthermore, requiring financial analyses of proposed codes and direct consultation with general contractors and developers will ensure that future updates account for both public safety and affordability. By improving collaboration between the public and private sectors, this measure will help mitigate cost increases while maintaining high construction standards.

HB1 is a necessary step toward reducing barriers to housing development and ensuring that building codes are implemented in a timely and cost-effective manner. I urge the committee to pass this measure to support a more efficient and affordable housing future for Hawaii.

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen Seddon". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Karen Seddon, Regional Vice President

EAH Housing is a non-profit corporation founded with the belief that attractive affordable rental housing is the cornerstone to sustainable, healthy, and livable communities.

733 Bishop Street, Suite 1717
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
(808) 466-7774

HB-1

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 7:24:39 PM

Testimony for HSG on 1/31/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan B Roberts Emery	Green Party of Hawai'i	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

The Green Party of Hawai'i **opposes HB1** and its attempt to uplift developers' short-term costs above the long-term safety, financial security, and well-being of Hawai'i's residents and communities.

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

Our building codes should prioritize safety, resilience, and long-term savings—not the short-term financial concerns of profit-driven corporate interests. Delaying updates will cost us all more in the long run, both in dollars and in our physical, economic, and environmental security.

We urge you to **HOLD HB1** and ensure that Hawai'i's building codes remain up to date to protect our homes, people, and communities.

In solidarity ,

Green Party of Hawai'i

Susan RobertsEmery

Co Chair GPH

Paauilo



Shaping Tomorrow's
Built Environment Today

180 Technology Parkway, NW • Peachtree Corners, GA 30092-2977 • Tel: 404.636.8400 • Fax: 404.321.5478

M. Dennis Knight
2024-2025 ASHRAE President

Whole Building Systems, LLC
921 Pitt St.
Mt. Pleasant, SC 29464
Phone: (843)437-3647
Email: dknight@wholebuildingsystems.com

January 29, 2025

The Honorable Luke Evslin
House Committee on Housing
Hawai'i State Capitol
415 South Beretania St.
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: Opposition to House Bill 1 "Relating To Building Codes"

Dear Representative Evslin:

I am writing on behalf of ASHRAE, the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air Conditioning Engineers. We are a professional and technical society of more than 54,000 members dedicated to energy efficiency, indoor air quality, resiliency, and sustainability in the built environment. Through our Society's research, standards writing, publishing, certification, and continuing education, ASHRAE shapes tomorrow's global built environment today. As one of the premier subject matter experts on the built environment, and on behalf of our 250 members in the state of Hawai'i, we wish to convey our opposition to Hawai'i House Bill 1 and advocate for its tabling in your committee.

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

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

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

First, this legislation removes the language that causes the state's building codes to be updated on a regular basis. This is a radical departure from the nationally recognized best practice that Hawai'i currently follows.

Second, this legislation will lead to fewer codes being updated less often in HI, which will negatively impact building occupants. By eliminating the appointment of a subcommittee comprised of county building officials whose duties are to recommend changes, authority is taken away from Hawai'i's county building officials, the very people who are experts on building code updates. Instead, the bill would require consultation with developers that have financial interests and who do not have to face the long-term implications of buildings that are not built to modern building codes. Rather than focusing on cost implications to developers, it is more important to consider the resiliency and safety of building projects and impacts on occupants.

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

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

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

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

There are many causes of high housing costs, and it would be outside our area of professional expertise to speak authoritatively on them. However, we can point to many counter examples of states that adopt the newest energy standard on cycle and have substantially lower housing and construction costs than Hawai‘i, indicating that at most energy standards and codes are a marginal factor in Hawai‘i’s housing crisis. For example, Montana, Florida, and Oregon all update to the newest edition of ASHRAE’s 90.1 energy standard every three years. This legislation cites the median price of a single-family home in Hawai‘i as \$825,000. This can be compared to \$609,900 in Montana, \$405,00 in Florida, and \$490,200 in Oregon.¹ More generally, we know that there is a substantial return on investment when it comes to building codes: up to date model building codes save \$11 for every \$1 invested through disaster mitigation benefits.² Additionally, a study has shown that the lower utility bills delivered by using up-to-date energy codes reduce mortgage default rates by about a third. Finally, numerous case studies have shown that updating to modern and more stringent building safety codes and energy codes is not associated with an increase in housing and construction costs.^{3,4,5}

In conclusion, ASHRAE opposes HI HB 1, and urges the swift dismissal of this legislation in the House Committee on Housing. We are at your disposal to answer any questions, and to address any comments or concerns you might have. We also wish to make ourselves available to you at any time if you find yourself in need of subject matter expertise on building sciences and the built environment. We can be reached at GovAffairs@ashrae.org. On behalf of our 54,000 members worldwide and our 250 members in HI, thank you for your consideration of our comments.

¹ McMillin, David. 2024. “Median Home Prices in Every State.” Bankrate. January 3, 2024.

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

² “PROTECTING COMMUNITIES AND SAVING MONEY The Case for Adopting Building Codes.” FEMA, November 2020. Accessed January 23, 2025. https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-11/fema_building-codes-save_brochure.pdf.

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

https://nehrp.gov/pdf/NIST%20GCR%2014-917-26_CostAnalysesandBenefitStudiesforEarthquake-ResistantConstructioninMemphisTennessee.pdf.

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

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

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "M. Dennis Knight". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "M." and last name "Knight" clearly legible.

M. Dennis Knight
2024-2025 ASHRAE President

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joshua McDonough". The signature is highly stylized and cursive, with the first name "Joshua" and last name "McDonough" clearly legible.

Joshua McDonough
2024-2025 ASHRAE Hawai'i Chapter President

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Luoma". The signature is cursive and somewhat stylized, with the first name "Kevin" and last name "Luoma" clearly legible.

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



**HAWAII STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON HOUSING
Conference Room 430 & Videoconference
State Capitol
9:15 AM**

January 31, 2025

Subject: HB 1 - RELATING TO BUILDING CODES

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

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

BIA-Hawaii is in strong support of HB 1, Relating to Building Codes, with comments. This bill amends the responsibilities of the State Building Code Council (SBCC).

As the Legislature is aware, the current process of adopting building codes at the national, state and local level is broken and chaotic. The results of this process do not serve the purpose of the intent of building codes. This intent has always been to promote the minimum standards to be used in building to protect the public health and safety. Unfortunately, the process has been hijacked by special interest groups promoting their agenda at the expense of affordable housing.

The process also requires all parties, the regulators and the regulated, to engage in a never-ending process of code review and adoption. For example, the national non-governmental organizations (NGOs) creating codes are on the 2024 code. The state of Hawaii is on the 2021 code, and the counties are on the 2018 code. Rather than reduce confusion as originally intended, the State Building Code Statute causes greater confusion. By eliminating the State code from the process and changing the SBCC to a research and advisory body, we will reduce some of the friction in the system.

HB 1 as drafted is a good start in this direction, however we would suggest modifications to make it truly effective. In addition to the existing language concerning section 107-24, we would suggest the deletion of section 107-25 in its entirety. We would also suggest striking the Hawaii State Building Code definition from 107-21.

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

Jan. 31, 2025, 9:15 a.m.
Hawaii State Capitol
Conference Room 430 and Videoconference

To: House Committee on Housing
Rep. Luke Evslin, Chair
Rep. Tyson Miyake, Vice-Chair

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

RE: HB1 — RELATING TO BUILDING CODES

Aloha Chair Evslin, Vice-Chair Miyake and other members of the Committee,

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii **supports** [HB1](#), which would change the State Building Code Council's responsibilities from adopting state codes to advising the counties on which model codes to adopt.

The bill would also require the State Building Code Council to conduct a financial review of the potential impact of any code changes it recommends to the counties for adoption.

Grassroot believes this measure would help fix the state's convoluted building code-adoption process, since it would balance the objectives of safety and cost.

State law currently requires the State Building Code Council to adopt every iteration of the International Building Code and related codes within two years of their release; the counties have an additional two years to adopt and make their amendments to the state code.

If the first deadline is missed, the model code automatically becomes the state code. If the second is missed, the state code automatically becomes the county code.¹

But the Council and counties often struggle to meet these deadlines. For example, it was only in April 2021 that the State Building Code Council adopted the 2018 Interim Building Code² and not until early 2023 that Honolulu fully adopted those amendments.³

Because of this staggered adoption process, county building officials and architects must constantly re-learn the building code's requirements.

The almost-constant nature of the building code updates also stresses already understaffed county planning and permitting departments and can exacerbate permitting delays, which research shows can affect the price of housing.⁴

Requiring the State Building Code Council to advise the counties on the potential financial effects of code changes also makes sense.

Construction costs for new single-family homes, apartments, condominiums and other residential dwellings have increased dramatically in Hawaii in recent years. As measured by the Honolulu Construction Cost Index, the cost for single-family homes in 2024 was 2.6 times higher than the cost in 2020. For highrises, the cost was 2.5 times higher.⁵

The state's strict land-use, zoning and permitting rules are a key driver of these costs. The Economic Research Organization at the University of Hawai'i has estimated that regulations comprise 58% of the cost of new condominium construction.⁶

The National Association of Home Builders already reviews the financial effects of certain code changes, and could serve as a resource for the State Building Code Council to adapt to Hawaii's specific climate, topographical and other concerns. NAHB's review of the 2024 International Residential Code, for example, identified a number of changes that would lower costs and others that would increase them.⁷

¹ [107-24 Authority and duties of the council.](#), Hawaii Revised Statutes, accessed Jan. 29, 2024.

² ["State Building Code Adoption,"](#) State Building Code Council, April 20, 2021, p. 1.

³ ["Interim Building Code \(2018 IBC\) Takes Effect,"](#) Honolulu Department of Planning and Permitting, April 20, 2023.

⁴ Paul Emrath, ["How Government Regulation Affects the Price of a New Home,"](#) National Association of Homebuilders, Economics and Housing Policy Group, 2011, p. 5; and Adam Millsap, Samuel Staley and Vittorio Nastasi, ["Assessing the Effects of Local Impact Fees and Land-use Regulations on Workforce Housing in Florida,"](#) James Madison Institute, Dec. 11, 2018, p. 19.

⁵ ["Quarterly Statistical and Economic Report, 4th Quarter 2024,"](#) Hawaii Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism, pp. 107-108.

⁶ Justin Tyndall and Emi Kim, ["Why are Condominiums so Expensive in Hawai'i?"](#) Economic Research Organization at the University of Hawai'i, May 2024, p. 11.

⁷ ["Estimated Costs of the 2024 IRC Code Changes,"](#) Home Innovation Research Labs prepared for the National Association of Home Builders, July 2, 2024.

A final note for your consideration: The current draft of the bill does not change Hawaii Revised Statutes §107-28, which contains a reference to the state building codes this bill seeks to remove. The language of that section should be changed to reflect the changes proposed here.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Ted Kefalas
Director of Strategic Campaigns
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii



January 30, 2025

TO: Honorable Luke Evslin, Chair
Committee on Housing

Honorable Tyson Miyake Vice Chair
Committee on Housing

FROM: Legislative Advocacy Committee
American Institute of Architects, Hawaii State Council

SUBJECT: **House Bill 1**
Relating to Building Codes

The American Institute of Architects

AIA Hawaii State Council
828 Fort Street Mall, Suite 100
Honolulu, HI 96813

T (808) 628-7243
contact@aiahonolulu.org
aiahonolulu.org/AIAHawaiiStateCouncil

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

The American Institute of Architects (AIA) Hawaii State Council and our Legislative Advocacy Committee stongly **OPPOSES** HB 1 based on the overall intent of the bill.

PERSISTENT FAILURE TO FUND SBCC

The intent of the bill to support housing projects Statewide fails to address the logistical needs of governing body (State Building Code Council) that mandates State Building code impacting design of housing projects. The bill further hamstrings the State Building Code Council (currently halted due to Governor's Housing EP) more than the Council has capacity for by requiring financial analysis, coordination with additional non-governmental entities, and hiring of consultants for financial analysis of codes with no funding.

According to International Code Council testimony, Hawaii is the only one of 50 states that provides no funding for its state building code council. AIA is proposing that the State release funding for the State building code council mainly for code admendment development and training for all County code officials Statewide prior to State code adoption.

Negative effect on HRS 107-24 intent for most current codes

AIA strongly supported original 2007 legislation intent on ensuring the state's building codes are current. A two year State building code and following two year County adoption cycle will realistically extend updated building code adoption further out, providing less public safety than the current code cycle. Further, language stating "staggered basis" of adoption of building code creates the

opportunity for outdated codes, major confusion between the suite of ICC codes and increasing the difficulties for County code officials, the construction industry, and the design industry.

Negative effect on FEMA standards

The “cardinal sin” for FEMA standards is failing to update to most current suite of codes. AIA strongly concurs with ¹Honolulu Star-Advertiser COMMENTARY by FEMA “insider” in 2024 that it is “unconscionable that the state legislature is quickly considering HB 2089 HD2 ... by arbitrarily preventing the state from keeping its building safety standards up to date. Consistent with similar efforts advanced by analogous lobbies in other states this bill puts the builder and developer interests ahead of Hawaii’s residents.” Over successive sessions, AIA has successfully waged series of legislative battles to keep pace with building technology and consumer protection. AIA aligns with SB120 testimony from the International Code Council (ICC) regarding the importance of updated building codes in regards to best case scenario of FEMA funding in the wake of natural disasters.

AIA is in favor of financial analysis on code updates / amendments, as well as the hiring of costing consultants to facilitate such analysis. The key is funding an operational and efficient State Building Code Council that supports each County with training of their staff code officials well in advance of the current State code cycle update. Thank you for the opportunity to offer our strategic thoughts in **OPPOSITION** to House Bill 1.

Sincerely,

AIA Legislative Advocacy Committee
American Institute of Architects, Hawaii State Council

¹Honolulu Star-Advertiser March 17, 2024.



January 30, 2025

Chair Luke A. Evslin
Vice Chair Tyson K. Miyake
Members of the House Committee on Housing
Thirty-Third Legislature, Regular Session of 2025

Hearing date: January 31, 2025 at 9:15 am

RE: **HB 1 – RELATING TO BUILDING CODES**

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

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of D.R. Horton Hawaii in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 1 – RELATING TO BUILDING CODES.

D.R. Horton Hawaii is proud to be one of Hawaii's largest homebuilders, serving local families for more than 50 years. We specialize in providing affordable housing and first-time homebuyer opportunities across Oahu and the state. Through sustainable and quality home designs, including our Ho'opili master-planned community in East Kapolei, we remain committed to addressing Hawaii's critical housing needs.

We are in strong support of HB 1 as it seeks to enhance the process for adopting state building codes by streamlining the responsibilities of the State Building Code Council (SBCC).

Building codes are essential to ensuring the safety, efficiency, and resilience of our built environment. However, the current process for updating and implementing these codes is often slow and cumbersome, resulting in delays that affect public safety, energy efficiency, and disaster preparedness. These inefficiencies also contribute to the ongoing challenges in addressing Hawaii's housing shortage.

By refining the role of the SBCC, HB1 will streamline code adoption by reducing unnecessary bureaucratic obstacles and adapt to evolving technologies and industry best practices. The amendments will also help to provide statewide construction standards while maintaining valuable stakeholder input. These improvements will benefit homeowners, businesses, and construction professionals alike, ensuring that Hawaii remains a leader in modern, sustainable building practices.



I respectfully urge the committee to pass HB1 to establish a more effective and responsive building code adoption process—one that prioritizes safety, sustainability, and economic growth. Accordingly, we respectfully urge the committee to pass HB 420 to help provide much-needed housing opportunities for Hawaii's residents.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Lee Tokuhara
Vice President of Government and Community Relations
DR Horton Hawaii



January 30, 2024

RE: International Code Council Opposition to HB1 – RELATING TO BUILDING CODES.

Members of the House Committee on Housing:

The International Code Council (ICC) is a U.S. based non-profit public benefit corporation with members in Hawai'i and across the world including architects, engineers, contractors, manufacturers, and government officials. ICC is dedicated to helping the building safety community, local and state governments, and the construction industry provide safe, sustainable, resilient, energy-efficient, affordable, and accessible homes, businesses and public buildings through the development of model codes and standards. Amended versions of ICC's codes and standards have been adopted by the State of Hawai'i and each of its counties.

We are writing in **opposition to HB1**. Passage of the bill has the potential to delay the state's adoption of current building standards and jeopardize the health and safety of residents of Hawai'i by eliminating the required regular SBCC building code adoption cycle within 2 years after a new model code is published, and adoption by counties within an additional 2 years.

ICC updates model building codes every 3 years to keep pace with technological advancements, improvements in building science, methods, and best practices, and incorporate lessons learned after disasters. The model codes provide for new cost-saving materials and techniques and help protect residents through important measures such as requiring protection against windborne debris, updated loading requirements to best protect structures from wind, rain, tsunami, and wildfire risks, and elevating structures and critical systems to avoid damage from flooding.

Studies confirm the adoption and implementation of current model building codes is one of the best mitigation strategies for natural hazards. The National Institute of Building Sciences (NIBS) estimates that building to modern building codes saves **\$11 for every \$1 invested** through earthquake, flood, and wind mitigation benefits, with an up to \$8 to \$1 return in wildfire mitigation savings.¹ The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) projects that if all future construction adhered to current codes, the nation would avoid more than \$600 billion in cumulative losses from floods, hurricanes, and earthquakes by 2060.² Advancements in codes to date in Hawai'i have already helped reduce the risk of loss from earthquake hazards by 25%.³

¹ NIBS, [National Hazards Mitigation Saves](#) (2019).

² FEMA, [Building Codes Save: A Nationwide Study](#) (2020).

³ *Id.*

Fueled by these findings, FEMA has been clear in its endorsement of jurisdictions adopting modern building codes. For example, on January 6, 2025, FEMA published a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) grants totaling \$750 million for states, local, Tribal, and territorial governments to mitigate natural disaster risk and increase community resilience, including \$112 million for states and territories for Building Code Plus-Up projects. In recognition of the recent publishing of the 2024 codes, the NOFO grandfathered in jurisdictions that have adopted the 2018 codes, but the BRIC grant scoring system generally **penalizes applications from jurisdictions that are not on the two most recent code cycles, placing future applications in jeopardy.**

In addition to mitigation funds, FEMA recently announced an interim policy increasing the federal share for post-disaster reconstruction of public facilities by 10% for jurisdictions that have adopted the two most recent codes (2021 or 2024). For comparison, in recent disasters that increase would have meant:

1. Over **\$100 million** in additional funds to aid Florida's recovery from Hurricane Michael.
2. **~\$26 million** in additional funds to aid California's recovery from the Camp Fire and 2018 wildfire season.
3. **\$70 million** in additional funding for Nebraska's recovery from severe storms in 2019.
4. **\$11 million** in additional funding for Pennsylvania's recovery from flooding in 2018.

Even though the current administration has placed a hold on certain federal funds while it reviews a multitude of programs, it is important to remember during the previous Trump administration at least two major pieces of legislation -- the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (BBA) that **increased post disaster federal recovery funds** and the Disaster Recovery Reform Act (DRRA), **funding infrastructure grants** -- tied funds to modern code adoption **and** advanced through Republican majorities in both the U.S. House and Senate and both were signed into law by President Trump.

Modern codes also mitigate the cost of insurance. The Insurance Services Office Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule (BCEGS) provides an opportunity for savings. BCEGS evaluates adopted code editions, staffing to permitting loads, as well as staff training and experience, and scores communities on commercial and residential construction. Top BCEGS scores can lead to insurance credits of as much as 25%. A low BCEGS has a negative impact on both insurance premiums and a jurisdiction's BRIC grant scoring.⁴

FEMA's Community Rating System (CRS) program employs a similar model to BCEGS.⁵ CRS is a voluntary incentive that recognizes community flood hazard mitigation efforts through reductions in National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) premiums. Like BCEGS, CRS classifies communities between 1 and 10, with 1 being the highest. Each improved class corresponds with a 5% boost in insurance discounts provided to that community's residents. A Class 9 community's residents would receive a 5% discount, Class 8 a 10% discount, etc.

⁴ <https://msplans.com/mwua/wind-mitigation-programs>

⁵ <https://www.fema.gov/floodplain-management/community-rating-system>

FEMA provides credit points for a range of activities organized under four categories: public information activities, mapping and regulations, flood damage reduction activities, and warning and response. To earn a Class 5 or 6, in addition to the credit points required, **CRS requires residential and commercial BCEGS scores of 5 or above.** In states where communities do not adopt rigorous building standards, potential CRS community benefits are effectively capped at 15%, forgoing as much as an additional 30% premium reduction.⁶

Residents of Hawai'i pay on average \$717 in annual NFIP premiums, up 3% over the past year. **The current adoption timeline in Hawai'i already risks forfeiting \$215 in NFIP premium reductions per policy per year,** with Hawai'i and Maui County, both CRS class 7 communities, ineligible for further NFIP premium reductions. HB1 would serve to further delay that process.

The benefits of resilient codes are not just measured in insurance savings and avoided damage, but also the environmental impact of that damage and necessary reconstruction. Failure to adopt resilient codes will result in damage to structures resulting in significant environmental costs that are associated with building new replacement infrastructure and repairing existing infrastructure. Buildings built to strong energy codes that are highly energy efficient or even net zero energy will not realize climate benefits if they are damaged or destroyed because they were not constructed to withstand hazard risk. The principal investigator for the NIBS report estimated that incorporating wildfire resistant codes nationwide has the annual equivalent value of preserving about 4,800 new homes and avoiding 500,000 metric tons of CO₂ emissions.⁷

Despite these benefits, research shows that **modern model building codes have no appreciable implications for housing affordability. No peer-reviewed research has found otherwise.** One study considering the role of government regulation on home prices found that construction costs, including labor and materials, were flat from 1980 to 2013.⁸ ICC was formed in 1994, the initial model codes were adopted across the country in the early 2000s, and several significant advancements to mitigate structures against natural hazards were integrated into the codes during the period studied. None of these code activities meaningfully impacted construction costs.⁹

Given their benefits to public safety and the savings they provide in avoiding what would otherwise be much more substantial disaster response costs, the federal government has increasingly incentivized the adoption and implementation of current codes and standards. This approach was advanced during the previous Trump administration's National Mitigation Investment Strategy¹⁰ and continued through the Biden administration's National Initiative to Advance Building Codes.¹¹

⁶<https://nfpiservices.floodsmart.gov/reports-flood-insurance-data>; <https://www.fema.gov/floodplain-management/community-rating-system#participating>

⁷ Cf. Porter, K. *Do Disaster-Resistant Buildings Deliver Climate Benefits?* SPA Risk LLC (2021) (conducting an analogous calculation concerning alternative hazards).

⁸ Gyourko, J. & Molloy, R., *Regulation and Housing Supply*, Handbook of Regional and Urban Economics, Volume 5B Chapter 19 (2015).

⁹ See, e.g., Porter, K. *Do Disaster-Resistant Buildings Deliver Climate Benefits?* SPA Risk LLC (2021).

¹⁰ U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Mitigation Framework Leadership Group (MitFLG), *National Mitigation Investment Strategy* (2019).

¹¹ White House, *Fact Sheet: Biden-Harris Administration Launches Initiative to Modernize Building Codes, Improve Climate Resilience, and Reduce Energy Costs* (2022).

The Hawai'i State Building Code Council currently faces a lack of funding that exacerbates existing challenges to updating state codes in a timely manner and to have the codes implemented by counties.

During a disaster, outdated building codes lead to additional deaths, injuries, property damage, emergency response costs, family displacement, longer recovery times, and business closures that could otherwise have been avoided or mitigated.

Faced with extreme weather that is only expected to increase in frequency and severity, SB 120 worsens the state's already lagging code update process and creates a dangerous disconnect between safe building practices and the measures necessary to advance it safely. **ICC opposes HB1.**

Thank you.

Bryan Imai
Government Relations Regional Manager
International Code Council
bimai@iccsafe.org



House Committee on Housing
Rep. Luke A. Evslin, Chair
Rep. Tyson K. Miyake, Vice Chair

January 31, 2025
9:15 am
Confrence Room 430

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

Castle & Cooke Homes Hawai'i, Inc. is in **strong support** of **HB1**, which seeks to amend the process for adopting state building codes by streamlining the duties of the State Building Code Council (SBCC).

As one of Hawaii's leading residential developers, Castle & Cooke Hawaii Homes Inc. is committed to creating quality, sustainable communities that meet the housing needs of our residents. However, the current process for adopting and updating building codes presents significant challenges that can hinder the timely delivery of much-needed housing. Delays in code implementation and inefficiencies in the adoption process not only impact developers but also have a ripple effect on homeowners and businesses who depend on safe, resilient, and energy-efficient construction.

HB1 offers an effective solution by refining the responsibilities of the SBCC. Specifically, the bill will:

- **Streamline the code adoption process** to reduce delays, enabling quicker implementation of necessary improvements to safety and energy standards.
- **Align Hawaii's building codes with technological advancements and industry best practices**, ensuring that our homes and communities remain resilient to changing environmental and economic conditions.
- **Foster consistency in statewide construction standards**, benefiting homeowners, builders, and other stakeholders while maintaining opportunities for input.

These improvements are critical to addressing Hawaii's housing crisis. By reducing inefficiencies in the building code process, we can more effectively deliver homes to Hawaii families while upholding the highest standards of safety and sustainability.

We urge the committee to pass HB1 to help facilitate a more streamlined and effective building code adoption process. Doing so will enable developers like Castle & Cooke Homes Hawai'i, Inc. to continue building vibrant communities that balance innovation, economic growth, and the well-being of our residents.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Garret Matsunami

Executive Vice President & Chief Operations Officer
Castle & Cooke Homes Hawaii, Inc.



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House Committee on Housing
January 31, 2025

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

My name is Anthony Borge, and I am submitting testimony in support of HB1, which seeks to amend the process for adopting state building codes by streamlining the duties of the State Building Code Council (SBCC).

The adoption of building codes plays a critical role in ensuring the safety, efficiency, and resilience of our built environment. However, the current process for updating and implementing these codes can be slow, inefficient, and burdensome, leading to delays in necessary improvements that impact public safety, energy efficiency, and disaster resilience, ultimately leading to the lag of building housing in Hawaii.

By refining the responsibilities of the SBCC, this bill will:

- Improve efficiency in code adoption by eliminating unnecessary bureaucratic steps.
- Enhance responsiveness to technological advancements and industry best practices.
- Ensure greater consistency in statewide construction standards while maintaining input from stakeholders.

These improvements will benefit potential hopeful homeowners, businesses, and construction professionals, ensuring that our state remains at the forefront of modern building practices.

I urge the committee to pass HB1 to facilitate a more effective and streamlined building code adoption process that balances safety, sustainability, and economic growth.

Thank you.

Respectfully Submitted

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'A' followed by a long horizontal line that ends in a small loop.

Anthony Borge



800 Bethel Street, Suite 500
Honolulu, HI 96813

House Committee on Housing
January 31, 2025

Chair Evslin, Vice Chair Miyake, and Members of the Committee,
My name Fred Moore, and I am submitting testimony in support of
HB1, which seeks to amend the process for adopting state building
codes by streamlining the duties of the State Building Code Council
(SBCC).

The adoption of building codes plays a critical role in ensuring the
safety, efficiency, and resilience of our built environment. However,
the current process for updating and implementing these codes can
be slow, inefficient, and burdensome, leading to delays in necessary
improvements that impact public safety, energy efficiency, and
disaster resilience, ultimately leading to the lag of building housing in
Hawaii.

By refining the responsibilities of the SBCC, this bill will: Improve
efficiency in code adoption by eliminating unnecessary bureaucratic
steps. Enhance responsiveness to technological advancements and
industry best practices. Ensure greater consistency in statewide
construction standards while maintaining input from stakeholders.
These improvements will benefit potential hopeful homeowners,
businesses, and construction professionals, ensuring that our state
remains at the forefront of modern building practices.
I urge the committee to pass HB1 to facilitate a more effective and
streamlined building code adoption process that balances safety,
sustainability, and economic growth.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.
Respectfully,

Fred Moore
Senior Business Development Manager
Email: fmoore@ameresco.com
Cell: 808-478-8482
Office: 808-400-3784



January 30, 2025

Representative Luke Evslin Chair
Representative Tyson Miyake Vice Chair
Committee on Housing

RE: **HB 1 - Relating to Building Codes**
Hearing date: January 31, 2025 at 9:15 AM

Aloha Chair Evslin, Vice Chair Miyake and members of the committee,

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of NAIOP Hawaii in **SUPPORT** on HB 1. NAIOP Hawaii is the local chapter of the nation's leading organization for office, industrial, retail, residential and mixed-use real estate. NAIOP Hawaii has over 200 members in the State including local developers, owners, investors, asset managers, lenders and other professionals.

HB 1 amends the responsibilities of the State Building Code Council (the "Code Council"). Specifically, subsection the new HRS 102-24 (b) requires the Code Council to conduct a financial analysis of all proposed new codes and standards.

As the Legislature is aware, the state is currently in a housing crisis with our median price of a single-family home sold being \$825,000, and the median condominium price at \$600,000. The current process of adopting building codes at the national, state and local level was originally intended to promote the minimum standards used in building to protect the public health and safety. Unfortunately, the current issue is that the Council implements codes and standards without doing a financial cost/benefit analysis, adding more construction costs to developers and increasing the cost of housing as a result.

Accordingly, NAIOP Hawaii supports HB 1 which will require a financial analysis of all proposed new codes and standards. This measure will allow for more thoughtful adoption of building codes and take into consideration the additional cost for affordable housing units that Hawaii residents desperately need.

Representative Luke Evslin Chair
Representative Tyson Miyake Vice Chair
Committee on Housing
January 30, 2025
Page 2

We urge the committee to pass HB1 which will assist in keeping housing costs lower for Hawaii residents. NAIOP appreciates the Legislature's commitment to collaborating on this issue and look forward to working together.

Mahalo for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Reyn Tanaka', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Reyn Tanaka, President
NAIOP Hawaii



MAUI

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

VOICE OF BUSINESS

**HEARING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM 430
Friday, January 31, 2025 AT 9:15 A.M.**

To The Honorable Representative Luke A. Evslin, Chair
The Honorable Representative Tyson K. Miyake, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Housing

SUPPORT HB1 RELATING TO BUILDING CODES

The Maui Chamber of Commerce **SUPPORTS HB1**, which amends the process for the adoption of state building codes by streamlining the duties of the State Building Code Council.

The Chamber appreciates that this bill seeks to eliminate some of the more burdensome requirements placed on the council. Accordingly, the bill mandates that the council conduct a financial analysis of all newly proposed codes and standards, identify which are essential for public safety, and consult with developers of both commercial and residential projects.

Additionally, we believe the council's composition should reflect representation from each county, and we urge that this be explicitly stated in the law. County representatives would be best positioned to address local challenges related to building codes and how new proposals may specifically impact construction in their respective areas.

Furthermore, while we understand the financial and public safety analysis applies to future code changes, we also suggest that the council review and assess past code changes and make recommendations accordingly.

For these reasons, we **SUPPORT HB1** and, with our suggestions added, respectfully request its passage.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap
President

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

HB-1

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 11:01:12 AM

Testimony for HSG on 1/31/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Linda Lyerly	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please oppose this HB 1 We need to keep the building codes for future safety even though we need to expedite building we should not throw out our building codes. Mahalo

HB-1

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 11:39:24 AM

Testimony for HSG on 1/31/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
tia pearson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Like SB120, HB1 would compromise the safety of local families, first responders, and entire neighborhoods, as well as the economic and environmental interests of our communities at large, by removing the State Building Code Council’s authority to update state building codes, and eliminating the automatic code updates that have kept our codes up-to-date with minimum international standards even while Governor Green’s emergency proclamation(s) have prohibited the Council from conducting its business.

HB-1

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 11:46:11 AM

Testimony for HSG on 1/31/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
HCN Warrington	Kupuna for the Moopuna	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Kupuna for the Moopuna **OPPOSES HB1.**

Do not compromise the safety of local families, first responders, and entire neighborhoods, as well as the economic and environmental interests of our communities at large. Mahalo.

HB-1

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 12:46:31 PM

Testimony for HSG on 1/31/2025 9:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

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

My name is Bo Breda, and I **oppose HB1** and its attempt to uplift developers' short-term costs above the long-term safety, financial security, and well-being of Hawai'i's residents and communities.

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

Our building codes should prioritize safety, resilience, and long-term savings—not the short-term financial concerns of profit-driven corporate interests. Delaying updates will cost us all more in the long run, both in dollars and in our physical, economic, and environmental security.

I urge you to **HOLD HB1** and ensure that Hawai'i's building codes remain up to date to protect our homes, people, and communities.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Sincerely,

Bo Breda

HB-1

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 12:48:55 PM

Testimony for HSG on 1/31/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaleiheana-a-Pohaku Stormcrow	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Kaleiheana Stormcrow, and I **oppose HB1** and its attempt to uplift developers' short-term costs above the long-term safety, financial security, and well-being of Hawai'i's residents and communities.

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

Our building codes should prioritize safety, resilience, and long-term savings—not the short-term financial concerns of profit-driven corporate interests. Delaying updates will cost us all more in the long run, both in dollars and in our physical, economic, and environmental security.

I urge you to **HOLD HB1** and ensure that Hawai'i's building codes remain up to date to protect our homes, people, and communities.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Sincerely,
Kaleiheana Stormcrow

HB-1

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 12:50:08 PM

Testimony for HSG on 1/31/2025 9:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

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

My name is Peter Wilson, and I **oppose HB1** and its attempt to uplift developers' short-term costs above the long-term safety, financial security, and well-being of Hawai'i's residents and communities.

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

Our building codes should prioritize safety, resilience, and long-term savings—not the short-term financial concerns of profit-driven corporate interests. Delaying updates will cost us all more in the long run, both in dollars and in our physical, economic, and environmental security.

I urge you to **HOLD HB1** and ensure that Hawai'i's building codes remain up to date to protect our homes, people, and communities.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Sincerely,
Peter Wilson

HB-1

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 1:12:51 PM

Testimony for HSG on 1/31/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patricia Blair	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Bad bill, compromises the safety of local families.

HB-1

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 2:12:34 PM

Testimony for HSG on 1/31/2025 9:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

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

My name is Andrew Grandinetti and I **oppose HB1** and its attempt to uplift developers' short-term costs above the long-term safety, financial security, and well-being of Hawai'i's residents and communities.

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

Our building codes should prioritize safety, resilience, and long-term savings—not the short-term financial concerns of profit-driven corporate interests. Delaying updates will cost us all more in the long run, both in dollars and in our physical, economic, and environmental security.

I urge you to **HOLD HB1** and ensure that Hawai'i's building codes remain up to date to protect our homes, people, and communities.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Sincerely,
Andrew Grandinetti, PhD

HB-1

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 2:30:49 PM

Testimony for HSG on 1/31/2025 9:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

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

My name is Matthew Gurewitsch, and I **oppose HB1**.

We must build for the future--not for the past.

Prioritizing developers' short-term profits over the long-term safety, financial security, and well-being of Hawai'i's residents and communities is a recipe for disaster. This bill seeks to strip the State Building Code Council's (SBCC) of the authority to update the state building code in step with best-practices international standards. Automatic updates are critical to our collective well being and that of generations to come. Let's be good stewards of this precious resource that is our home! As recognized by the insurance industry and federal disaster funds, code updates are essential for protecting us from the growing threats of hurricanes, floods, wildfires, and other climate-related disasters. Without updates, health, safety, and cost improvements for building standards could face indefinite delays, leaving homes, families, and first responders more vulnerable in the years and decades to come.

Our building codes should prioritize safety, resilience, and long-term savings—not the short-term financial concerns of profit-driven corporate interests. Delaying updates will cost us all more in the long run, both in dollars and in our physical, economic, and environmental security.

I urge you to **HOLD HB1** and ensure that Hawai'i's building codes remain up to date to protect our homes, people, and communities.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Sincerely,
Matthew Gurewitsch

HB-1

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 5:38:24 PM

Testimony for HSG on 1/31/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ANDREW ISODA	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Andrew Isoda, and I **oppose HB1** and its attempt to uplift developers' short-term costs above the long-term safety, financial security, and well-being of Hawai'i's residents and communities.

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

Our building codes should prioritize safety, resilience, and long-term savings—not the short-term financial concerns of profit-driven corporate interests. Delaying updates will cost us all more in the long run, both in dollars and in our physical, economic, and environmental security.

I urge you to **HOLD HB1** and ensure that Hawai'i's building codes remain up to date to protect our homes, people, and communities.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Sincerely,
Andrew Isoda
Lahaina, Mau'i

HB-1

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 7:14:53 PM

Testimony for HSG on 1/31/2025 9:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

I strongly oppose this measure that prioritizes profits over people.

HB-1

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 9:18:30 PM

Testimony for HSG on 1/31/2025 9:15:00 AM

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

Comments:

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

My name is Diane Ware and I **oppose HB1** and its attempt to uplift developers' short-term costs above the long-term safety, financial security, and well-being of Hawai'i's residents and communities.

Several houses surviving wildfires in Lahina and LA had been built with materials such that they survived while every house around them went up in flames. We need to build Wisely not cut corners.

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

Our building codes should prioritize safety, resilience, and long-term savings—not the short-term financial concerns of profit-driven corporate interests. Delaying updates will cost us all more in the long run, both in dollars and in our physical, economic, and environmental security.

I urge you to **HOLD HB1** and ensure that Hawai'i's building codes remain up to date to protect our homes, people, and communities.

Thank you for considering my testimony.

Sincerely,

Diane Ware, Volcano HI

HB-1

Submitted on: 1/29/2025 10:12:30 PM

Testimony for HSG on 1/31/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Katherine Fryer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose HB1 and its attempt to uplift developers' short-term costs above the long-term safety and financial security of Hawai'i's residents and communities.

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

HB-1

Submitted on: 1/30/2025 9:59:17 AM

Testimony for HSG on 1/31/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nanea Lo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Nanea Lo, and I am a Kanaka Maoli, a lineal descendant of the Hawaiian Kingdom. I reside in Mō‘ili‘ili, O‘ahu, and am a renter/member in Honolulu Tenants Union. I currently serve as an Executive Commission Member of the Sierra Club of Hawai‘i and a Board Member of the Hawai‘i Workers Center. **I am writing in strong opposition to HB1, which places profit over the well-being of our people by weakening essential building codes.**

Hawai‘i is already in a housing crisis, with working families struggling to find safe, affordable, and resilient homes. Our communities are continuously displaced by development that prioritizes corporate interests over the needs of local residents. Weakening building codes for the sake of profit is a direct threat to the safety, health, and sustainability of our islands.

We must ensure that our laws uphold the highest standards for construction, disaster preparedness, and environmental responsibility—especially in the face of climate change. Cutting corners to maximize profits endangers our keiki, our kūpuna, and the generations to come. Instead, we should be investing in community-driven, sustainable development that aligns with our values and protects both our people and our ‘āina.

I urge you to reject HB1 and stand with the people of Hawai‘i, not corporate interests.

Me ke aloha ‘āina,

Nanea Lo

Mō‘ili‘ili, HI 96826

Renter - Honolulu Tenants Union

Executive Commission Member, Sierra Club of Hawai‘i

Board Member, Hawai‘i Workers Center

Kanaka Maoli / Lineal Descendant of the Hawaiian Kingdom

HB-1

Submitted on: 1/30/2025 10:45:16 AM

Testimony for HSG on 1/31/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dennis Lin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Dennis Lin, and I support the change in the State Building Code Council's responsibilities.

The proposed changes would allow for a financial analysis before codes are adopted. This is a crucial step in assessing whether the codes will have a direct economic impact on the end user, whether it be a home buyer or builder.

The other change that I support is providing the option for the Council to hire outside resources to help develop the financial analysis. This would help prevent any conflicts of interest from having Council members prepare the study or SBCC staff.

The cost of construction is continuing to rise, this is a great first step in trying to alleviate those costs by doing our homework first.

Mahalo for your consideration and opportunity to testify,

Dennis Lin

HB-1

Submitted on: 1/30/2025 5:34:58 PM

Testimony for HSG on 1/31/2025 9:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Koster	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My family **opposes HB1** and its crass intent to give preference to developers over Hawai‘i’s residents. This bill would remove the State Building Code Council’s (SBCC) authority to update the state building code pursuant to international standards, and eliminate the automatic updates that have kept our building standards current. This is poor long-term policy. Code updates are essential for protecting us from hurricanes, floods, wildfires, and other climate-related disasters. Our building codes should prioritize safety, resilience, and long-term savings—not the short-term financial concerns of profit-driven corporate interests. Delaying updates will cost us all more in the long run.