



**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.C.R. NO. 158 AND H.R. NO. 153, REQUESTING THE ATTORNEY GENERAL TO CONVENE A WORKING GROUP TO DEVELOP LANDLORD-TENANT CODE IMPROVEMENTS TO INCREASE THE SUPPLY OF HOUSING IN HAWAII.

**BEFORE THE:**

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CONSUMER PROTECTION & COMMERCE

**DATE:** Thursday, March 20, 2025      **TIME:** 2:00 p.m.

**LOCATION:** State Capitol, Room 329

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

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Chair Matayoshi and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General (Department) provides the following comments.

This resolution requests the Attorney General to convene a three-year working group to research landlord-tenant issues specific to increasing the availability of rental housing and improving landlord-tenant interactions.

The Department notes that the topics to be researched by the working group extend beyond the Department's legal role and areas of subject-matter specialization. For example, the resolution calls for the working group to identify the potential availability of rental housing stock that is not being offered for rent, a task better suited for either real estate professionals or consultants or state agencies with subject matter expertise in housing. The resolution also calls for the working group to evaluate financial and procedural barriers to offering or obtaining housing, a task better suited for real estate agents or economists or for state agencies with expertise in housing. As such, the Department recommends that the scope and membership of the working group be adjusted to focus on the real estate and financial aspects of the rental housing issues.

Furthermore, landlord-tenant disputes fall outside the Department's jurisdiction, as the Department is statutorily authorized to generally provide legal services to "the governor, legislature, and such state departments and officers as the governor may direct[.]" and to "give advice and counsel to the heads of departments, district judges, and other public officers, in all matters connected with their public duties[.]" Sections 26-7 and 28-4, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS). The Legislative Reference Bureau (LRB) may be better suited to evaluating potential legislative solutions based on its general grant of authority to conduct and provide research for the enactment of substantive legislation. See section 23G-3, HRS. As such, the Department recommends that the Legislature direct another agency more suited for this task to convene a task force or the LRB to conduct a study on the issue.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

**HR-153**

Submitted on: 3/19/2025 11:08:08 AM

Testimony for CPC on 3/20/2025 2:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Royce Ventura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I wholeheartedly support any group who decides to help Mau'I with the incredible task of increasing the rental market here. Where studio's are a premium at \$3000. Per month, and families need to sneak their children into these small spaces. I know our family of 7 lived in an apartment for half a year, that meant 1 bathroom and sleeping like sardines in a can. This is Not conducive for school children to thrive in? The rents are quadruple the amount? People are basing this price off of the mortgage they need and an additional profit.? The only thing my family can pray for is the mortgage rates lower and the overall decency of landlords prevails so the rents decrease to an affordable rate. Thank you