

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR



DEAN MINAKAMI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII

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

Statement of DEAN MINAKAMI

Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation
Before the

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

January 30, 2025 at 1:10 p.m.
State Capitol, Room 225

In consideration of
S.B. 491
RELATING TO HOUSING

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

HHFDC **supports** SB 491, which establishes the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Financing and Deed Restriction Program under the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation (HHFDC) to allocate funds to the counties to provide grants to eligible homeowners or homebuyers to finance construction costs, development costs, and non-reoccurring closing costs associated with the construction of an ADU and purchase deed restrictions on such property.

The upfront costs of designing and permitting an ADU are a barrier for many homeowners. HHFDC supports the ADU Financing and Deed Restriction program as a way to increase the inventory of below-market rental units in the State.

HHFDC has a few considerations:

We suggest the inclusion of properties held in a revocable living trust in the definition of "Eligible homeowner or homebuyer."

The amount to be paid to the property owner for the deed restriction needs to be determined. Would it be a fixed amount for all properties, percentage of tax assessed value, or would it be based on an appraisal or other means? This could be addressed in administrative rules, but it would be helpful to know the legislative intent.

The requirement that the deed restriction be in first position (page 5, line 6) may not be possible in planned communities where Conditions, Covenants, and Restrictions typically have first position.

We request that clarification on section 201H-C, "Deed restriction; requirements" be provided as to whether the deed restriction applies to the primary residence, ADU, or both.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



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

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:
S.B. NO. 491, RELATING TO HOUSING.

BEFORE THE:
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

DATE: Thursday, January 30, 2025 **TIME:** 1:10 p.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 225 and Videoconference

TESTIFIER(S): Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or
Chase Suzumoto, Deputy Attorney General

Chair Chang and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General offers the following comments.

The purpose of this bill is to establish an accessory dwelling unit financing and deed restriction program under the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation.

This bill permits the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation to allocate funds from the Dwelling Unit Revolving Fund to a county to award grants to eligible homeowners and homebuyers to finance various costs associated with the construction of accessory dwelling units. This bill also authorizes the counties to purchase deed restrictions from eligible homeowners or homebuyers using funds from the Dwelling Unit Revolving Fund.

There are two issues with the bill. First, this bill does not appear to contain legally sufficient standards for the issuance of such grants of public money as required by article VII, section 4, of the Constitution of the State of Hawai'i – "[n]o grant of public money . . . shall be made except pursuant to standards provided by law." Therefore, we recommend that this bill be amended to insert appropriate standards. Examples of existing statutes that provide standards for agencies to issue grants are part II of chapter 9 and sections 10-17, 210D-11, and 383-128, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

The second issue concerns the deed restrictions. The deed restrictions would require that the property be occupied by at least one owner-occupant or tenant that meets certain qualifications, including individuals who:

- (1) Retired at the age of sixty-five or older and worked an average of thirty hours or more per week at a qualified business¹ within the county for ten consecutive years immediately before retirement; or
- (2) Have a disability and worked an average of thirty hours or more per week at a qualified business within the State for five consecutive years immediately before the determination of disability.

Page 7, line 12, to page 8, line 3.

These provisions appear to be durational residency requirements that may be challenged as violating the right to travel protected by the United States Constitution.

In addition to the right to enter and exit another state, the right to travel refers to the right to be treated like other citizens of that state. See *Saenz v. Roe*, 526 U.S. 489, 500 (1999). A state law that burdens this right, “unless shown to be necessary to promote a compelling governmental interest, is unconstitutional.” *Shapiro v. Thompson*, 394 U.S. 618, 634 (1969), *overruled in part on other grounds by Edelman v. Jordan*, 415 U.S. 651 (1974).

Laws distinguishing between new and established residents are strictly scrutinized under an equal protection analysis and frequently invalidated because they impact the fundamental right to travel. For example, in *Saenz v. Roe*, 526 U.S. 489 (1999), the United States Supreme Court overturned a California law granting lower welfare benefits to individuals who had resided in the State for less than one year, explaining that the duration of their residence was irrelevant to California residents’ need for welfare benefits and the law therefore did not serve a compelling state interest. *Id.* at 507.

¹ A qualified business is defined, in part, as a “corporation, partnership, sole proprietorship, trust or foundation, or any other individual or organization carrying on a business,” that: “(1) has a physical presence within the State; and . . . (4) is generally recognized as an operating business within the community.”

Similarly, this bill may burden the right to travel by requiring people to have lived and worked here for five or ten years before a qualifying event (retirement or disability). These requirements do not appear to promote a compelling governmental interest, particularly if the owner-occupant or tenant intends to become a permanent resident of Hawai'i after the qualifying event. Therefore, we recommend that the Committee amend this bill to remove the duration requirements on page 7, lines 17-18 and page 8, lines 1-3, of the bill.

We are happy to work with you on amending the bill to address these issues.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

JOSH GREEN M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION

Ka 'Oihana 'Auhau

P.O. BOX 259

HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

PHONE NO: (808) 587-1540

FAX NO: (808) 587-1560

TESTIMONY OF
GARY S. SUGANUMA, DIRECTOR OF TAXATION

TESTIMONY ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

S.B. No. 491, Relating to Housing.

BEFORE THE:

Senate Committee on Housing

DATE: Thursday, January 30, 2025

TIME: 1:10 p.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 225

Chair Chang, Vice-Chair Hashimoto, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Taxation (DOTAX) offers the following comments regarding S.B. 491 for your consideration.

Section 6 of S.B. 491 amends section 247-3, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), to exempt from conveyance tax any property with a county owned deed restriction according to the new provisions under chapter 201H, HRS, in this bill.

The measure shall take effect on July 1, 2025.

DOTAX requests section 6 take effect on January 1, 2026 to allow for form and instruction changes necessary to implement the proposed conveyance tax exemption.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.

Council Chair
Alice L. Lee

Vice-Chair
Yuki Lei K. Sugimura

Presiding Officer Pro Tempore
Tasha Kama

Councilmembers
Tom Cook
Gabe Johnson
Tamara Paltin
Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez
Shane M. Sinenci
Nohelani U'u-Hodgins




Director of Council Services
David M. Raatz, Jr., Esq.

Deputy Director of Council Services
Richelle K. Kawasaki, Esq.

COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 S. HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.MauiCounty.us

January 29, 2025

TO: The Honorable Stanley Chang, Chair, and
Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Housing

FROM: Alice L. Lee
Council Chair 

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF JANUARY 30, 2025; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB491,
RELATING TO HOUSING**

I **support** this measure to establish an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Financing and Deed Restriction Program under the Hawai'i Housing Finance and Development Corporation.

I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I **support** this measure for the following reasons:

1. By incentivizing the construction of ADUs, this bill increases the number of available housing units, particularly in residential areas where space allows for additional dwellings.
2. The bill places the responsibility on counties to apply for and allocate grant funding to eligible homeowners and homebuyers, allowing for localized decision making that aligns with specific community needs.
3. The deed-restriction component of this bill safeguards housing for local residents by ensuring that ADUs remain accessible to those who live and work in Hawai'i.

Thank you for your consideration.



Hawai'i YIMBY
Honolulu, HI 96814
hawaiiyimby.org
info@hawaiiyimby.org

January 30, 2025

Senate Committee on Housing
Hawai'i State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: SUPPORT for SB 491 - RELATING TO HOUSING

Aloha Chair Chang, Vice Chair Hashimoto, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Hawai'i YIMBY, we are writing in **support of SB 491** which would establish the Additional Dwelling Unit Financing and Deed Restriction Program, funding and allowing counties to purchase voluntary deed restrictions from eligible homeowners and homebuyers. Those eligible may use the funds towards the cost of constructing an ADU. ADUs are an important type of housing that adds gentle density to existing, established neighborhoods. ADUs can house a young professional, a retired grandparent, or many other members of the community. However, many homeowners lack the money to build an ADU, despite having the willingness and space.

We believe in fixing incentives, and this includes creating innovative and targeted incentives. Hawai'i homebuyers continue to struggle to compete with non-Hawai'i buyers both because of lack of funds and a non-dedicated housing stock. This innovative incentive will let counties purchase **voluntary** deed restrictions that require the owner-occupant and/or renters be recently retired from or is a full time employee of a Hawai'i business, with appropriate protections for those experiencing involuntary unemployment or disability. In the long-term, more homeowners would volunteer for the deed restriction and build ADUs. This will create a stock of homes dedicated to those who work and live in Hawai'i.



Hawai'i YIMBY

Honolulu, HI 96814

hawaiiyimby.org

info@hawaiiyimby.org

This alone will not solve the housing crisis, however, it will increase our overall supply of housing. Although small, building ADUs on plots of land that previously only had one unit, increasing the number of units on that same plot to two or three, is a much more efficient and affordable use of space.

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

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

Sincerely,

Damien Waikoloa

Chapter Lead, Hawai'i YIMBY

Edgardo Díaz Vega

Chapter Lead, Hawai'i YIMBY





HAWAII APPLESEED

CENTER FOR LAW & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

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

Support for SB491 – Relating to Housing

Senate Committee on Housing

Wednesday, January 30, 2025 at 1:10PM Conf. Rm. 225 and via Videoconference

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

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in strong support of SB491, which would establish an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Financing and Deed Restriction Program.

This innovative legislation addresses two critical challenges facing our communities: the severe shortage of affordable housing causing an increase in cost burdened households and the subsequent displacement of local families. By providing grants for ADU construction while ensuring long-term affordability through deed restrictions, this bill offers a practical solution that could create immediate housing opportunities while preserving them for Hawaii's workforce. Approximately 56% of households across the state are rent-burdened, that is spending more than 30% of their income on rent¹

Additionally, this bill addresses concerns which were expressed by community members after the passing of Act 39 by providing financial means for our local homeowners to participate in and contribute to addressing our housing shortage as well as making Hawaii a place where residents can remain.

We strongly support this measure for several key reasons:

Addresses Financial Barriers: Estimates for ADU construction in Hawaii is about \$250-\$350 per square foot². Many homeowners who wish to build ADUs to help address our housing crisis face significant financial barriers. The grant program will make it possible for more moderate-income homeowners to participate in creating housing solutions.

Protects Local Workforce: The deed restriction requirements ensuring occupancy by local workers, maintaining employment within the county, demonstrate a thoughtful approach to preserving housing for Hawaii's working families. This helps prevent the conversion of these units to vacation rentals or investment properties and help establish a locals only market.

¹ <https://uhero.hawaii.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/HawaiiHousingFactbook2024.pdf>

²

[https://www.talbuilders.com/adu/#:~:text=How%20Much%20Do%20ADUs%20Cost,to%20\\$350%20per%20square%20foot.](https://www.talbuilders.com/adu/#:~:text=How%20Much%20Do%20ADUs%20Cost,to%20$350%20per%20square%20foot.)



HAWAII APPLESEED

CENTER FOR LAW & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Testimony of the Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
Support for SB491 – Relating to Housing
Senate Committee on Housing
Wednesday, January 30, 2025 at 1:10PM Conf. Rm. 225 and via Videoconference

Creates Sustainable Solutions: The perpetual deed restrictions ensure that these housing units will remain available for local workers and residents for generations to come, creating a lasting legacy of workforce housing that grows over time as more homeowners participate in the program.

Empowers Residents to Actively Contribute: This program enables resident homeowners to play an active role in addressing Hawaii's housing challenges, empowering them to become part of the solution and directly contribute to building a stronger, more sustainable community.

The bill also includes important accountability measures, such as annual reporting requirements and clear qualification criteria for both property owners and tenants. These provisions help ensure the program serves its intended purpose while remaining transparent and accountable to the public.

Aligned with Hawaii Appleseed's mission to promote social and economic justice, **we view this program as an essential tool for tackling Hawaii's housing crisis while helping working families stay rooted in their communities.** By pairing financial assistance with long-term affordability requirements, the program strikes a thoughtful balance that benefits both present and future generations.

We respectfully urge your committee to pass HB491. This legislation represents a significant step forward in creating sustainable, community-based solutions to our housing challenges while protecting opportunities for local working families and establishing a true "locals only" housing market.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

Sincerely,

Arjuna Heim
Director of Housing Policy



OUR MISSION

To support and advance public policies that make Hawai'i affordable for all working families.

OUR VISION

Collaborative, sustainable, and evidence-based public policies that create a diverse and sustainable Hawai'i economy, an abundance of quality job opportunities, and a future where all working families living in Hawai'i can thrive.

BOARD MEMBERS

Jason Fujimoto
Meli James, *Board Chair*
Micah Kāne
Brandon Kurisu
Brad Nicolai
Mike Pietsch
Sunshine Topping

ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Josh Feldman
Brittany Heyd
Alicia Moy
Ed Schultz

Josh Wisch
President & Executive Director

827 Fort Street Mall, 2nd Floor
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HolomuaCollaborative.org

Committee: Senate Committee on Housing
Bill Number: SB 491, Relating to Housing
Hearing Date and Time: January 30, 2025, 01:10pm (Room 225)
Re: Testimony of Holomua Collaborative – Support

Aloha Chair Chang, Vice Chair Hashimoto, and members of the committee:

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony **in support** of SB491, Relating to Housing. This bill would establish and fund the Accessory Dwelling Unit Financing and Deed Restriction Program.

Hawai'i remains in a housing crisis. Skyrocketing home prices leave many local families struggling to secure safe, attainable places to live. The median home price in Hawai'i now exceeds \$800,000—an impossible amount for most residents. As a result, many local families are being forced to leave in search of affordable living options elsewhere. Between July 2022 and July 2023 alone, an average of twelve people left Hawai'i *every day*.¹ More Native Hawaiians now live outside Hawai'i than within it. This is a loss of our culture, traditions, and the essence of what makes Hawai'i home.

In October 2024, a survey² gathering information about the day-to-day financial experience of local workers was released and it suggests this growing crisis has the potential to reach staggering levels. When nearly 1,500 local workers were asked if they may need to move to a less expensive state, only thirty-one percent answered a definitive “no,” while sixty-nine percent said “yes” or “unsure.” And nearly two-thirds of the respondents said the cost of housing was the primary impact on their cost of living in Hawai'i. Each local worker and family we lose to the continent contributes to a loss of our economy, our culture, and our family.

A Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism (DBEDT) study from March 2024 found that Hawai'i needs to grow its housing stock by between 2,482 and 4,112 per year from 2025 to 2035 to meet housing demand.³

The Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Financing and Deed Restriction Program is a voluntary initiative that would create a dedicated housing supply for local residents by

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division Estimates, released on March 14, 2024; and calculations by the Hawai'i State Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism, Hawai'i State Data Center.
https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/census/popestimate/2023/county-pop/2023_daily_est_counties.pdf

² <https://holomuacollective.org/survey/>

³ *Hawaii Housing Demand: 2025-2035*
https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/economic/reports/hawaii_housing_demand_2024_final.pdf

empowering the Counties to purchase perpetual deed restrictions on properties that require occupants to live and work in Hawai'i in return for the construction costs of an ADU. In the face of our state's ongoing housing crisis, this program represents an important investment in building the housing units necessary to meet our housing demands.

We do respectfully request one amendment. As written, Page 4, lines 9-12, of the current draft of SB 491 appears to require the counties to apply to the Hawai'i Housing Finance & Development Corporation (HHFDC) for funding each and every time they purchase a single deed restriction pursuant to this program. Requiring the counties to apply for a funding each time it has successfully negotiated for the purchase of a deed restriction is an additional step that could delay a timely purchase or even prevent an eligible homeowner or homebuyer from choosing to participate in the program. Accordingly, we respectfully request that the bill be amended to provide each county an annual lump sum, as determined by HHFDC, for the county to use when purchasing deed restrictions through the program.

Sincerely,



Joshua Wisch
President & Executive Director



HAWAI'I COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Testimony in Support of SB491, Relating to Housing

From: Micah Kāne, Chief Executive Officer & President - Hawai'i Community Foundation

Re: Support for the Accessory Dwelling Unit Financing and Deed Restriction Program

The Hawai'i Community Foundation (HCF) supports SB 491, which establishes the Accessory Dwelling Unit Financing and Deed Restriction Program. Housing is a priority area within HCF's CHANGE Framework under the "C" sector of Community-Centered Economy. Per UHERO, "median housing costs in Hawaii are more than 2.7 times the national level"¹ and median rents are the highest in the country.² ALICE families are more vulnerable because of our current housing market.

The demand for attainable local housing currently enveloping Hawai'i is at crisis levels. Too many people who do not live or work in Hawai'i are owning and driving up the costs of our housing market, which contributes to a record outmigration of local residents. The agony of this dynamic punctuated by the fact that more Hawaiians now live out of Hawai'i than in Hawai'i.

While efforts to address the housing crisis have shown progress, it is evident that the current perspectives and efforts need to be expanded, and new creative solutions must be adopted. Hyper prioritization of major off-site infrastructure improvements that can effectuate housing, broad-based collaboration and regulatory reform are more critical now than ever.

We support the creation of the Accessory Dwelling Unit Financing and Deed Restriction Program because it represents a new and creative solution. The program envisioned by this bill will simultaneously increase our housing supply while also dedicating units to be used for local workforce housing. Each deed restriction sold under this program is a promise to the community that another home is available for a working family in perpetuity.

Kama'āina want to stay in Hawai'i and SB 491 can open that door and provide that hope. There is universal agreement that locals need more places to call home. Homes must be affordable so residents will be free from the pressure of leaving the island. SB 491 is an innovative solution that contributes to more housing for our community, and HCF is happy to support it.

¹ [UHERO 2023 Hawaii Housing Factbook](#) at page 1.

² [UHERO 2024 Hawaii Housing Factbook](#) at page 6.



TITLE GUARANTY
HAWAII

January 30, 2025

Testimony in support of SB 491, Relating to Housing

Aloha Chair Chang, Vice Chair Hashimoto, and Committee Members,

We write in support of SB 491, Relating to Housing, which would establish the Accessory Dwelling Unit Financing and Deed Restriction Program to place voluntary deed restrictions on homes and accessory dwelling units (ADU) that will be dedicated for local working residents in exchange for the financing the construction of an ADU.

Title Guaranty of Hawai'i is the oldest and largest title company in the state. We have been owned and operated by a kama'aina family since 1896 and we are proud to employ over 250 residents who work in our branches across the state. As an organization that has worked for over a century to help connect local families with housing, we see firsthand the economic shift that is preventing local families from achieving the dream of homeownership.

The Accessory Dwelling Unit Financing and Deed Restriction Program is an innovative proposal to create a new pool of residential real estate that is restricted to local residents while building new housing units. This will enable locals to get into Hawaii's tight housing market by restricting housing stock for local families and promoting a local workforce. This program is offering property sellers and buyers financing for the construction of an ADU on their property in exchange for voluntarily placing a deed restriction on their property that restricts the types of future buyers and/or tenants to Hawai'i residents. The proposal accomplishes this by tying the voluntary deed restriction to residency and work requirements. It enables locals to compete with mainland buyers when buying a home and it also encourage property owners to rent to locals long term instead of leaving homes vacant.

SB 491 is an original solution that invests in our community and in culture, and I hope that you support this effort to keep local residents in Hawai'i.

Sincerely,

Mike B. Pietsch
President and Chief Operating Officer
Title Guaranty of Hawai'i



Statement of
Meli James and Brittany Heyd
Cofounders
Mana Up

SB491, Relating to Housing

Aloha Chair Chang, Vice Chair Hashimoto, and committee members,

We support SB491, which establishes the Accessory Dwelling Unit Financing and Deed Restriction Program to provide voluntary deed restrictions to willing eligible homeowners and homebuyers who agree to limit the use of their property for local working occupants in exchange for funding to help the construction of an accessory dwelling unit (ADU).

Mana Up is a statewide initiative that helps provide entrepreneurs in Hawai'i with the resources and tools to grow their business and scale globally. As these entrepreneurs continue to grow, they also help contribute to our expanding our local economy. As part of our mission, we aim to sustain the local economy through economic diversification, local job creation, community giveback, investment, and a regenerative culture of entrepreneurship – providing a better future for generations to come here in Hawai'i. To keep these types of entrepreneurs in Hawai'i and even expand our entrepreneurial ecosystem, though, these entrepreneurs need a place to live that they can afford.

We repeatedly hear from our entrepreneurs about the difficulty they have in finding attainable housing that provides them the safety and security necessary to focus on their business and family. Local entrepreneurs want to create and expand their business in Hawai'i, but far too often feel that opportunities for housing and business are better on the continent.

Creating a dedicated housing stock for our local workforce will help our families have security as they navigate the difficult economic conditions that face the State. The Accessory Dwelling Unit Financing and Deed Restriction Program incentivizes local homeowners and buyers to voluntarily be a part of the solution to create a permanent dedicated housing stock for local families. Housing is a challenge for everyone, and by coming together, we can find shared solutions that help all the people of Hawai'i.

Sincerely,

Meli James | Cofounder, Mana Up
Brittany Heyd | Cofounder, Mana Up



January 30, 2025

Committee:	Senate Committee on Housing
Bill Number:	SB491, Relating to Housing
Hearing Date and Time:	January 30, 2025, 1:10pm
Re:	Testimony of HPM Building Supply in Support

Dear Chair Chang, Vice Chair Hashimoto, and Committee Members:

I would like to submit this testimony in support of SB491, Relating to Housing. The purpose of SB491 is to create a dedicated local housing market through the establishment of the Accessory Dwelling Unit Financing and Deed Restriction Program.

HPM Building Supply is a 100% employee-owned company serving Hawaii's home improvement market and building industry for over 100 years since 1921. With 18 locations across Hawai'i and Washington State, HPM offers various services and products, including retail stores, building supply and lumber yards, home design centers, drafting and design services, and manufacturing facilities. HPM is dedicated to enhancing homes, improving lives, and transforming communities.

A significant portion of our workforce consists of skilled tradespeople like carpenters, electricians, and plumbers, all of whom are integral to the construction process. However, as housing prices rise and rental prices soar, these workers are forced to leave the state in search of more affordable living situations. The result is a shortage of skilled labor in the construction sector, leading to delays and higher costs for homeowners and developers alike. The Accessory Dwelling Unit Financing and Deed Restriction Program offers a solution to this by ensuring that local workers have a place to live in the same communities where they work.

SB491's approach—creating deed-restricted housing and constructing accessory dwelling units dedicated to local working residents—will help stabilize the housing market by giving local workers a fighting chance in a competitive market in which wealthier non-residents often have an advantage. With more local residents able to afford homes and stay in the state we will have a stronger, more sustainable construction industry that benefits everyone, from homeowners to contractors and beyond.

I ask for your support of SB491, as it provides the foundation for a more robust, locally employed, and efficient building industry that will meet the needs of Hawaii's growing population.

Sincerely,

Jason Fujimoto
Chairman & CEO





Testimony in Support of SB 491, Relating to Housing

Aloha Chair Chang, Vice Chair Hashimoto, and members of the Committee,

We write in strong support of SB 491 which will establish the Accessory Dwelling Unit Financing and Deed Restriction Program allowing interested homeowners and homebuyers to voluntarily sell a deed restriction on their property that limit the occupancy of the property to our local workforce.

aio is a locally owned company with holdings across a broad range of industries. Our companies are purpose-driven and firmly rooted in local values. At aio, Hawai'i is at our core, and through our products and services, we work hard to make Hawai'i a better place for future generations.

Hawai'i is in the midst of a housing crisis. Our employees are our greatest asset, and we want to ensure that they have access to quality and attainable housing. This program is a good first step at establishing a housing market that is dedicated to local working families rather than out-of-state purchasers.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 491.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Brandon H. Kurisu'.

Brandon Kurisu
aio Family of Companies





**Testimony to
House Committee on Housing
January 30, 2025
1:10 PM
Conference Room 225 & VIA videoconference
Hawaii State Capitol
SB 491**

Aloha Chair Chang, Vice Chair Hashimoto, and members of the Committee,

We write in support of SB491. This bill will increase our housing supply for local working families in Hawai'i.

Established in 1904, Hawai'i Gas serves over 70,000 customers on all islands through its utility pipeline infrastructure and propane business, all of whom depend on the company for sustainable, reliable, and affordable gas for water heating, cooking, drying, and other commercial and industrial applications. The company employs some 350 professionals, over 75% of whom are under collective bargaining.

The stability of our local workforce is directly tied to the ability of local families to live and work in Hawai'i. Housing instability has a direct impact on the workforce's ability to remain in the state and to continue supporting the essential infrastructure that allows businesses like ours to thrive and serve the public.

Our company relies on a dedicated workforce of technicians, engineers, and support staff who ensure that the gas services we provide are safe, reliable, and accessible to all residents. However, the rising cost of housing makes it increasingly difficult for these essential workers to remain in the state. The Accessory Dwelling Unit Financing and Deed Restriction Program offers a meaningful solution by ensuring that local families can secure housing in their communities through deed restricted housing and the construction of accessory dwelling units, thereby providing a stable and skilled workforce that is essential to industries like ours.

HB 740 addresses long-term workforce sustainability, ensuring that employees who work in critical infrastructure sectors like energy can stay in Hawai'i and continue their work without the constant threat of displacement. It is a smart, forward-thinking solution that will benefit all sectors of our economy.

We urge you to support SB491, as it represents an investment in Hawaii's workforce, infrastructure, and long-term prosperity.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

TORI RICHARD

January 30, 2025

Aloha Chair Chang, Vice Chair Hashimoto, and members of the Committee,

We write in support of SB 491 and the creation of the Accessory Dwelling Unit Financing and Deed Restriction Program.

Tori Richard has manufactured in Honolulu nearly 70 years, and we continue to proudly do so today. As a long-time medium-sized Hawai'i employer, we recognize the challenge high housing costs pose to everyone working to make ends meet in Hawai'i.

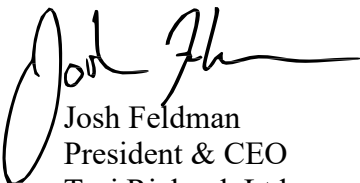
Our business is deeply committed to supporting Hawaii's local workforce, but the growing housing crisis makes it increasingly difficult for our employees to remain in the islands. Attainable housing is key to keeping talented, creative people in Hawai'i, and this bill offers a much-needed solution to that challenge.

Many of our employees are struggling to find attainable places to live. As their employer, I see firsthand the impact this has on their lives. When workers are forced to move away or leave the state altogether, it hurts our ability to operate and expand. The Accessory Dwelling Unit Financing and Deed Restriction Program ensures that local workers, like those in the fashion, manufacturing, and retail industries, have a place to call home. This stability will allow them to continue contributing to Hawai'i's vibrant economy and support local businesses.

Moreover, as a company that takes pride in being part of the local community, we understand the importance of preserving Hawaii's unique cultural identity. The housing crisis threatens that identity, as local residents are pushed out by non-resident investors and wealthy buyers. SB 491 will help reverse this trend by providing a steady supply of attainable homes dedicated to local residents through the building of accessory dwelling units and restriction of homes for use by our local residents, ensuring that our workforce and community remain strong and diverse.

I urge you to support SB 491, as it is essential to the future of our business and the local economy. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Josh Feldman
President & CEO
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January 30, 2025

The Honorable Stanley Chang, Chair

Senate Committee on Housing

State Capitol, Conference Room 225 & Videoconference

RE: Senate Bill 491, Relating to Housing

HEARING: Thursday, January 30, 2025, at 1:10 p.m.

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

My name is Lyndsey Garcia, Director of Advocacy, testifying on behalf of the Hawai'i Association of REALTORS® ("HAR"), the voice of real estate in Hawaii and its over 10,000 members. HAR provides **comments** on Senate Bill 491, which establishes the Accessory Dwelling Unit Financing and Deed Restriction Program to allocate funds to the counties to provide grants to eligible homeowners or homebuyers to finance construction costs, development costs, and non-reoccurring closing costs associated with the construction of an accessory dwelling unit and purchase deed restrictions on such property.

Hawai'i REALTORS® supports the creation of accessory dwelling units to help increase the supply of housing and help address Hawaii's housing challenges. We do however have concerns that the deed restrictions contained in this measure are in perpetuity. Having deed restrictions on a property in perpetuity can be problematic especially in land use planning, as communities can change and uses for a property may need to change as well over time. The Committee may want to consider instead that the deed restriction be amortized over 10 years.

It is also important to note that homeowners can currently choose to sell their property to Hawaii residents. We need to understand the challenges Hawaii residents face in purchasing a home in Hawaii.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

January 30, 2025

TO: Chair Chang and members of the Senate Housing Committee
RE: SB 491 RELATING TO HOUSING.

Dear Chair Chang and Committee Members,

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

We support the establishment of the Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Financing and Deed Restriction program through SB 491.

Local families with existing ADU capacity on their residential lots often lack the capital necessary to gain financing for new housing construction. We need to stimulate ADU construction while generating a new, permanent market of affordable workforce housing for residents.

We support the construction of accessory dwelling units as a strategy for generating more affordable housing across Hawai'i. SB 491 will tangibly operationalize the Accessory Dwelling Unit Act of 2024, known also as Act 39, SLH 2024,

Placing new ADUs under deed restrictions will guarantee that this housing remains workforce housing. As HHF concluded in our sixth policy brief, deed restrictions are an underutilized mechanism for meeting our housing needs.¹

We are grateful for your careful consideration of SB 491.

Thank you,



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



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

¹ Housing Hawai'i's Future. "Policy Brief #6: Deed Restrictions in Maui County." 2024.
<https://www.hawaiiisfuture.org/resources/policy-brief-mau-deed-restrictions>.



MAUI
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
VOICE OF BUSINESS

LATE

**HEARING BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, SENATE CONFERENCE ROOM 225
Thursday, January 30, 2025, 1:10 P.M.**

To The Honorable Senator Stanley Chang, Chair
The Honorable Senator Troy N. Hashimoto, Vice Chair
Members of the committee on Housing

SUPPORT SB491 RELATING TO HOUSING

The Maui Chamber of Commerce wholeheartedly **SUPPORTS SB491** which establishes the Accessory Dwelling Unit Financing and Deed Restriction Program to allocate funds to the counties to provide grants to eligible homeowners or homebuyers to finance construction costs, development costs, and non-reoccurring closing costs associated with the construction of an accessory dwelling unit and purchase deed restrictions on such property.

Housing is a top priority for the Maui Chamber of Commerce and continues to be so as the crisis escalates following the wildfires and it directly impacts businesses and our economic revitalization. Before the wildfires, we needed over 10,000 units by 2025, but that number has only increased as 3% of our housing was lost in Lahaina. This is one of the main factors in the ever-increasing pricing of housing.

This is another excellent tool in the toolbox for housing.

For these reasons, we **SUPPORT SB491**.

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.