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Statement of DEAN MINAKAMI

Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation
Before the

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

February 04, 2025 at 1:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Room 225

In consideration of
S.B. 511
RELATING TO HOUSING.

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

HHFDC has comments on SB 511, which clarifies that approval for certain housing projects seeking exemptions from planning and development laws and rules shall be granted by the appropriate county legislative body, rather than the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation (HHFDC). It also requires HHFDC to work in conjunction with the counties to ensure state-approved affordable housing developments conform to county general plans and growth policies.

HHFDC supports efforts to streamline legislative body and ministerial approvals to expedite the development of critically needed affordable housing. The purpose of Section 201H-38, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is to expedite affordable housing development by providing an alternative to the zoning and development plan amendment process, which can take years.

Section 201H-38 specifically requires that the corporation must find that housing projects are consistent with the purpose and intent of Chapter 201H, and that the project meets minimum requirements of health and safety. As such, HHFDC's role must be more than an evaluator and the corporation must have the ability to exercise discretion when evaluating applications. We agree that the counties are the final approver for 201H-38 projects.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

SB-511

Submitted on: 1/31/2025 4:40:25 PM

Testimony for HOU on 2/4/2025 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Seth Kamemoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I believe this will help collaboration between HHFDC and the relevant county, and will allow the counties to be involved earlier in the process and more throughout the process. Currently, 201H projects can move quite far (and propose any and all exemptions under the sun) in isolation before even being seen by the counties. And the current timeframe leaves almost no time for the counties to provide constructive input: it ends up being a "take it or leave it" proposition, which isn't fair to the public.