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STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
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ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT

WRITTEN ONLY
TESTIMONY BY LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON WAYS AND MEANS AND JUDICIARY
ON
SENATE BILL NO. 534, S.D. 1

**February 26, 2025
10:05 a.m.
Room 211 and Videoconference**

RELATING TO THE HAWAII COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

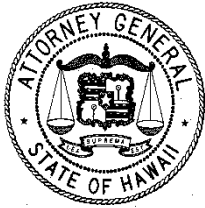
Senate Bill (S.B.) No. 534, S.D. 1, establishes three new sections to Chapter 206E, HRS, to allow the Hawai'i Community Development Authority (HCDA) to approve residential development on certain parcels of land in the Kaka'ako Makai area within their Kaka'ako Community Development District (KCDD): 1) establish a 400-foot height limit on residential developments situated on a subset of the parcels, only if they are owned by the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA); 2) require any residential development approved by HCDA on the subset of the parcels to allocate at least 50% plus one unit of the residential units to households with income at or below 140% of the area median income, with priority given to individuals who are essential workers working within a five-mile radius of the Kaka'ako Makai area; 3) allow OHA to determine a Kaka'ako Makai association fee to be collected from all residents, tenants, and lessees within the Kaka'ako Makai area; and 4) create a subaccount within OHA's special fund, to deposit the aforementioned fees and to fund various services and projects for the

Kaka'ako Makai area. S.B. No. 534, S.D. 1, also amends Sections 206E-12 and 206E-31.5, HRS, to exempt the new residential developments from HCDA dedication rules and statutory prohibitions related to KCDD.

B&F notes that it is uncertain which OHA special fund is being referenced in Section 2 of this bill if any currently exists.

Furthermore, as a matter of general policy, B&F does not support the creation of any special fund or special fund subaccount that does not meet the requirements of Section 37-52.3, HRS. Special funds should: 1) serve a need as demonstrated by the purpose, scope of work, and an explanation why the program cannot be implemented successfully under the general fund appropriation process; 2) reflect a clear nexus between the benefits sought and charges made upon the users or beneficiaries or a clear link between the program and the sources of revenue; 3) provide an appropriate means of financing for the program or activity; and 4) demonstrate the capacity to be financially self-sustaining. Regarding S.B. No. 534, S.D. 1, it is difficult to determine whether the proposed special fund subaccount would be self-sustaining.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.



**WRITTEN 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. 534, S.D. 1, RELATING TO THE HAWAII COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY.

BEFORE THE:

SENATE COMMITTEES ON JUDICIARY AND ON WAYS AND MEANS

DATE: Wednesday, February 26, 2025 **TIME:** 10:05 a.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 211

TESTIFIER(S): **WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY.**

(For more information, contact Kevin C. Tongg,
Deputy Attorney General, at (808) 586-1180)

Chairs Rhoads and Dela Cruz and Members of the Committees:

The Department of the Attorney General (Department) provides the following comments because the Department has concerns that this bill could be challenged as (1) special legislation in violation of article XI, section 5, of the Hawai'i State Constitution, and (2) authorizing an illegal tax in violation of article VIII, section 3, of the Hawai'i State Constitution.

This bill: (1) authorizes the Hawai'i Community Development Authority (Authority) to approve a developer's plan or proposal for a residential development on any parcel in that portion of the Kakaako community development district makai of Ala Moana Boulevard and between Kewalo basin and the foreign trade zone if certain findings are made; (2) raises the building height limit to four hundred feet and increases the maximum floor area ratio to 10.0 for residential development on the parcels bounded by Ala Moana Boulevard, Ilalo Street, Ward Avenue, and Forrest Avenue; (3) requires any residential development approved by the Authority on the parcels bounded by Ala Moana Boulevard, Ilalo Street, and Forrest Avenue to allocate at least fifty percent plus one unit of the residential units in the development for affordable housing in perpetuity with priority given to essential workers within a five-mile radius of Kakaako makai; (4) limits the sale of residential units developed in certain residential developments to prospective owner-occupants; (5) requires the Office of Hawaiian

Affairs (OHA) to determine a Kakaako makai association fee to be deposited into a special account in an OHA special fund, to fund various public services and projects; and (6) exempts those parcels identified in (1) above from the requirement to dedicate public facilities of land or facilities, or cash payments, as a condition of development.

Article XI, section 5, of the Hawai'i State Constitution requires the State to legislate over its lands or lands under its control through general laws as opposed to special laws. An unconstitutional special law regulates specific parcels of land rather than land generally. Haw. Att'y Gen. Op. No. 2007-2. The reason behind this constitutional provision is to protect against the dangers inherent in special legislation intended to favor a specific individual, class, or entity. See Sierra Club v. Department of Transportation of State of Hawai'i, 120 Hawai'i 181, 231 (2009).

As currently drafted, this bill appears to be a special law because it proposes to increase the building height limit and maximum floor area ratio on specifically identified parcels of state land, and requires residential developments on specifically identified parcels of state land to allocate at least fifty percent plus one unit of the residential units in the development for affordable housing in perpetuity with priority given to essential workers within a five-mile radius of Kakaako makai. To address this constitutional concern, we suggest amending this bill as follows:

1. Delete paragraph (2) on page 7, lines 11-12;
2. Delete paragraph (3) on page 7, line 13, to page 8, line 2;
3. Renumber paragraph (4) on page 8, lines 3-5, and paragraph (5) on page 8, lines 6-9, to paragraphs (2) and (3), respectively;
4. Replace the title of the new section 206E-A proposed by section 2 of this bill on page 8, lines 13-15, with: "**Kakaako residential development procedure; public hearing; disclosures; nuisance mitigation.**";
5. Delete section 206E-A(e) on page 10, line 16, to page 11, line 2;
6. Delete section 206E-A(g) on page 11, line 14, to page 12, line 5; and
7. Reletter the subsections in section 206E-A as appropriate.

We also have concerns that this bill may improperly delegate the Legislature's taxing power to the executive branch in violation of article VIII, section 3, of the Hawai'i State Constitution, and the separation of powers doctrine. Article VIII, section 3, of the

Hawai'i State Constitution provides that "[t]he taxing power shall be reserved to the State, except so much thereof as may be delegated by the legislature to the political subdivisions[.]" The taxing power is a legislative power, and "[t]he executive branch is left only with the power to administer and enforce the state's tax laws, not to levy new taxes." Hawaii Insurers Council v. Lingle, 120 Hawai'i 51, 70 (2008) (citing McCandless v. Campbell, 20 Haw. 411, 417 (Haw. Terr. 1911)). The separation of powers doctrine is not expressly set forth in any single constitutional provision, but Hawaii's government is divided and allocated among three co-equal branches. Id. at 69-70 (quotations and citations omitted). A department may not exercise powers that were not constitutionally granted, unless powers are properly incidental to the department's performance of constitutionally granted powers. Id. at 70.

As currently drafted, this bill requires OHA to determine a "Kakaako makai association fee" in section 206E-B on page 12, lines 12-15. The Hawai'i Supreme Court adopted two separate tests to determine whether a law is a fee or a tax. To determine whether a charge is a service fee, the court analyzes whether the charge (1) applies to the direct beneficiary of a particular service, (2) is allocated directly to defraying the costs of providing the service, and (3) is reasonably proportionate to the benefit received. State v. Medeiros, 89 Hawai'i 361, 367 (1999). To determine whether a charge is a regulatory fee, the court analyzes whether (1) a regulatory agency assesses the fee, (2) the agency places the money in a special fund, and (3) the money is not used for a general purpose but rather to defray the expenses generated in specialized investigations and studies, for the hiring of professional and expert services and the acquisition of the equipment needed for the operations provided by law for the payor. Hawaii Insurers Council v. Lingle, 120 Hawai'i 51, 65-66 (2008). If the charge is neither a service or regulatory fee, then it is a tax.

Applying the above tests to the "Kakaako makai association fee" in section 206E-B on page 12, lines 12-15, it could be subject to challenge on the grounds that it is neither a service fee nor a regulatory fee, but instead a tax. As discussed above, the taxing power must be exercised by the Legislature, and cannot be delegated except to counties, which exercise subordinate legislative powers. The executive branch cannot be left with the discretion to fix the rate of tax, to determine the method of taxation, or to

adjust its apportionment among the taxpayers. To address this constitutional concern, and to address an inadvertent reference to the Authority on page 13, line 6, we suggest amending this bill as follows:

1. Replace the title and text for section 206E-B on page 12, lines 12-15, with:

"§206E-B Kakaako makai fee. The office of Hawaiian affairs shall determine and assess a Kakaako makai service fee in accordance with applicable law.";

and

2. Replace the text for section 206E-C on page 12, line 16, to page 13, line 7, with:

"§206E-C Kakaako makai special account. Fees collected pursuant to section 206E-B shall be deposited into a special account for the office of Hawaiian affairs. Moneys from the special account shall be used to fund various public services and projects for the Kakaako community development district makai of Ala Moana Boulevard and between Kewalo Basin and the foreign trade zone, including the Kewalo Basin area, as determined by the office of Hawaiian affairs in accordance with applicable law. Disbursements from the special account shall be made in accordance with procedures adopted by the office of Hawaiian affairs and approved by the director of finance."

One of the purposes of this bill is to authorize the Authority to approve residential development in that portion of the Kakaako community development district makai of Ala Moana Boulevard and between Kewalo basin and the foreign trade zone if certain findings are made. Currently, paragraph (2) of section 206E-31.5, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) prohibits residential development in Kakaako makai. Instead of repealing paragraph (2) of section 206E-31.5, HRS, this bill proposes to create an exception to the general rule (i.e., the prohibition against residential development) that encompasses the entirety of the general rule. Section 206E-A(a) makes the prohibition against residential development unnecessary in paragraph (2) of section 206E-31.5, HRS. To make this bill clearer, we recommend the following amendments:

1. On page 14, lines 4-5, delete from section 206E-31.5 the proposed new wording, "and except as provided in section 206E-A(a),"; and
2. At page 14, lines 18-21, repeal paragraph (2) of section 206E-31.5 in its entirety, and make other appropriate amendments as follows:

"§206E-31.5 Prohibitions. Anything contained in this chapter to the contrary notwithstanding, the authority is prohibited from[:

~~(1) Selling]~~ selling or otherwise assigning the fee simple interest in any lands in the Kakaako community development district to which the authority in its corporate capacity holds title, except with respect to:

~~[(A)]~~ (1) Utility easements;

~~[(B)]~~ (2) Remnants as defined in section 171-52;

~~[(C)]~~ (3) Grants to any state or county department or agency;

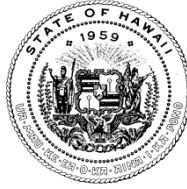
~~[(D)]~~ (4) Private entities for purposes of any easement, roadway, or infrastructure improvements; or

~~[(E)]~~ (5) Reserved housing as defined in section 206E-101[; or

~~(2) Approving any plan or proposal for any residential development in that portion of the Kakaako community development district makai of Ala Moana boulevard and between Kewalo Basin and the foreign trade zone]."~~

Finally, we recommend clarifying the relationship between the definition of "owner-occupant" on page 12, lines 10-11, with the Authority's reserved housing rules. The definition of "owner-occupant" in this bill adopts the definition in section 514B-95, HRS, that requires the owner-occupant to reside in the residential unit for only three hundred sixty-five consecutive days, whereas the Authority's recent reserved and workforce housing rules require an owner-occupant to reside in the residential unit for ten years. We suggest amending this bill by adding to the end of the sentence at page 12, line 11: ", provided that this definition shall not control over the authority's applicable reserved and workforce housing rules."

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION | KA 'OIHANA ALAKAU
869 PUNCHBOWL STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-5097

February 26, 2025
10:05 A.M.
State Capitol, Room 211

S.B. 534, SD1
RELATING TO THE HAWAII COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Senate Committees on Judiciary & Ways and Means

The Department of Transportation (DOT) offers comments on SB 534, SD1, which proposes raising the building height limit for two of the six parcels owned by the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) in the Kakaako Makai area to four hundred feet.

The OHA Kakaako Makai parcels are located within four miles of Daniel K. Inouye International Airport (DKI) and are directly beneath the aircraft approach and departure slopes for the airport. Notably, the parcel identified as Tax Map Key (1) 2-1-015:061 lies within a protected airspace zone essential for flight safety and operations. Under the Federal Aviation Regulation, Part 77, structural heights in this area are restricted to less than 355 feet above mean sea level. Similarly, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, Chapter 262, Airports Zoning Act, reinforces these height limitations to safeguard aviation operations.

Additionally, it is important to note that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) requires the completion of FAA Form 7460-1, Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration, for any construction or alterations exceeding 200 feet. This process is critical for FAA review to assess the potential impacts of such structures on aviation safety and operations. With an average of 27,000 monthly operations at DKI, any decision to raise height limits could have significant ramifications for flight safety, operational efficiency, and the community.

Future developments on these parcels should also consider the potential for single-event noise from aircraft operations, as well as possible exposure to fumes, smoke, vibrations, odors, and other effects of regular airport activities.

In closing, DOT strongly advises that all developments within five miles of state airports review the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development's [Technical Assistance Memorandum](#) for guidance on compliance with regulatory requirements. Developers must be prepared to address the concerns outlined above and obtain all necessary permits to ensure their projects align with federal and state regulations.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB534 WITH COMMENTS

Relating to the Hawai'i Community Development Authority

Senate Committee on Judiciary
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

February 26, 2025

10:05 a.m.

Room 211

Aloha e Chairs Rhoads and Dela Cruz, Vice Chairs Gabbard and Moriwaki, and Members of the Senate Committees on Judiciary and Ways and Means

Mahalo for hearing SB534_HD1, which is one of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs' (OHA's) 2025 Legislative Priorities. OHA appreciates the time dedicated to considering this important bill which provides an innovative approach to addressing the State's housing crisis while also fulfilling the terms of the historic 2012 settlement between the State and OHA by unlocking the full development value of the Kaka'ako Makai lands. OHA submits this testimony in **SUPPORT of SB534_HD1**, and respectfully requests that the Committee adopt the amendments proposed below.

Overview of SB534 HD1

OHA's Kaka'ako Makai workforce development bill offers an innovative solution to addressing the housing crisis in urban Honolulu by prioritizing the development of **affordable, owner-occupant, workforce-focused housing**. This initiative aims to provide essential housing options for Hawai'i's critical workforce, including educators, healthcare professionals, law enforcement personnel, hospitality workers, civil service employees, and construction industry workers—individuals who form the backbone of the state's economy and community services. At the same time, OHA remains committed to ensuring continued public access and use of Kaka'ako Makai. See map. The bill sets forth both a commitment to fair, community-centered development of Kaka'ako Makai, and a development template for ensuring that those who serve us can afford to live and thrive in the communities where they work.

The proposed development of Kaka'ako Makai also **presents a unique opportunity to invest in a Hawaiian cultural center and other important OHA initiatives** funded by revenue generated from market sales of residential units, as well as mixed-use and commercial income. The cultural center that OHA plans to construct here would serve as a vibrant hub for public education, community engagement, and the perpetuation of

Native Hawaiian traditions and practices. By integrating this cultural cornerstone into the development, OHA can advance its core mission of improving the lives of Native Hawaiians, while ensuring that the community benefits of the project extend beyond the families who will directly benefit from moving into affordable workforce housing units set aside under the terms of the bill. **See SB534_HD1, § 2 (reserving 50% +1 unit for workers making at or below 140% of the area median income).**

The Need for SB534_HD1

As detailed in a recent study published by the Economic Research Organization at the University of Hawai'i (UHERO), as of 2023, only one in five local households across the State (20%) could afford a mortgage on the median-priced single-family home.¹ Among renters, 56% of households are rent-burdened (spending more than 30% of their income on rent) while 28% are severely rent-burdened (spending more than half their income on rent).² In other words, home ownership is outside the reach of the vast majority of local residents, and the majority of renters are burdened or severely burdened by market rate rental prices.

“The consequences of unaffordable housing continue to show up in out-migration, homelessness, and more families being priced out of the local market.”³ For example, in 2022, more than 67,000 former Hawai'i residents moved to other states, with the high-cost of housing identified in surveys as a leading cause of out-migration.⁴ During the same post-Covid time-period, Hawai'i rose to number four on the list of states with the highest rates of homelessness,⁵ a tragic distinction that does not reflect the long-standing value of our community to help those in need.

On the island of O'ahu, the median single family home has increased to \$1,030,000 (second to Maui where the median single family home is priced at \$1,050,000), and the median condominium price has increased to \$566,805.⁶ As detailed in the UHERO Report case-study looking at The Central condominium project in Ala Moana, construction of a single new condominium unit **that is sold to a local resident** can help up to four families “upgrade” to better living conditions as previously occupied

¹ Tyndall, J., Bond-Smith, D., Inafuku, R., Rhinebolt, V., Wood, C., & Kim, E. (2024). *The Hawai'i Housing Factbook 2024*. University of Hawaii Economic Research Organization (UHERO), p. 1, <http://uhero.hawaii.edu> (hereinafter “UHERO Report”).

² UHERO Report at p. 7.

³ UHERO Report at p. 1.

⁴ UHERO Report at 7.

⁵ UHERO Report at 7

⁶ UHERO Report at 3.

condominium units open.⁷ **Therefore, owner-occupant developments prioritizing local workers such as that proposed in SB534 have positive ripple effects for housing throughout the community.**

Proposed Amendments

a. Definition of Owner Occupant Proposed HRS §206E-A(3)(d)(2)(i)

In line with the purpose of this bill—to provide affordable housing for Hawai'i's essential workers living in and serving the citizens of this State—OHA would like to amend the proposed definition of owner-occupant, which as written incorporates the definition used in HRS Chapter 514B. See HRS § 514B-95 (defining an owner occupant as living in the unit for 365 consecutive days). Instead, OHA proposes to adopt the definition currently found in the Hawai'i Community Development Authority (HCDA) rules specifying that an owner-occupant of an affordable housing unit will live there for ten years, subject to certain exceptions spelled out in the rules. See Hawai'i Administrative Rules (HAR) § 15-218-35. Because any proposed residential development will generally remain subject to the HCDA Rules, there is no further amendment needed other than to delete proposed sub-section 206E-A(3)(d)(2)(i) from the bill.

b. Hazard Mitigation Requirements Proposed HRS § 206E-A(3)(c)(3)

In the last Committee hearings, proposed language was added specifying that any application for residential development in Kaka'ako Makai must include:

Documentation from the department of health verifying that the applicant has **adequately removed or capped any hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants** present on a parcel pursuant to chapter 128D and any rules that the department of health has adopted thereunder.

SB534_SD1, p. 10 at lines 4-9 (emphasis added).

OHA appreciates the intent of this amendment and remains committed to environmental remediation. However, the proposed language on environmental hazard mitigation is overly specific, as it limits remediation methods to "removal or capping," which is more restrictive than what existing Department of Health statutes and regulations allow. For example, on-site remediation may be appropriate in some cases, along with other state-of-the-art cleanup methods that continue to evolve. To ensure flexibility while maintaining environmental safeguards, OHA suggests amending the language to read:

Documentation from the department of health verifying that the applicant has adequately ~~removed or capped~~ addressed or treated any hazardous substances,

⁷ UHHERO Report at pp.10-13.

pollutants, or contaminants s present on a parcel pursuant to chapter 128D and any rules that the department of health has adopted thereunder.

(proposed deletion in strike through addition underlined).

Mahalo nui for your consideration of this testimony. SB534_HD1 aligns with OHA's primary mission to improve the conditions of Native Hawaiians while also addressing the ongoing affordable housing shortage in our community. We look forward to partnering with the Legislature on this and other important initiatives to improve life in Hawai'i nei in the years ahead.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 9:09:59 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| John & Rita Shockley | Testifying for Free Access Coalition | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha!

Once again, after many past attempts of OHA to skirt established law prohibiting residential high-rise condos in Kaka'ako Makai, we have SB534 asking for zoning variance.

There are many reasons to NOT support SB534 that have been mentioned in the past including: Destruction of the last open coast in Honolulu, ecological issues regarding deep piling construction under a former dump site, opening the door for other hi-rise builders to flood the area creating another "Waikiki."

Follow the money. Members of the OHA board are Real Estate salespeople. When condo and other business real estate sales come up, they will take the 6% profit on this potential billion dollar development. "Affordable condos" are not really affordable to local working people no matter what OHA claims. The key to their development is the "market price" hi-rise units that will be right on the shoreline. Where will the OHA profits go? See if any of the Hawaiians at Waimanalo, Papakolea, Waianae and even the outer islands will see anything from this illegal project.

Please shelf SB534 and hope that OHA will act responsibly with their ceded land without hi-rise residential condo building structures.

Mahalo for your time.



Re: SB534 – Relating to the Hawaii Community Development Authority

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee on Ways and Means, and Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Committee on Judiciary,

On behalf of the Prince Kuhio Hawaiian Civic Club, I respectfully submit our strong **SUPPORT** for SB534, a bill that allows for residential development on select parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, raises building height limits, and mandates that a portion of the units be reserved for households within specified income levels. This legislation offers a progressive solution to the ongoing housing crisis in urban Honolulu, particularly by prioritizing the development of affordable, owner-occupant workforce housing in Kaka‘ako Makai.

SB534 is designed to help the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) realize the full value of the parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai that were acquired through the 2012 settlement agreement. Previous restrictions on residential development and height limits have hindered progress in this area. By focusing on affordable housing for essential workers—such as educators, healthcare professionals, law enforcement, hospitality workers, civil servants, and construction workers—SB534 directly addresses a critical need in our community, while also ensuring public access to and use of Kaka‘ako Makai.

The need for affordable housing in Hawai‘i is urgent. According to a recent report by the Economic Research Organization at the University of Hawai‘i (UHERO), homeownership is unattainable for most local residents, with only 20% of households able to afford the median-priced single-family home. Over half of renters are also rent-burdened, spending more than 30% of their income on rent. These issues contribute to outmigration and homelessness, with Hawai‘i now ranking among the top states for homelessness, largely due to escalating housing costs. SB534’s focus on developing affordable workforce housing in Kaka‘ako Makai offers a solution to these critical issues. This bill also aligns with OHA’s long-standing commitment to ensuring that the development of these parcels benefits not just Native Hawaiians, but all of Hawai‘i. OHA has consistently worked to improve the lives of Native Hawaiians, and this bill will facilitate the creation of housing that is both affordable and accessible for those who serve our communities.

In addition to housing, the proposed Kaka‘ako Makai development presents a unique opportunity to invest in a Hawaiian cultural center and other OHA initiatives. This center will serve as a hub for public education and community engagement, promoting Native Hawaiian traditions and

practices. By incorporating culture into this development, the project will have a lasting impact beyond those directly benefiting from affordable housing, ensuring the preservation and promotion of Hawaiian heritage.

By allocating 50% + 1 of the residential units for individuals earning at or below 140% of the area median income, SB534 ensures that housing remains affordable for those who need it most, especially the workforce that is the backbone of Hawai'i's economy. Furthermore, the development at Kaka'ako Makai will generate revenue to support additional programs, grants, and services benefiting the Native Hawaiian community and all residents of Hawai'i.

We strongly urge your committee to support SB534 as a vital step toward addressing the affordable housing crisis, while promoting economic opportunity, cultural preservation, and community well-being for all residents of Hawai'i. The benefits of this initiative will be far-reaching, extending not only to Native Hawaiians but to everyone in our community who depends on affordable housing to thrive.

Founded in 1964, the Prince Kuhio Hawaiian Civic Club (PKHCC) was established to promote the education and social welfare of people of Hawaiian ancestry. Its objectives include supporting high ethical standards in business, industry, and professional fields.

PKHCC urges the committee to pass SB534. Mahalo for your attention and consideration.

Me ke aloha,

Norman Llanos
Pelekikena
president@pkhcc.org



February 26, 2025

TESTIMONY OF THE ASSOCIATION OF HAWAIIAN CIVIC CLUBS
To the Senate Committees on Judiciary and Ways and Means

**SB 534 SD1 - RELATING TO THE HAWAII COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
AUTHORITY**

Aloha Chair Rhoads, Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees:

The Association of Hawaiian Civic Club **supports** SB 534, SD 1, which allows for the approval of residential development on certain parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, raises building height limits, requires a portion of the units built on these parcels to be made available to households of certain income levels, and requires an association fee be collected from certain residents, tenants, and lessees of these parcels and deposited into a Kaka‘ako Makai sub-account of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs Special Fund.

This bill will support the Office of Hawaiian Affairs in realizing the full value of the parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai that it acquired during the settlement agreement in 2012. The existing prohibitions against residential development and the height restrictions have prevented this in the past. By allowing the residential development in Kaka‘ako Makai, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs will be able to better serve its constituents while also creating needed housing units for people of Hawai‘i.

The Association of Hawaiian Civic Clubs has a long-standing track record of advocating for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and other Native Hawaiian trusts, in its efforts to manage trust assets on behalf of beneficiaries. Over the past 15 years, our organization has adopted dozens of resolutions at our annual conventions to this end. We believe this measure will lead to great future opportunities for those served by the Office of Hawaiian Affairs.

We appreciate your favorable consideration of this bill.



UNITED PUBLIC WORKERS

AFSCME Local 646, AFL-CIO

THE SENATE KA 'AHA KENEKOA

THE THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 2025

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY
Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Wednesday, February 26, 2025, 10:05 AM
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

**Re: Testimony on SB534, SD1 – RELATING TO THE HAWAII COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
AUTHORITY**

Chairs Rhoads and Dela Cruz, Vice Chairs Gabbard and Moriwaki, and Members of the
Committees:

The United Public Workers, AFSCME Local 646, AFL-CIO ("UPW") is the exclusive bargaining representative for approximately 14,000 public employees, which includes blue collar, non-supervisory employees in Bargaining Unit 1 and institutional, health, and correctional employees in Bargaining Unit 10, in the State of Hawaii and various counties. Additionally, UPW also represents approximately 1,500 members in the private sector.

UPW supports SB534, SD1, which clarifies the process by which the Hawaii Community Development Authority may approve residential development on certain parcels of Kakaako Makai. Additionally, this measure requires a certain percentage of the residential units developed on certain parcels to be allocated to households at or below a certain income level in perpetuity, with priority given to certain essential workforce in the area and limits the sale of residential units developed in certain residential developments to prospective owner-occupants.

For many years, Hawaii has had the distinction of having the highest cost of living in the U.S., based in part on the average price of food, utility, and transportation costs. However, it is

HEADQUARTERS

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HAWAII

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KAUAI

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Toll Free - Molokai/Lanai only

widely known that the high cost of housing, particularly in urban Honolulu, is the most substantial cost for working families and has become a significant financial burden for hard-working local residents who want to remain in Hawaii.

By allocating more than 50% of residential units to households with income at or below 140% of the area median income, limiting the sale of residential units to prospective owner-occupants, and prioritizing the housing needs of Oahu's essential workforce, we believe the development of Kakaako Makai could provide some of our members with a path to homeownership in urban Honolulu.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify in support of this measure.

HEADQUARTERS

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HAWAII

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Toll Free - *Molokai/Lanai only*



February 24, 2025

To: Chair Senator Donavan Dela Cruz
Chair Senator Karl Rhoads
Members

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB 534

My name is Ron Iwami, President of Friends of Kewalo.

I would like to open with we are not against residential development nor are we against OHA, but when anyone attempts to change a landmark law that has been protecting this last open public oceanfront land on the South Shore of Oahu, under the guise of being environmentally safe and feasible to build, and under the guise of being affordable, that is not Pono.

To elaborate, this law has been protecting this special land for 19 years and was passed by the legislature unanimously except one, showing the strong public sentiment for this land. Public Policy was established for this land. This strong public sentiment still remains today because everyone I have asked if they would like to see more highrises in Kaka'ako Makai, everyone said NO, we have enough already mauka with more coming. Ask yourself that.

An urban planner told me that KM is unsafe to build being on toxic brownfields and unstable filled land to support 400 ft towers. KM was underwater and the shoreline was Ala Moana Blvd. Imagine that... He said there will be tremendous construction costs to remediate the land and make the structures safe. He predicted that the units would all have to be sold at multi-million dollar prices with No Affordable in order to pencil out.

Friends Of Kewalo would like to require OHA to take a pause to complete a full EIS by a neutral contractor and a full feasibility study before they even think of changing the law.

HCDA is currently moving ahead to organize a series of Community Outreach sessions to see what the public wants for KM.

The righteous thing to do is we all take a pause and let this process play out and see what the People want. After all, you all took an oath to listen to the People and make decisions accordingly. Its been going on 13 years since OHA got the land, and nothing has been done. What is one more year.

Back in 2005/2006, when this public land was to be sold to Alexander and Baldwin to build residential highrises, when the People were saving this land, OHA was standing with us with the Stewardship mindset WE and FOREVER. Now after becoming owners of the land they now stand with the Ownership mindset of ME and NOW.

Former Governor George Ariyoshi said it well,
He says “ HCDA asked, how can we put this land to use now? The People asked what do we want from this land in perpetuity? The People asked the better question with the realization that when the land is developed, other potentials are gone.”

Friends of Kewalo and I have been protecting this land for 20 years. Ask me why? Simply put, **we protect what we love...** What's at stake should the Residential ban be repealed? With OHA's nine parcels and Kamehameha School's four parcels, there is the potential to build **thirteen** 400 ft residential highrises. The flood gates will open and we have another Wakiki in the making. It's too late for Waikiki, but not too late for Kaka'ako Makai. Think about that for a moment before you cast your vote.

We need to think beyond the “Making of a Quick Buck.” In 10 years, the money will be gone. The residential towers, if allowed to be built, will drastically change the landscape of the area and will alter public access to the ocean. It is a no brainer that land by the ocean should be for the People and not for private residences. True riches of the land come when you can provide for the People year after year, generation after generation in perpetuity. That is how we all THRIVE...

Mahalo for this opportunity to share our mana'o.
I am open and available to talk more about solutions.

Ron Iwami
Friends of Kewalo, President
Non Profit 501 C-3
808 222- 6645
Email: Ronald@kewalo.org

Protecting Open Spaces for Hawaii's Future Generations

*To Protect, Preserve, and Malama Kewalo Basin Park and the surrounding shoreline
and ocean to ensure that the recreational user will continue to have access
and the ability to enjoy the area for future generations to come.*

www.friendsofkewalos.org



1200 Ala Kapuna Street • Honolulu, Hawai'i 96819
Tel: (808) 833-2711 • Fax: (808) 839-7106 • Web: www.hsta.org

Osa Tui, Jr.
President

Logan Okita
Vice President

Cheney Kaku
Secretary-Treasurer

Ann Mahi
Executive Director

**TESTIMONY TO THE HAWAI'I SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND SENATE COMMITTEE
ON WAYS AND MEANS**

Item: SB 534, SD1 – Relating to the Hawai'i Community Development Authority

Position: Support

Hearing: Wednesday, February 26, 2025, 10:05 am, Room 211

Submitter: Osa Tui, Jr., President - Hawai'i State Teachers Association

Dear Chairs Rhoads and Dela Cruz, Vice Chairs Gabbard and Moriwaki and members of the committees,

The Hawai'i State Teachers Association (HSTA) supports SB 534, SD1 which recognizes the critical need for workforce housing in the urban core of Honolulu, particularly for educators. The bill's provision to prioritize essential workers, including teachers, for the workforce housing developed on certain parcels of land in Kaka'ako Makai is commendable.

The high cost of living in Hawai'i, with housing costs being 2.7 times the national average, has made it increasingly difficult for many essential workers, including teachers, to afford to live in the communities they serve. This has resulted in a severe teacher shortage, as many educators are forced to leave the profession or the state due to the unaffordable housing market.

The development of affordable housing in Kaka'ako Makai, with priority given to essential workers, would be a significant step towards addressing the teacher shortage and ensuring that our keiki have access to a quality education. The proximity of this housing to schools and other essential services in the urban core would make it an ideal location for teachers and their families.

The HSTA urges the passage of SB 534, SD1 which helps provide solutions to the affordable housing crisis in Hawai'i. The future of our education system and the well-being of our communities depend on it.

Mahalo.



The Committee on Judiciary
&
The Committee on Ways and Means
February 26, 2025
Room 211
10:05 AM

RE: SB 534, Relating to the Hawaii Community Development Authority

Attention: Chairs Karl Rhoads and Donovan Dela Cruz, Vice Chairs Mike Gabbard and Sharon Moriwaki, and Members of the Committees

The University of Hawaii Professional Assembly (UHPA), the exclusive bargaining representative for all University of Hawai'i faculty members across Hawai'i's statewide 10-campus system, **supports SB 534, SD 1**, relating to the Hawaii Community Development Authority.

SB 534, SD 1, prioritizes affordable housing for six essential industries, including education. Through the prioritization of workforce housing, more hardworking University of Hawaii Faculty will have an opportunity to reside within Urban Honolulu, close to multiple UH campuses.

UHPA supports and requests the passage of SB 534, SD 1.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. L. Fern'.

Christian L. Fern
Executive Director
University of Hawaii Professional Assembly



Randy Perreira
President

HAWAII STATE AFL-CIO

888 Mililani Street, Suite 501 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Telephone: (808) 597-1441
Fax: (808) 593-2149

The Thirty-Third Legislature
The Senate
Committee on Ways and Means
Committee on Judiciary

Testimony by
Hawaii State AFL-CIO

February 26, 2025

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB534 SD1 - RELATING TO THE HAWAII COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Chairs Dela Cruz and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Moriwaki and Gabbard, and members of the Committees:

The Hawaii State AFL-CIO is a state federation of 76 affiliate labor organizations representing over 69,000 union members in Hawaii. The AFL-CIO serves its affiliates by advocating for the rights of working families, promoting fair wages, ensuring safe working conditions, and supporting policies that strengthen Hawaii's workforce.

The Hawaii State AFL-CIO supports SB534 SD1, which allows residential development in the Kakaako Makai area and prioritizes affordable housing for essential workers. Expanding housing access for Hawaii's workforce is a critical step in addressing affordability challenges and ensuring families can continue to live and work in Hawaii.

This measure provides a pathway to strengthen Hawaii's economy and retain workers by creating housing opportunities for those who are essential to our communities.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Randy Perreira", is written over a faint, larger version of the same signature.

Randy Perreira
President



HAWAII GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES ASSOCIATION

AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO

RANDY PERREIRA, Executive Director • Tel: 808.543.0011 • Fax: 808.528.0922

The Thirty-Third Legislature, State of Hawaii
The Senate
Committee on Judiciary
Committee on Ways and Means

Testimony by
Hawaii Government Employees Association

February 26, 2025

S.B. 534, S.D. 1 — RELATING TO THE HAWAII COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
AUTHORITY.

The Hawaii Government Employees Association, AFSCME Local 152, AFL-CIO supports the concept of S.B. 534, S.D. 1, which requires a certain percentage of the residential units developed on certain parcels to be allocated to households at or below a certain income level, with priority given to certain essential workforce in the area.

The HGEA represents many employees within healthcare, education, law enforcement, and in general, thousands of civil servants that would be prioritize if this housing development were to move forward because they work within Downtown Honolulu and the Civic Center. Many of our members struggle with existing rent or mortgage, and we recognize the need for the development of more thoughtful affordable workforce housing. Reports indicate that our state's workforce has a 24% vacancy rate and 30% of our state's current workforce is eligible to retire in the next five years. Therefore, the state and counties must develop modern and attractive benefits to recruit and retain the next generation of public employees. We believe workforce housing can serve as one of many tools to help accomplish this.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of S.B. 534, S.D. 1.

Respectfully submitted,

Randy Perreira
Executive Director

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 7:57:00 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Jamie | Testifying for Friends of kewalo | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB534, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai‘i. The passage of SB534 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

1. Failure to Complete a Proper Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The proposed development in Kaka‘ako Makai lacks a comprehensive and updated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that considers the full extent of harm to the area’s ecosystem, coastal integrity, and climate resiliency. Given the increasing threats of rising sea levels and shoreline erosion, pushing forward without due diligence disregards the long-term consequences of commercial residential expansion in a fragile coastal zone. Without an updated, independent EIS, this project represents reckless development that prioritizes short-term economic gains over the environmental and cultural sustainability of Hawai‘i.

2. The Delusion of Affordable Housing in Honolulu

Proponents of SB534 argue that it will provide much-needed affordable housing. However, history has shown that “affordable” housing in the Honolulu market is largely unattainable for local families due to inflated income thresholds and market-driven pricing. Previous high-rise developments in urban Honolulu have failed to provide truly affordable units for local residents—instead, they primarily serve out-of-state investors and high-income buyers. The promise of affordability is an illusion, and allowing high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai only deepens the crisis of displacement for Hawai‘i’s people.

3. Protecting the Last Shoreline of Honolulu from Commercial Residential Development

Kaka‘ako Makai is the last undeveloped shoreline in urban Honolulu, a rare and invaluable open space for residents and visitors alike. This land was intended to remain a public asset, providing community access to green space, cultural practices, and ocean recreation. High-rise development would permanently privatize and commercialize one of the last pieces of Honolulu’s coastline, restricting access for local families and severing the deep cultural and ancestral connection that Native Hawaiians have with the land and ocean. Once lost to concrete and steel, this shoreline cannot be reclaimed.

Conclusion

SB534 is not in the best interest of Hawai‘i, its people, or its cultural legacy. By neglecting environmental responsibility, perpetuating false promises of affordability, and threatening the last remaining shoreline of Honolulu, this bill prioritizes profits over people. Kaka‘ako Makai should be preserved as a public and cultural resource, not handed over to developers under the guise of housing that will not truly serve local residents.

I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Jamie Lasconia



Kamehameha Schools®

Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Senate Committee on Judiciary

Time: 10:05 a.m.

Date: February 26, 2025

Where: Conference Room 211

TESTIMONY

By: Kā'eo Duarte

Vice President, 'Āina Pauahi

RE: SB534, SD1, Relating to Hawaii Community Development Authority

Aloha e nā Luna Ho'omalua Dela Cruz, Rhoads, nā Hope Luna Ho'omalua Moriwaki, Gabbard, a me nā Lālā o nā Kōmike.

Kamehameha Schools appreciates this opportunity to **support** SB534, SD1.

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) is critically important to the advancement of our Native Hawaiian families, culture, and lāhui and to the well-being of our State. For its success, OHA relies, in large part, on the State fulfilling its long-standing trust obligations to Native Hawaiians and continuing its ongoing public policy of recognizing and uplifting Native Hawaiian well-being, self-determination, self-governance, and sovereignty. SB534, SD1 addresses these obligations and aligns with this public policy.

The intention of SB534, SD1 enables OHA with the means to better serve Hawai'i's workforce, which includes many Native Hawaiian individuals and families. We support this good intention, which uplifts our communities and helps to ensure the perpetuation of our culture.

At Kamehameha Schools, we work to advance our Native Hawaiian people through education, and we are committed to working with community partners, organizations and State leaders in our collective efforts to empower and elevate the well-being of our lāhui.

Kamehameha Schools owns lands that would be covered by SB534, SD1 and at this time, Kamehameha Schools has no plans for the development of our parcels.

Founded in 1887 by the legacy of Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop, Kamehameha Schools (KS) is a private, educational, charitable trust committed to improving the capability and well-being of Native Hawaiian people through education. KS envisions a thriving lāhui where learners, grounded in Christian and Hawaiian values, grow into 'ōiwi leaders who inspire and contribute to their communities, both locally and globally.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 2:52:27 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Audrey Lee | Testifying for Malama Moana | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

WE STRONGLY OPPOSE SB534 SD1:

1. The purpose of passing this bill is to overturn an existing law which has protected Kaka'ako Makai for two decades from development and those who don't care about the land and its people. Once this protection is taken away, all current plans of what could be done with the land will dissolve. Before OHA was given this land, they fought to keep this very area free from development along with the groups and individuals still opposing that development today.

2. SB534 has been and continues to be painted as an answer to affordable housing for the local Hawaiian community. It is specifically mentioning those in the medical, education, fire, and police workforces making less than 140% of the average median income of the Kaka'ako area. The affordable prices for that area are about \$200,000 less than market prices, but still high for incomes in the workforce. To say this bill is giving priority to workforce housing may sound like a nice idea, but taking the incomes of those in the workforce into consideration, it is really a hardship rather than a solution.

3. The current perspective of SB534 SD1 is to give more control to OHA and remove HCDA from as much control as possible. The Committees that passed this bill to this point are "encouraging" OHA to utilize HCDA's knowledge and information that has been worked on over many years for the Kaka'ako Makai area. What I have heard from the Public Meetings and Hearings from OHA is that they do not want to do so. So, more control for OHA is questionable and probably more costly.

4. If the environmental concerns about the land itself before building anything residential is important, wouldn't that have been the first thing to check on before changing a law protecting the land? All this pomp and circumstance about changing the law, but no legitimate study such as an environmental assessment or impact statement preceding the change? If I were going to have my family live on land that might or might not be toxic, I would want to check on that first even if it were free. So, being a steward of the Hawaiian people, I know I would definitely want to know that it was absolutely safe for anyone to live there before making plans for them to give their life savings and entire income to live there. I heard representatives from OHA say at a public hearing about Kaka'ako Makai and Kaka'ako Mauka land, "If they passed those environmental tests, we will, too." I think this is a significant misconception, but better to hear that from a geological scientist than me.

As much as we would like OHA to access the monies it was entitled to from the State, we feel overturning the law protecting Kaka'ako Makai is not the solution. Affordable housing can be built in other areas that are not occupied with landfills and shallow grounds. Please do not use SB534 SD1 or related bills to feel better about the State getting OHA to take the land years ago. **THERE IS A WAY, BUT THIS IS NOT IT.**

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 3:14:59 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Philip Kitamura | Testifying for Ka Ike Mau Loa O Ke Kai Hohonu | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Philip Kitamura. I am the vice president of Ka Ike Mau Loa O Ke Kai Hohonu. I'm writing to oppose this bill relating to the Kaka'ako Makai development with concerns for additional leaching of the brownfield into the water. Kaka'ako Makai was built over a dump, and construction of 400ft residential buildings would severely disturb that brownfield.

Right on the water of Kaka'ako Makai sits Point Panic. Point Panic is the world's bodysurfing bodysurfing break and Oahu's bodysurfing ONLY reef break. I've been bodysurfing at Panics for over 10 years and running the bodysurfing competitions there for a few of those through Kai Hohonu. The bodysurfing community deserves a guarantee with a pilot EIS before any large development is made on the land.

The community already maintains our section of the park because we take care what little we have. We are in constant conflict with surfers despite the bodysurfing only laws. Don't open the Pandora's box onto the community without the right homework from KS/OHA to put the community at ease.



Iron Workers Stabilization Fund

T. George Paris
Managing Director

February 26, 2025

10:05 AM

Senate Committee on Ways and Means and Judiciary
CR211 & Videoconference.

Re: Support for SB534 SD1-relating to the Hawaii Community Development Authority

Aloha Chair Delacruz, Chair Rhoads, Vice-Chairs, Hashimoto and members of the Committee on Ways and Means and Judiciary

The Ironworkers Stabilization Fund stands in **strong support** of SB534 SD1 with its current intent, which addresses the critical issue of affordable housing in Hawai'i. This legislation takes a multi-pronged approach to increase the availability of housing for essential workers. SB534 SD1 would empower the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) to develop its lands for workforce housing and mixed development.

In the 2024 survey by Asset Limited Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) reported an alarming 180,000 residents are currently considering relocating elsewhere for financial relief. This significant exodus has detrimentally impacted our workforce and significantly impacted all working families in Hawaii.

This is a crucial step towards addressing the housing needs of Hawai'i's residents and ensuring that OHA's lands are utilized to benefit the community and also fund programs for the advancement of native Hawaiians and **to keep our local families home.**

I urge this committee to pass SB534 SD1 without delay. This legislation represents a balanced and comprehensive approach to addressing the housing crisis in Hawai'i while ensuring the sustainable development of the Kakaako Makai area.

Sincerely,
T. George Paris
Managing Director



**HAWAII COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

547 Queen Street, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Telephone: (808) 594-0300 Fax: (808) 587-0299
Web site: <http://dbedt.hawaii.gov/hcda/>

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR

STERLING HIGA
CHAIRPERSON

CRAIG K. NAKAMOTO
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Statement of
CRAIG K. NAKAMOTO
Executive Director
Hawai'i Community Development Authority
before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
and the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY
February 26, 2025
10:05 AM
Room 211 & Videoconference

In consideration of
S.B. 534, S.D. 1
RELATING TO THE HAWAII COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY.

Chairpersons Dela Cruz and Rhoads, Vice Chairpersons Moriwaki and Gabbard and members of the Committees.

The Hawai'i Community Development Authority (HCDA) respectfully offers both general and specific comments on S.B. 534, S.D. 1, for the committee's consideration.

Summary of the Bill's Major Provisions

- (i) Mandates residential land use for the Makai area. Allows the authority to approve residential development in the Makai area if the authority finds that the residential development is reasonable and consistent with the rules and policies of the Kakaako community development district, as shown in Figure 1 below [Page 8, Lines 13 to 21];
- (ii) Applicant and HCDA Hearings. Requires an applicant, for development, to conduct community outreach and hearings prior to any contested case hearing held by HCDA pursuant to Chapter 206E, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), and applicable rules [Page 9, Lines 4 to 15];
- (iii) Increases the Height Limit to 400 Feet and Floor Area Ratio (FAR) to 10.0. Legislatively directs that development on OHA-owned parcels between Ala Moana Boulevard, Ilalo Street, Ward Avenue, and Forrest

Avenue be restricted to a height limit of 400 feet and a density of 10.0 FAR¹, as shown in Figure 2 below [Page 10, Lines 16 to 21];

- (iv) Mitigation Plan. Requires applicants for residential development to submit a mitigation plan and provide notice of nuisances associated with the development [Page 9, Lines 16 to 21];
- (v) Workforce Housing on Certain Owned Parcels in the Makai Area. Sets workforce housing requirements in perpetuity for any residential development only on parcels bounded by Ala Moana Boulevard, Ilalo Street, Ward Avenue, and Forrest Avenue, as shown in Figure 3 below. The requirements include:
 - a. 50% plus one housing units targeted to buyers earning no more than 140% of the area median income;
 - b. Priority to essential workers in certain industries who work within five miles of Kaka'ako Makai;
 - c. Allows exemptions under Section 201H rules; and
 - d. Prohibits sales to non-prospective owner-occupants, as defined by §514B-95, HRS [Page 11, Lines 14 to 21 and Page 12, Lines 1 to 11];
- (vi) OHA Association Fees. Establishes a makai association fee to be administered and collected by the OHA [Page 12, Lines 12 to 15];
- (vii) Association Fees Special Account. Establishes a special account to hold such association fees that shall be disbursed according to rules and procedures adopted by the OHA and approved by the Director of Budget and Finance [Page 12, Line 16]; and
- (viii) Exempts all Residential Developments in the Makai Area from Dedication Fees. Exempts residential developments approved pursuant to this bill from the HCDA's public facilities dedication fees [Page 13, Lines 6 to 16].

¹The term, "floor area ratio", refers to the ratio of a building's floor area relative to the size of the land upon which the building sits. For example, a FAR of 10.0 means the floor area **could be** as much as ten times larger than the parcel size. The more building floor area, the more units can be built, which is sometimes referred to as "density".



Figure 1: Parcels identified for residential development (in S.B. 534, S.D. 1).



Figure 2: Parcels identified for 400-foot-tall building height limits and increased density of FAR 10.0 (in S.B. 534, S.D. 1).

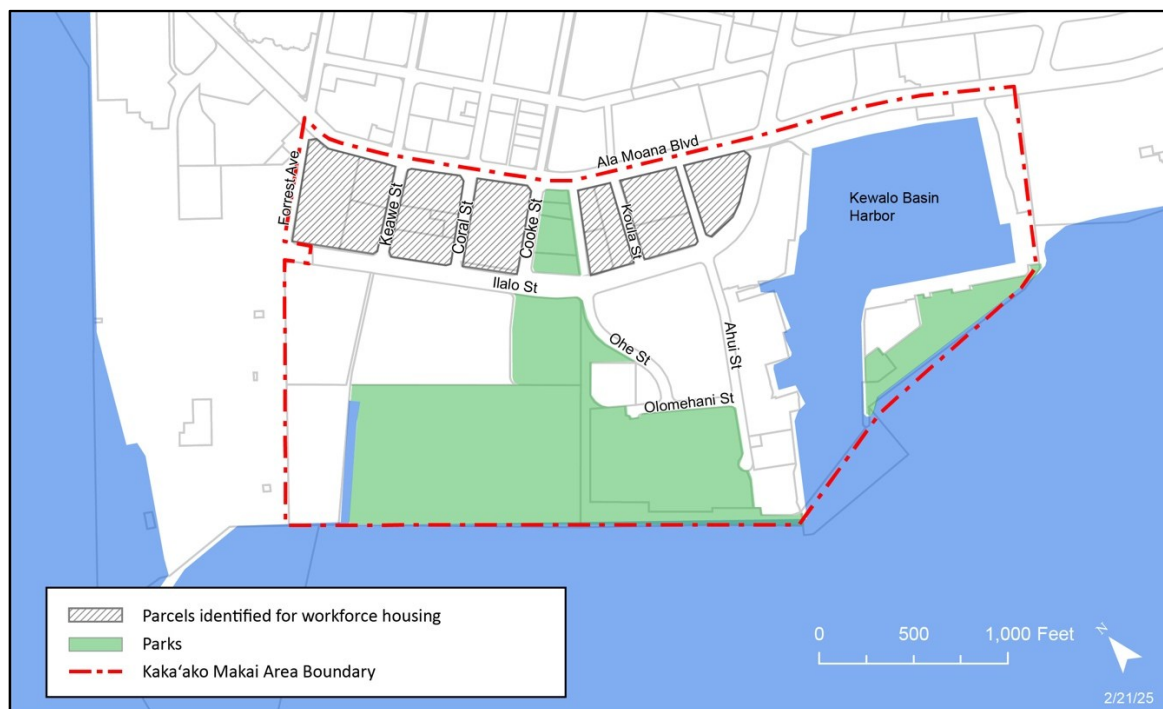


Figure 3: Parcels identified for perpetual workforce housing (in S.B. 534, S.D. 1).

Analysis of Changes in S.D. 1

The changes to Section 2 (Section 206E-A) creates a procedure and process for applicants to follow for residential developments. However, the HCDA reiterates its general comments, as follows, from our testimony submitted for the prior committee hearing.

General Comments

In lieu of a legislatively mandated land use change, increased density to 10.0 FAR, and height change to 400 feet, we suggest that a community planning effort, with community engagement, of the Makai area, led by HCDA, is needed. There are several reasons for undertaking a more fundamental examination of the Makai area, including the following:

(a) Land Ownership. There have been significant changes in land ownership in the Kaka'ako Makai area, including the transfer of lands from HCDA to OHA and the City and County of Honolulu Department of Parks and Recreation. A new, comprehensive community planning effort would be able to recognize the role of these landowners in supporting a wider community vision for Kaka'ako makai.

(b) Residential Uses. The Legislature has expressed interest in revisiting the allowable land uses in Kaka'ako makai, specifically the ban on residential use.

(c) Contaminated Soil Hazards. Environmental hazard remediation plans in order to consider the soil and water contamination hazards under residential development scenarios. Existing environmental hazard management plans only considered mitigation for commercial and industrial uses, since residential development was not allowed. Kaka'ako Makai is built on fill material that includes municipal incinerator ash, construction and household debris, car batteries, and other refuse. Contaminants of concern include PCBs, lead, arsenic, copper, mercury, naphthalene, selenium, TPH-O, benzo(a)pyrene, and others. The environmental remediation measures necessary to allow residential uses on these sites needs to be identified.

(d) Comprehensive Planning. Various development proposals have surfaced without the benefit of comprehensive planning and analyses of infrastructure capacity. Examples of such proposals include a mobility hub on Lot C, a terminal for the proposed interisland seaglider services, hotel accommodations for neighbor island residents visiting the UH Cancer Center, and a south shore multimodal trail. New development in the makai area should be coordinated and planned in a holistic manner and in accordance with a comprehensive plan.

(e) Flood Hazards and Climate Change. A comprehensive analysis to identify sea level rise, climate adaptation, and flood hazard mitigation strategies for the makai area also needs to be undertaken. The current base flood elevations range from 5 to 10 feet above sea level, and the ground floor of residential development parcels will need to be raised to this elevation to make the building eligible for the National Flood Insurance Program. The makai area is also within the current 3.2-foot sea level rise exposure area. Over the long-term, Ala Moana Boulevard and the other streets in Kaka'ako may also need to be raised in order to preserve accessibility and maintain resiliency as the sea level rise becomes a greater issue during the coming years (See Figures 4 and 5 below).



Figure 4: 100-year flood hazard zones (annual 1% chance of occurrence) and base flood elevations in the makai area.



Figure 5: 3.2-foot sea level rise exposure area in the makai area.

(f) Affordability. The economics and long-term affordability and sustainability of affordable residential homes in high-risk waterfront areas may also need to be assessed. In the future, underwriters may be reluctant to issue homeowner insurance policies for residential units in flood zones and sea level rise exposure areas, or they may charge higher premiums. How these factors affect the affordability of housing in these areas should be evaluated.

Specific Comments

Should the committee prefer, instead, to continue to move this bill and without limiting our general comments, we offer the following comments on specific items in the bill for your consideration, as follows:

(1) Development Risks. There seems to be a presumption that residential development will yield maximum income [**Page 4, Lines 13-19**]. Development is risky. Site location, conditions, soil suitability, environmental hazards, and hazard remediation costs add to the risk and cost of development. The feasibility and marketability of OHA's residential, leasehold market and affordable housing product is uncertain, especially if OHA hopes to maximize income. Soil conditions and the presence of hazardous materials in the Makai area, and the cost of climate change adaption could make a 400-foot residential tower and 10.0 FAR in the Makai area infeasible.

(2) Community Planning. To reiterate, land uses in the Makai area, including residential or other uses, should be community driven and not legislatively directed [**Page 8, Lines 13-21**]. It should be noted that when Act 15 (SLH 2012) transferred land in the Makai area from HCDA to OHA, the HCDA was prohibited from approving any plan for residential development in the Makai area. OHA accepted the transfer of land, on an as-is basis, and with the existing HCDA zoning and entitlements and the prohibitions.



Figure 6: Land ownership and proposed residential in the makai area (in S.B.534, SD1).

(3) Building Height and Density Considerations. The bill proposes to direct that building heights be increased from 200 feet to 400 feet and that the density be increased to a FAR of 10.0 for two of parcels owned by OHA, as shown in Figure 6 above [Page 10, Lines 16-21]. The urban form in the Makai Area was intended to be diverse, with a mix of structures rising to levels of 200 feet and stepping down to 65 feet and 45 feet along the waterfront. The current urban form of the height of structures rising to 200 feet and stepping down to 65 and 45 feet along the waterfront follows the same urban form contained in the 2005 Makai Area Plan. The 200-foot height limit was established in consideration of the Makai area being in the vicinity of the airport and the approach of airplanes. It should be noted that when Act 15 (SLH 2012) transferred land in the Makai area from HCDA to OHA, the 200-foot building height limit in the Makai area was applicable. OHA accepted the transfer of land, on an as-is basis, and with the existing HCDA zoning and entitlements, including the 200-foot height limit. The additional height limit and accompanying density to 10.0 FAR needs to be studied, as mentioned above (See Figures 7, 8, and 9 below).



Figure 7: Conceptual rendering showing existing 200-foot building heights and proposed 400-foot building heights on selected parcels.

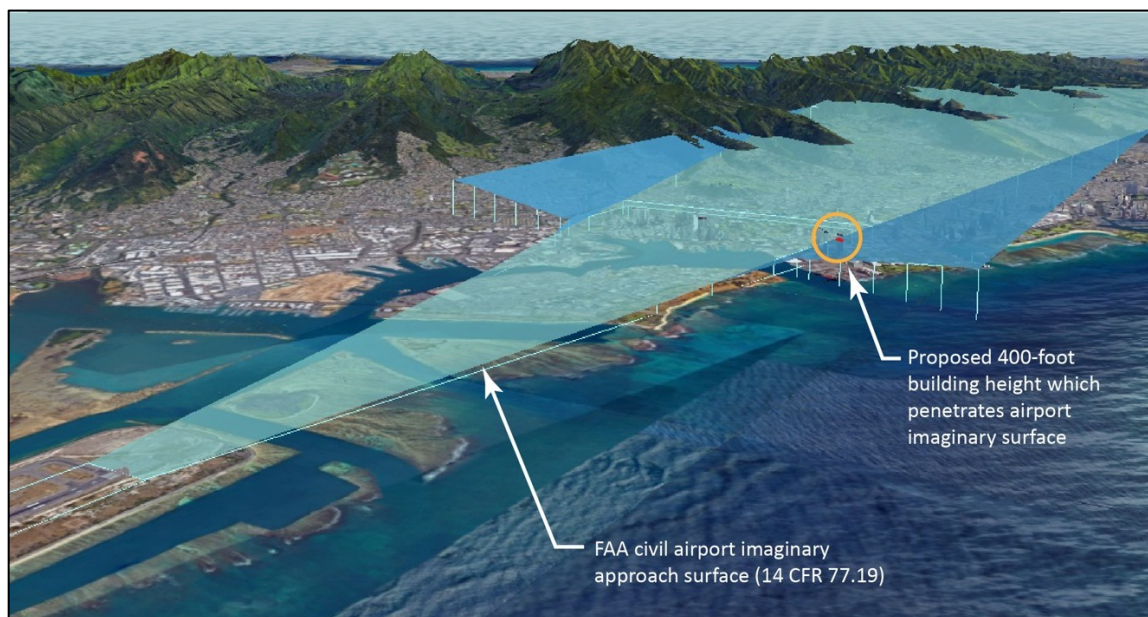


Figure 8: A view from above, showing how the proposed 400-foot building sites in Kaka'ako Makai would penetrate the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) civil airport imaginary surface around the Daniel K. Inouye International Airport, as pursuant to 14 CFR Part 77.



Figure 9: A view looking Diamond Head showing how one of the proposed 400-foot building sites in Kaka’ako Makai would penetrate the FAA civil airport imaginary surface from below, as pursuant to 14 CFR Part 77.

(4) Hearing Requirements. Public hearings held by the HCDA for development permits should continue to be contested case, quasi-judicial hearings as required by law and rules. The bill language appears to require HCDA to hold hearings that are exempt from Chapter 91 **[Page 9, Lines 4-21, to Page 10, Lines 1 to 9]**. The contested case, quasi-judicial hearing is a two-part process that requires a presentation hearing followed by a decision-making hearing. Therefore, we request that such language be clarified that any hearings held by the HCDA shall be contested case, quasi-judicial hearings. On Page 9, Lines 1-2, our suggested changes are as follows (deleted language is crossed out and new language is underlined):

“ . . . provided that approval may be granted only after the ~~[applicant seeking approval]~~ authority conducts public hearings pursuant to subsection (b) and section 206E-5.6. . . . ”

(5) Workforce Housing. The S.D.1 revised the workforce housing requirements such that the income eligibility and occupational priority for these units will apply in perpetuity [**Page 11, Line 19**]. Provisions for qualification, compliance, and enforcement of these restrictions should be clarified, either in the HRS or via separate administrative rules promulgated by HCDA or another agency.²

In our testimony to the subject matter committees, we asked that HCDA-owned parcels not be subject to the 400-foot height limit increase. That change was made, however, the workforce housing requirements should also be revised - since HCDA's reserved housing rules should apply to HCDA parcels - not the requirements requested by the OHA. Thus, we suggest that subsection (g) [**Page 11, Lines 14-21, Page 12, Lines 1-5**] be revised as follows (new language is underlined):

“ (g) Any residential development Ilalo Street (except for the parcels owned by the HCDA) “

(6) Owner-Occupancy-Perpetuity. This section limits the sale of all residential units in Kaka'ako Makai to prospective “owner-occupants”, as such term is defined in Section 514B-95, HRS. That section essentially defines an owner-occupant as a person who lives in their “principal residence” (as defined by the Hawai'i Department of Taxation) for a period of not less than 365 consecutive days. As written, the residential units not subject to the workforce requirements, as shown in Figure 10 below, could be owner-occupied for only the first year after purchase. There is no language to prevent local or foreign investors from purchasing these units. In the prior hearing, OHA agreed to a perpetual owner-occupant requirement, which is not reflected in subsection (i). HCDA's regulated term is currently 10 years. Thus, we suggest that the language in the bill be revised as follows (new language is underlined):

- (i) For the purposes of this section, “owner-occupant” has the same meaning as defined in section 514B-95; provided, however, that this requirement shall not apply to HCDA-owned parcels. [**Page 12, Line 10-11**]

² The “workforce housing” applies only to the parcels bounded by Ala Moana Boulevard, Ilalo Street, and Forrest Avenue. See, **Page 11, Lines 15 to 16**.

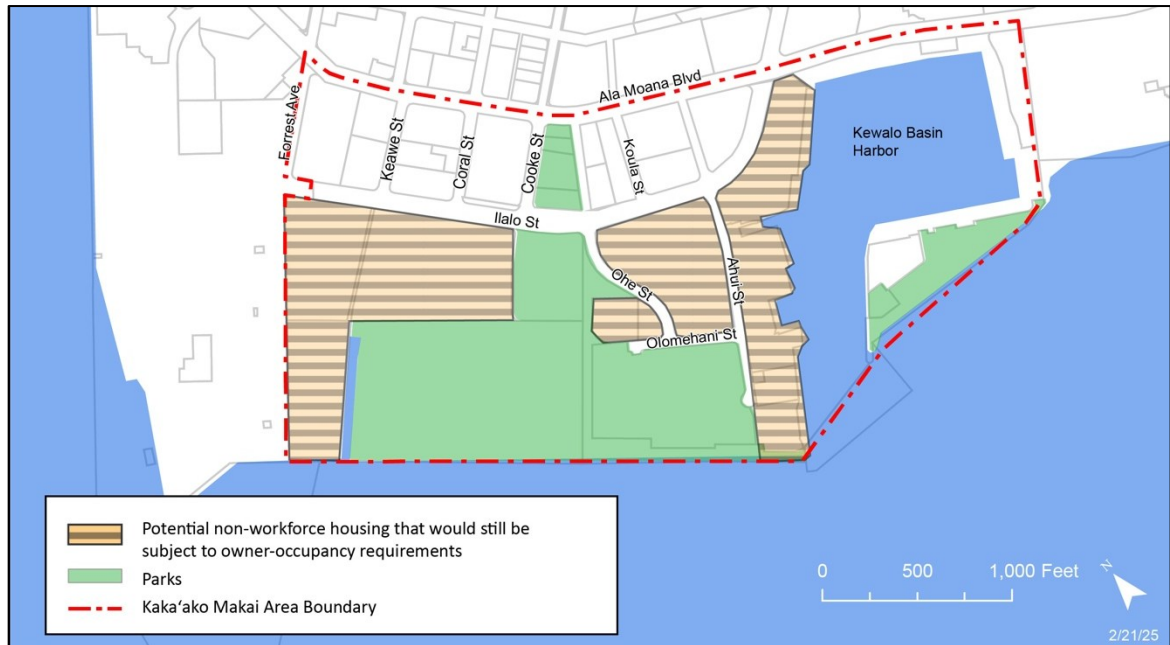


Figure 10: Parcels identified for potential market-rate residential housing that would be subject to owner-occupancy requirements (in S.B. 534, S.D. 1).

(7) Public Facilities Dedication Requirements. The bill proposes that all residential developments in Kaka'ako Makai, including on lands owned by both OHA and private developers, are to be exempted from the HCDA's public facilities dedication requirements [Page 13, Lines 10 to 20]. Development on parcels identified should be required to dedicate public facilities. The purpose of public facilities dedication from a proposed development is to enhance the quality of the public urban environment within the development by requiring parks, public plazas, and community gathering spaces. The HCDA uses these fees to purchase, create, expand, or improve public facilities within the district. These fees are part of the development permit process. Exempting a development from this requirement will result in a less than desired public urban environment for the development as well as the larger Kaka'ako community. Since S.D. 1 now allows the OHA to collect association fees, OHA and its private developers who develop OHA lands, should not be exempt from HCDA's public facilities dedication fees. Private developers should not be exempt from the public facilities dedication fees.

(8) Site conditions. HCDA notes that there are other site conditions and infrastructure needs which may influence the economic viability of different development proposals. There is a 60-inch diameter wastewater force main which currently passes through the parcel along Forrest Avenue that is proposed for a residential tower. In addition, two new 60-inch force mains were recently installed along Ilalo Street. These could present some engineering challenges for large-scale development of this parcel.

In addition to the environmental contamination issues described previously, there are other soil conditions which could present challenges for development. An alluvial channel was previously located through the central portion of the makai area, and the

substrata is relatively poor to average (See Figures 11 and 12 below). These could necessitate deeper, more costly foundations to support taller buildings. In addition, the retaining wall and bulkhead at Fisherman's Wharf (Kewalo Basin along Ilalo Street) was constructed almost 100-years ago and must be replaced. The wharf and revetment along the Ewa side of Kewalo Basin must also be rebuilt (See Figure 13 below). Altogether, these shoreline improvements are estimated to cost around \$100 to \$120 million dollars.

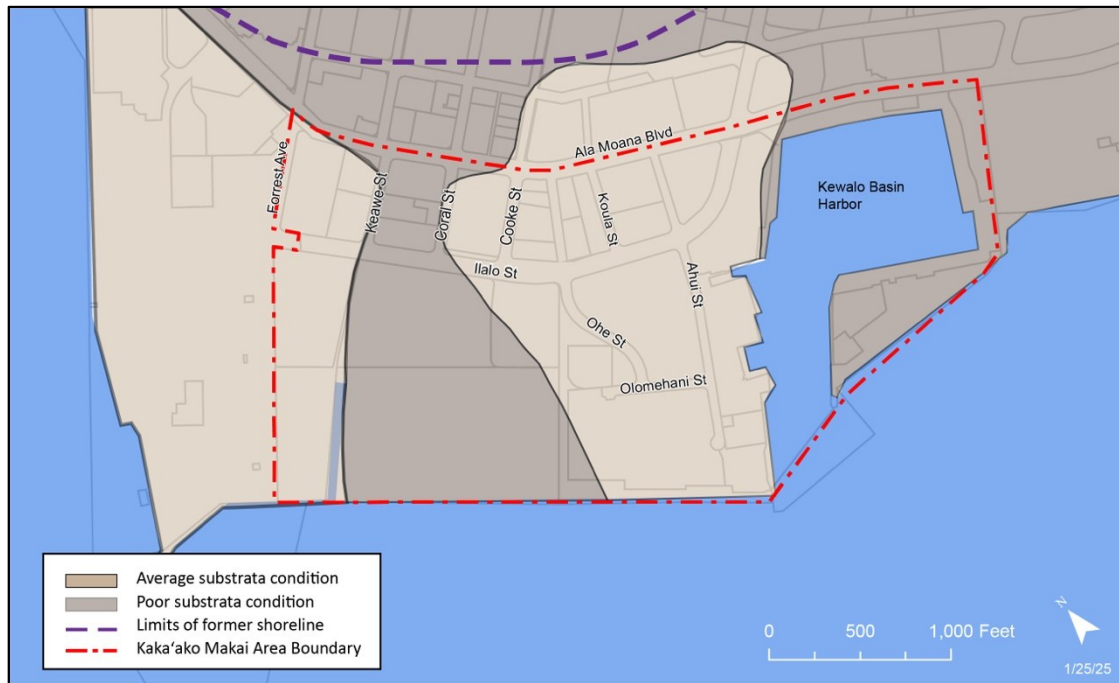


Figure 11: Substrata condition.

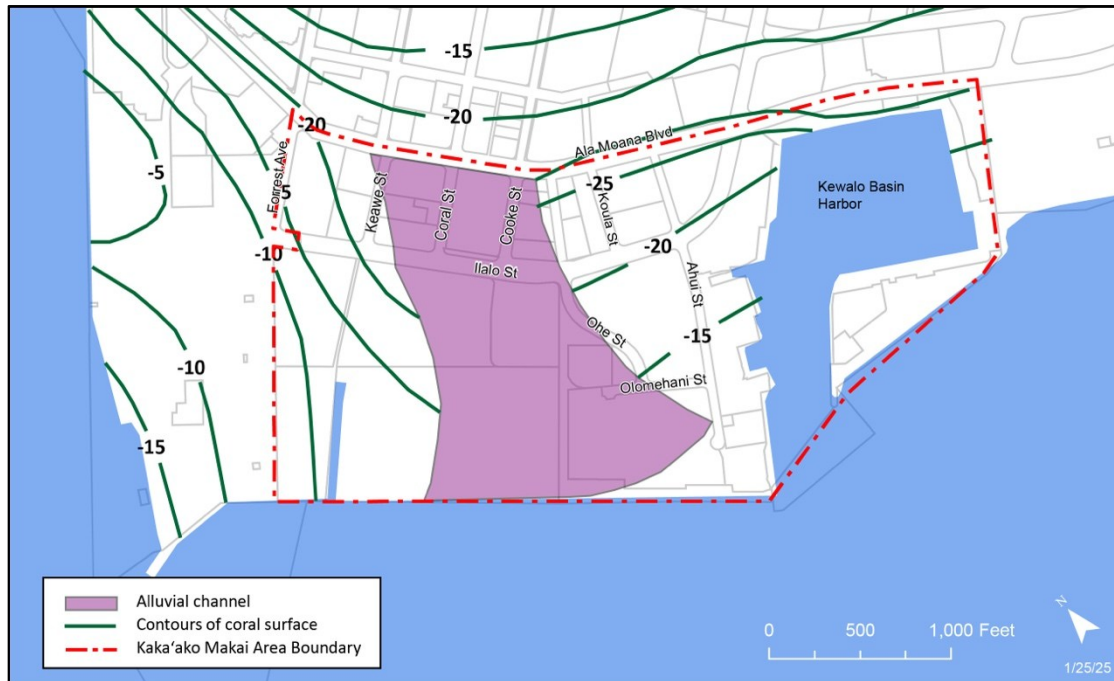


Figure 12: Coral subsurface condition.



Figure 13: View of Kewalo Basin Harbor looking ewa, showing Fisherman's wharf and 100-year-old bulkhead (under wharf) which requires reconstruction.

(9) Transportation. Improvements to Ala Moana Boulevard may be required to accommodate increased development activity in the makai area, such as widening of Ala Moana Boulevard. A tram or people mover may also be needed to connect the makai area with the Skyline rail stations.

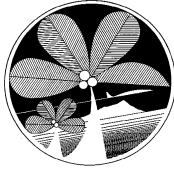
(10) Tsunami Hazards. The makai area is within the tsunami hazard evacuation zone and should be considered in the development of a major residential community (See Figure 14 below).



Figure 14: Tsunami hazard evacuation zones.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

AIRLINES COMMITTEE OF HAWAII



Daniel K. Inouye International Airport
Terminal 1, Third Floor
300 Rodgers Blvd., #62
Honolulu, Hawaii 96819-1832
Phone (808) 838-0011
Fax (808) 838-0231

LATE

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair
Committee on Judiciary

Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Moriwaki, Vice Chair
Committee on Ways and Means

Wednesday, February 26, 2025; 10:05 AM
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

RE: SB 534 SD1 Relating to the Hawaii Community Development Authority - Comments

Aloha Chairs Rhoads and Dela Cruz, Vice Chairs Gabbard and Moriwaki and members of the committees:

The Airlines Committee of Hawaii (ACH), comprised of 20 signatory air carriers that underwrite the State airport system, appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony expressing concerns with a specific provision of SB 534 SD1, which clarifies the process by which the Hawaii Community Development Authority may approve residential development on certain parcels of Kakaako Makai and raises the building height limit and the maximum floor area ratio on certain parcels in the area.


Of particular concern is the 400-foot building height limit in Section 2, Chapter 206E-A (e). Given the different aircraft types, payloads, and destinations, 400-foot structures constructed on Kakaako Makai will have varying impacts to airlines serving Hawaii. For example, it appears that most, if not all flights departing from HNL RWY 08L will not be impacted. On the other hand, flights departing from HNL RWY 08R could be impacted, with certain flights having minimal to no impacts, and others having to impose payload restrictions so severe that it would not be safe and economically feasible to operate the flight.

*ACH members are Air Canada, Air New Zealand, Alaska Airlines, All Nippon Airways/Air Japan, Aloha Air Cargo, American Airlines, China Airlines, Delta Air Lines, Federal Express, Fiji Airways, Hawaiian Airlines, Japan Airlines, Korean Airlines, Philippine Airlines, Qantas Airways, Southwest Airlines, Sun Country Airlines, United Airlines, United Parcel Service, and WestJet.

If you are inclined to pass this measure, the airlines would like to participate in discussions relating to building and crane heights. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

ACH Executive Committee

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'B. Baker'.

Brendan Baker

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'D. Sellers'.

David Sellers

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'E. Loomis'.

Elizabeth Loomis

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Randall Fiertz'.

Randall Fiertz

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Richard Ide'.

Richard Ide



Hawaii's Thousand Friends

335 Hahani Street #342132 * Kailua, HI 96734 * Phone (808) 262-0682 E-Mail: htf3000@gmail.com

LATE

February 26, 2025

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Moriwaki, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair
Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

SB 534 SD1

RELATING TO HAWAII COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Aloha Chairs Dela Cruz and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Moriwaki and Gabbard and Committee members

Hawaii's Thousand Friends, a non-profit organization dedicated to ensuring that appropriate planning, management and land use decisions are made that protect the environment, human health and cultural resources and that decision are made in conformity with the law opposes SB 534 SD1, which seeks to ignore and bypass HCDA's land use planning process by legislating residential development in Kakaako Makai.

It is unfortunate that OHA was offered and accepted an area that is contaminated and was once previously at or below sea level with a coral layer between 5 and 20 feet below mean sea level and is threatened by sea level rise.

Between 1913 and 1927 a seawall was constructed along where Ala Moana Blvd. is now, and artificial "fill" materials were deposited behind the seawall. The fill material consisted of toxic ash from the burning of municipal refuse, unburned refuse, construction debris, household debris, automobile batteries, other miscellaneous refuse and dumped debris.

In 1930, the first of two incinerators was built on the southeast portion of Ahui Street. In the mid 1940's a second incinerator was constructed in the area. From the late 1940's until the 1960's, the land areas seaward of both incinerators were expanded to the south with fill material and ash from the incinerators.

In 1997 the Environmental Protection Agency granted the State Department of Health funds to proceed with a brownfields study of the Kakaako Makai land, which among other things, found that the soil contained total petroleum hydrocarbons of varying carbon ranges, gasoline, diesel, oil, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), semi-volatile organic compounds including polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons, polychlorinated biphenyls, heavy metals, various pesticides and dioxins/furans.

The Environmental Hazard Management Evaluation study found that some of the makai locations contained toxic ash from two waste incinerators that spewed high levels of lead, zinc, dioxins, mercury, silver, copper asbestos and arsenic. These toxins were spread as “fill” contaminating the surface and groundwater. Leaking underground petroleum storage tanks also spread benzene, DDT, and PCBs from discarded transformers in various locations.

Ground disturbances required for pile driving, foundations and other infrastructure on Kakaako Makai could emit hazardous waste, affecting coastal ecosystems and exposing humans to toxins. Direct contact with toxic soil may result in incidental dermal absorption and oral ingestion of Contaminants of Concern (COC).

SB 534 SD1 undermines the planning efforts of HCDA, which was established by the legislature in 1997 to supplement traditional community renewal methods by promoting and coordinating public and private sector community development.

HCDA's mission is to collaborate with private enterprise, public agencies, and community stakeholders to build better communities through planning, collaboration, regulation and infrastructure development.

Such collaboration resulted in HCDA's 2023 Makai Area Plan, which eliminated residential and industrial uses in Makai Area Plan. This zoning change stemmed from recommendations in the 1989 Honolulu Waterfront Master Plan which concluded that the waterfront area would be better utilized as a major recreational, people-oriented activity area with a significant amount of commercial development.

HCDA is following its mandate and mission to establish community development plans in creating Kakaako Community Development District Mauka and Makai Area Plans and Rules. These plans and rules are designed to guide the redevelopment of this former warehouse area into a vibrant pedestrian-oriented urban community. These Plans establish the general redevelopment goals and objectives for each respective area, while the Rules specify regulations.

The basic premise of the Makai Area Plan is that substantial portions of the Makai Area be set aside for public enjoyment and access to the waterfront with parks, educational and cultural facilities, commercial and office uses in Makai would be considered in support of the residential and urban activity in Kakaako Mauka, rather than as a separate community by itself.

The Makai Area Plan will preserve important views of Ala Moana Park, Diamond Head and the mauka/makai corridor along Cooke Street and have an urban form that will be diverse, with a mix of structures.

We urge the committees to hold SB 534 SD1 and not undermine HCDA's Kakaako Makai comprehensive planning process and Plan that provides a vision for the future while protecting human health, the ocean and marine ecosystems.

THE KAKA'AKO MAKAI COMMUNITY PLANNING ADVISORY COUNCIL
TESTIMONY IN STRONG OPPOSITION to SB534

LATE

SB 534 RELATING TO THE HAWAII COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair, Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair, Senator Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

Aloha Senators:

The Kaka'ako Makai Community Planning Advisory Council (CPAC), was established in 2006 by H.C.R 30, which called for a collaborative community working group to develop a Master Plan for Kaka'ako Makai.

Also in 2006, the State Legislature established laws under Chapter 206E-31, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to 1) prohibit residential development in Kaka'ako Makai and 2) prohibit the sale of state land in Kaka'ako..

CPAC became the diverse working group created by HCR30 (2005) that comprised of many members of the public, including Hawaiian Beneficiaries and OHA representatives, that created the Kaka'ako Makai Vision and Guiding Principles and the Kaka'ako Makai Master Plan approved and adopted by the Hawaii Community Development Authority (HCDA) in 2010. In 2023 the HCDA revised the Kaka'ako Makai Area Rules to incorporate the 2010 Kaka'ako Makai Master Plan and its Kaka'ako Makai Vision and Guiding Principles.

Currently, the HCDA is continuing its community outreach to further define the Kaka'ako Makai area rules to begin implementing long delayed development of this important shoreline public recreation area in the best interest of future generations. It will also focus on current issues including; 1) Sea level Rise, 2) Mitigation of hazardous toxic materials and ash from the two former incinerators and the city and county refuse motorcade site fuel storage site and a high voltage transformer disposal site. In 2010 the HCDA covered the Piano Lot that is a Brownfield site with 2" asphalt as a temporary remedial cap. Other Kaka'ako Makai Brownfield sites are capped with 6" of gravel including the Cannery Lot, Former Waste Water Lot and Look Lab site.

From 2006 through today, the issues against residential development in Kaka'ako Makai have remained constant. Kaka'ako Makai remains one of Honolulu's last remaining open recreational shoreline areas. This State public trust land is frequented daily by myriad recreational ocean and park users including surfers, fishermen, divers, picnickers and visitors to the Children's Discovery Center.

The Save Our Kaka'ako Makai community movement focused on preserving open spaces is similar to the preservation of Magic Island in the 1960's, Save Sandy Beach and the Ka'iwi coastline movement, preservation of Kawela Bay and Turtle Bay and the North Shore "Keep the Country Country" movement.

Kaka'ako Makai was originally a shoreline fishing area built on infill from two (2) two large incinerators that burned trash and generated toxic ash high in lead, arsenic, mercury, asbestos and other toxic waste.. Cattle were herded from barges into pits of DDT pesticides and tanks of petroleum corroded by salty ground water leaking petroleum and benzene. Used transformers leaking PCB were dumped here,

and a pesticide mixing plant built in Kaka'ako Makai discarded carcinogenic chemicals. These and other toxic materials remain underground in Kaka'ako Makai today, capped with an impermeable surface layer with piping to emit methane gas released from below the surface, and most of the underground toxins have leached to the soil below while being undisturbed for decades. Below the toxic infill throughout Kaka'ako Makai, is the seabed where underground seawater mixes with subterranean streams that carry onshore storm water into the changing tides.

But if the protective long-standing law is changed and this toxic-infilled land is disturbed by the construction of 200-foot to 400-foot high-rise residential towers built on required foundation pilings penetrating deep into this toxic infill, the embedded toxins will be released into the nearby ocean shoreline and public park recreational areas, causing a public health disaster when these toxins become dislodged and contaminate the underground streams, coral, rocks and lava tubes. Equally concerning would be any heavy construction damage to the basalt cap, that protects the freshwater aquifer from ocean seawater, consequently releasing the toxins.

Excavation to construct the huge foundations for the towers will also compromise toxic materials imbedded in Kaka'ako Makai. In Waikiki, Ala Moana, and Kaka'ako Mauka and even near Ala Moana Park, construction of large buildings has resulted in sinkholes, broken sidewalks, and broken water mains and sewer lines. A developer of a 400-foot residential condo in Kakaako Mauka required about 80 auger pilings drilled 150 feet deep to anchor the building. If that is required of a building in Kakaako Makai, the encapsulated contaminants of the underground landfill will endanger the waters and health of residents. In Kaka'ako Makai large berms in Waterfront Park cap toxic waste under large impermeable membranes to keep the public safe. But consider what would happen if there was a sinkhole or other breach of the toxic landfill, necessarily closing the popular Park and denying access to the public.

The OHA Chairman of the board mentioned that this proposed condo development project in Kaka'ako Makai may require removing truckloads of hazardous materials. However, to remove the toxic waste under the current remedial cap would create a HAZMAT site requiring all equipment coming in contact with toxins to be decontaminated, with the water used to clean the equipment safely collected and taken to an off island certified toxic waste disposal site. There are no such disposal sites in the state for this type of hazardous waste, which would have to be shipped out of state. To overcome these environmental concerns would be costly and make construction of the OHA-promised affordable housing impossible.

The Hawaiian beneficiaries were severely shortchanged when a former governor made a deal with OHA to take this toxic land "as is, where is". Instead, and to remedy this disrespectful endeavor, and for truly affordable housing needed by the beneficiaries, an equal amount of land of equal value to the debt owed to the Beneficiaries should be exchanged by the State for non-toxic land with necessary infrastructure for more immediate building of affordable housing for beneficiaries. It could be in the present Aloha Stadium Redevelopment Area now slated for high-rise residential development. And in the best interests of Hawaii's communities, including Native Hawaiian beneficiaries and the general public, OHA should first convene a publicly-vetted master plan process for the exchanged land.

Since taking the Kakaako Makai parcels pursuant to Act 15 (SB2783) in 2012, OHA has continually sought to overturn the existing law prohibiting residential development and sale of state land in Kaka'ako Makai. And during the over dozen years since then these OHA parcels have remained undeveloped. Notably, ACT 15 states the following for the transferred lands in Kaka'ako Makai under OHA:

For purposes of this section and this Act, **"as is, where is"** means that the office of Hawaiian affairs is accepting the Properties in their existing condition as of March 1, 2012, the close of the office's period for due diligence, without representations or warranties of any kind or nature.

All too often public access restrictions and limitations result from rampant residential development of public land sold to developers and out of state investors, and the public has the right to know what OHA's true intentions are.

Historically, OHA has shown a lack of transparency with its Kaka'ako Makai planning and development process. In 2011 OHA participated with CPAC and the HCDA in creating the community based Kaka'ako Makai Master Plan. CPAC supported OHA in 2012 in acquiring Kaka'ako Makai due to their strong support of the HCDA approved Kaka'ako Makai master plan. However, an OHA audit by Plante Moran reported on October 31, 2022 reported OHA spent \$2,925,752 for Kaka'ako Makai planning. Although OHA did not disclose any planning information for the audit, a rendering for an 800' "Tower of Earth and Sky" turned up later that appeared to be very unappropriated.



The CPAC and HCDA 2010 Kaka'ako Makai Master Plan was created through a comprehensive community planning process to preserve the tranquil nature and scenic view planes from the Mountains to the Sea as part of the "lei of green" planning effort, echoing the preservation of "Magic Island" park land that was formerly considered for hotel and resort development. As our limited spaces become overwhelmed with development, it is quite clear that SB354 SD1 would deprive the community and future generations to the many visual, recreational, and iconic benefits offered by this irreplaceable Kaka'ako Makai shoreline asset.

The participants of CPAC and the "Save Our Kaka'ako Makai" movement fully understand the full value of preserving Kaka'ako Makai's public trust lands and the importance of preserving the now limited

shoreline public access for future generations. While SB534 SD1 has added protections such as requiring an environmental impact statement, meeting conditions as a special management area and mitigating any contaminants and nuisances, it is still not adequate to protect the vulnerable coastline and waters as it allows for 400 foot structures that are 200 feet above current maximum allowable height and density of 10.0 floor area ratio (FAR) at three times the current maximum density of 3.0 FAR.

For all of the above reasons, CPAC opposes Senate Bill 534 SD1

Sincerely,

Wayne Takamine
Chair, Kaka'ako Makai Community Planning Advisory Council

Kanekoa Crabbe
Vice Chair, Kaka'ako Makai Community Planning Advisory Council

Michelle Matson
Secretary, Kaka'ako Makai Community Planning Advisory Council

Hawaii State Senate Joint Committee Decision Making Hearing

Wednesday, February 26, 2025

10:05 AM

Senate Conference Room 211

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Senator Dela Cruz, Chair

Senator Moriwaki, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Judiciary

Senator Rhoads, Chair

Senator Gabbard, Vice Chair

LATE

Testimony in Strong Opposition to Senate Bill 534 “Relating to the Hawaii Community Development Authority”

Aloha Honorable Joint Committee Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members:

Pursuant to Act 15, Session Laws of Hawaii 2012, the Hawaii Community Development Authority (HCDA) is required to retain its jurisdiction and authority over the use and zoning of Kaka’ako Makai lands conveyed in 2012 to the State’s Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) in exchange for overdue pro-rata ceded land revenue interest.

Following the State Legislature’s call in 2005 for withdrawal of a massive development proposal for Kaka’ako Maka that included a bridge over the Kewalo channel, and for the formation of a community-based working group to create a Master Plan for Kaka’ako Makai, the State and HCDA invested heavily in a collaborative community-based Kaka’ako Makai Master Plan initiative that became a significant well-vetted effort undertaken by the interested and affected larger community, including Hawaiian cultural practitioners, representatives of the arts of music and dance, inter-island sustainable agriculture advocates, ocean recreation organizations, and community-based planning professionals among many others. Significantly, the Kaka’ako Makai community-based Master Plan was approved by the HCDA 2010 and adopted by the State 2011.

Despite this, in 2012 a former governor seriously short-changed Hawaiian Beneficiaries by enticing certain OHA state agency Beneficiary trustees to take lands with subsurface toxins in Kaka’ako Makai that by law could not be developed into 400-foot residential high-rises penetrating the land, and by inferring that OHA could commence their envisioned residential and mixed-use development, now including a hotel, as soon as the law prohibiting residential development in Kaka’ako Makai is repealed and changed to allow whatever developers desired. Curiously, the same former governor is now a self-proclaimed developer as expressed near the end of a previous Senate Joint Committee hearing on SB 584.

And despite the clear statutory prohibition of residential development in Kaka’ako Makai and the known health hazards posed by capped toxic landfill caused by industrial facilities once occupying the area, OHA trustees continue year-after-year to pursue high-density residential

and hotel development up to 400 feet high within Kaka’ako Makai, Honolulu’s last remaining open public shoreline recreational area with its Hawaiian cultural visual association “from mauka to makai.”

For OHA to legally and effectively fund programs and services to better the conditions of Native Hawaiians, the revenue-generating potential of clean and safe lands for properly-zoned residential and mixed-use development can be found via the exchange of OHA’s present substandard Kaka’ako Makai lands for properly-zoned lands equal in value to what is and has been owed to the Hawaiian Beneficiaries, and by provision of truly affordable housing directly to the Beneficiaries in contrast to development exploitation for market and insider investment.

The shortage of truly affordable housing, i.e., that meeting and below the island’s income average, disproportionately affects Native Hawaiians, many who have a higher poverty level and lower median household income among the major ethnic groups in Hawaii, causing many to become homeless on the streets or to reluctantly leave Hawaii, their cultural home.

Therefore it is essential for OHA, as a State agency, to be wisely guided by the State Legislature and present Governor to assist Hawaiian Beneficiaries by ensuring the exchange of their substandard capped toxic lands in Kaka’ako Makai for safe, toxic-free lands properly zoned for their fiduciary purposes, affordably allocated in perpetuity to the below-average income range, with any sale of residential units limited to proven owner-occupants.

One active opportunity for this exchange equal in value to what is accurately owed to the Hawaiian Beneficiaries would be portions of the State’s present Stadium Redevelopment Area, now slated on the fast track for new and affordable residential and mixed-use development.

Respectfully,

Michelle S. Matson
President, O’ahu Island Parks Conservancy

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 8:41:20 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Yvonne Geesey | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Enough already.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 8:48:41 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Daniel Uno | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I strongly oppose residential development being built on Kakaako Makai. Kakaako is already filled with tall, luxury condos too expensive for the majority of local people to own or rent. Developing on the Makai side of Kaakako will only consist of even more expensive condos that will run into problems later, in regards to rising sea levels and erosion. Instead of developing on Kakaako Makai, lets leave what's left of the last beautiful open space we have left on the south shore. Locals and tourist alike love Hawaii because of the natural beauty this land has to offer. Lets share and leave this open land for visitors and our future generations to enjoy. If we allow this land to be developed we can never get it back.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 9:06:52 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| John Parkinson | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Raising the height limits will destroy what view planes still exist.

When OHA negotiated the land deal they were aware of the height restrictions.

I envision that driving down Ala Moana will feel like entering a canyon of buildings if the height limits are not kept in place.

Opposed to this bill.

Feel free to build out wonderful low-rise communities and commercial spaces using existing requirements.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 9:51:00 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Madonna Dizon | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Strong Opposition to SB534

I am native Hawaiian. I am in vehement opposition to SB534. I believe in responsible stewardship. It is HEWA and grossly irresponsible to rezone makai Kakaako for high rise buildings. The greed exhibited by OHA is stunningly apparent. Rather than helping the Hawaiian people, OHA lines its pockets. The Hawaiian people are the richest on paper but the poorest in reality. A‘OLE, a resounding no, to SB534.

Reject! SB534! Safeguard the ‘aina and concomitantly it's native Hawaiian population.

Respectfully submitted,

Kaleookamahina

AKA Madonna Dizon

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 9:51:22 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Kai Jacobs | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Dear Judiciary Chair Sen. Rhoads and Ways and Means Chair Sen. Dela Cruz,

I am writing in ***STRONG OPPOSITION*** TP SB534 SD1. While I am not a constituent of the Kakaako Makai, I utilize the area almost daily. I am an avid surfer, waterman, and Hawaii native.

The community I have built at Kewalos and the surrounding area holds a unique sense of place that is becoming increasingly rare. As more high-rises go up, I feel the same shift I experienced growing up in Kailua—watching familiar spaces change under the weight of development. Just because there is open space doesn't mean it needs to be built on. We need to be smarter about development, considering the long-term impacts on parking, accessibility, and traffic. Allowing unnecessary projects sets a dangerous precedent, opening the door for developers who may prioritize profit over what truly benefits the community.

Please do not pass this bill.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 10:50:12 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Bucky Goo | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am writing in to state my position on SB534, that I fully oppose the reversal of the current law that prohibits the building of residential units at the Kakaako Makai area. I feel that leaving open spaces for the future generations after us to enjoy is crucial to their upbringing. Ala Moana park is a fine example of this. OHA can still explore an option to trade of the Kakaako Makai area for another suitable area (less costly per square foot, hence more \$\$ that can go to more housing for hawaiians or people of this State).

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 11:16:49 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Kevin Fung | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am in strong opposition of this bill, especially in regards to residential development in Kaka'ako Makai and raising of height limits.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 11:40:08 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Kathryn Feloy | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I strongly oppose development of Kakaako makai. I believe this land should remain undeveloped and for the use and enjoyment of the public.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 12:28:03 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Alex Kagawa | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

1. **OHA deserves “real” land not filled and contaminated land. The exchange should never have happened. Trade Kakaako makai lands for better lands, the kind of lands being sold to outsiders e.g. Zuckerberg, Ellison, Oprah, Bezos, etc.) with beautiful views, sandy beaches, fresh water streams, lush greenery, and fertile lands where cultural practices can be revived. Living in a condo would make it difficult to connect with the aina. Without aina, there’s no culture.**
2. **Study the significant historical cultural purposes and uses of the Kakaako makai lands (pre-1900's) before building anything over it.**
3. **This part of the ahupuaa contributed to the Hawaiian’s successful practices of self sufficiency and sustainability. Do we really want to bury all of this under concrete condominiums ? Kakaako mauka lands had many artifacts and infrastructure (auwai) that got covered by the luxury condominiums, how is this any different from the days where the Hawaiian culture, practices, and language were methodically being erased ?**
4. **Let’s not let our greed blind us from protecting the Hawaiian culture that makes Hawai’i a special place. Don’t bury the culture under more concrete, revive it.**
5. **Give Hawaiians real land to build real homes.**

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 2:34:04 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Wai H. Low | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Honorable Senators:

I **oppose** this SB534 SD1 because our families need open spaces to breath and Hawai‘i must preserve its unique landscape as a tourist destination. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully:

Wai Low

Douglas Meller
2615 Aaliamanu Place
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
douglasmeller@gmail.com

Testimony Opposing SB 534, SD1 Relating to the Hawaii Community Development Authority

Submitted to Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Senate Committee on Judiciary

Wednesday, 10:05 AM, February 26, 2025, Conference Room 211 & Videoconference Hearing

Although I support appropriation of public funds owed to OHA, I oppose any kind of statutory “rezoning” of OHA property and any kind of statutory authorization for OHA to assess taxes. Both are a misguided unconstitutional remedy for OHA’s mistake of accepting property in lieu of funds owed to OHA. If SB 534 is enacted, I predict someone will file a lawsuit alleging that important parts of this bill violate the Hawaii Constitution. Relevant constitutional requirements are explained in the Attorney General’s January 29, 2025 testimony on SB 534.

I also oppose statutory designation of property contaminated by a county landfill and leaks from county corporation yard fuel tanks for development of “affordable” housing. Although I support public subsidies and price/rent controls for “affordable” housing at suitable locations, it would be a ridiculous misuse of public funds to subsidize “affordable” housing on property contaminated by either a landfill or massive diesel fuel leaks.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 4:08:00 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Thomas Iwai Jr. | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony Against SB534 SD1

Although proper amendments were made to SB534 and currently reflected in SB534 SD1 and within Stand. Comm. Rep. No.616, a number of serious questions still remains and requires further consideration:

1. The current bill still does not specifically state which OHA parcels are under review for 400' residential tower development. SD534 SD1 only repeats the same verbiage used in the original bill referring to "the development of certain parcels."

2. Raising the height limit on "certain parcels." Once again, which parcels(?), since each parcel has different environmental constraints (vertical & horizontal "brownfield contaminant" concentrations) that would require specific remediation efforts to ensure public safety before, during, and after construction. For example, the leaching of soluble contaminants is more likely to occur from parcels adjacent to recreational waters than from parcels located more mauka. However, since Kaka'ako Makai was once a wetland marsh area that was backfilled and later used as a local dump site, the existing aquifer dynamics has probably changed and therefore requires a thorough and in-depth (and costly) EIS analysis.

3. Although it was not addressed in SB534 S.D.1, SB234 SD1 SSCR616 clearly states within the Committee Discussion the following, "These projects will likely require that OHA request the State for funding multiple times during development." The reason(s) and rationale for such an OHA request should undergo careful legislative and public scrutiny if tax payers will be financing OHA's misguided plans; especially since OHA has not provided any EIS details/analysis on their "selected parcels" being considered for 400' residential development!

Mahalo!

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 4:30:26 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Alethea Rebman | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

This land is the last oceanfront open land here. OHA accepted it in trade knowing the zoning, and now keeps lobbying to change the zoning. No development!

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 9:02:13 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Grace Ishihara | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I strongly oppose to the development of Kakaako Makai. We, the people must ensure that the natural environment is not ruined by more residential and commercial developments. In addition, there are also environmental reasons (from EPA studies) that allowing residential development in Kakaako Makai shouldn't be permitted due to areas contaminated by toxins on the surfaces and in the groundwater.

Let us continue to protect and cherish this area, now and for the future generations. Mahalo for your consideration.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 9:26:21 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Lance T. Iwami | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I STRONGLY OPPOSE THIS BILL

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2025 11:01:27 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Dominique Anders | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB534, which seeks to alter the development parameters of Kaka‘ako Makai, raising building height limits, increasing floor area ratios, and allowing for residential development with affordability provisions. While I support efforts to create more affordable housing and support local workforce residents, this bill raises significant concerns regarding environmental impact, cultural preservation, and public access.

Kaka‘ako Makai is one of the last remaining waterfront lands in Honolulu that is not yet privatized or overly developed. It was designated for public use and cultural enrichment, not for high-density residential towers. The proposed changes in this bill would permanently alter the character of this vital coastal space and set a dangerous precedent for the commercialization of public lands.

Increasing building heights and floor area ratios will undoubtedly place greater stress on existing infrastructure, including roads, sewage, and water systems. Additionally, the environmental risks associated with high-rise development so close to the coastline—including potential impacts on coastal erosion, rising sea levels, and natural disaster resilience—have not been adequately addressed.

The intent to preserve Kaka‘ako Makai as a public asset has been upheld in multiple legislative sessions, reflecting extensive input from community stakeholders, including Native Hawaiian organizations, environmental groups, and residents. This bill overrides those agreements and ignores years of careful planning that prioritized cultural and public use over private development.

While this bill includes provisions for affordable housing, it does not ensure long-term affordability or prevent speculative investment that could lead to gentrification. Many so-called affordable housing projects fail to deliver on their promises, with units eventually being sold at market rates, pushing out local families.

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) plays a crucial role in managing lands and resources for the benefit of Native Hawaiians. However, the proposed changes, including the imposition of a Kaka‘ako Makai association fee, raise

concerns about whether these developments will truly serve Native Hawaiian interests or merely create financial burdens without meaningful cultural or economic benefits.

I urge the committee to reject SB534 and instead focus on sustainable, community-driven development that prioritizes public access, environmental protection, and cultural integrity. Hawai'i cannot afford to sacrifice its last remaining public coastal spaces for private interests.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Dominique Anders

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 7:12:44 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Foster Righter | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I strongly oppose SB534. We need to preserve what little public open space and parks we have remaining on O'ahu. O'ahu is overcrowded, overdeveloped, choked by traffic and pollution, and doesn't provide enough green space and clean ocean access to the current population! Don't make it worse! These projects, no matter how well intentioned (a dubious claim anyway), NEVER end up helping low income locals or the Aina in any way shape or form. They always provide a short term money grab for developers, and nothing more. Stop repeating this destructive cycle!

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 8:08:36 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Jun Look | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

" The lei of Green" created by Gov Waiahee was to protect and cherish our makai coastline for GENERATIONS. OHA's plan is threatening that concept with their plan

OHA is a special interest, benefiting one group over another. The state needs to give OHA land for revenue... trade the makai land for some thing they can use and make money from. The State has other pieces of property.

Stop the Steal...

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 10:05:59 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| sandra moneymaker | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am **strongly opposed** to allowing any residential development in Kakaako Makai. I believe it is foolish to think condos Makai will be affordable by locals working multiple jobs. The Skyline rail is supposed to serve the workforce living in more affordable areas of the island. That is where OHA should build the desired housing. Housing with rail access would promote ridership of the boondoggle built for that very purpose. The Kakaako Makai area is designated as a tsunami zone so I ask why would we knowingly put residents in such a hazardous zone? It's already a garbage dump and known to be toxic so it makes no sense to put "affordable" housing there!! The suggestion by OHA that tsunamis can be mitigated is laughable, may I remind you of Fukushima Japan! If mitigation was the answer, tsunamis wouldn't be the topic and if mitigation is a great solution then whatever that plan might be should be deployed statewide before more development in an uninsurable zone.

Kakaako Makai is the last piece of oceanfront land on the south shore and should not become another Waikiki. These lands should be protected as open spaces for future generations with free access to all locals and visitors.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 10:46:23 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Anthony Makana Paris | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha,

I support.

Me ke aloha,

Anthony Makana Paris

Kapolei, Hawaii

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 12:21:15 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Ian Custino | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Re: SB534 – Relating to the Hawaii Community Development Authority

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and members of the Committee on Ways and Means, and Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Gabbard, and members of the Committee on Judiciary,

On behalf of the Moanalua Gardens Foundation, I respectfully submit our strong SUPPORT for SB534, a bill that allows for residential development on select parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, raises building height limits, and mandates that a portion of the units be reserved for households within specified income levels. This measure offers a prudent contribution to the ongoing housing crisis in urban Honolulu by prioritizing the development of affordable, owner-occupant workforce housing in Honolulu’s urban core.

SB534 will help the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) realize the full value of the parcels it owns in Kaka‘ako Makai that were part of the 2012 settlement agreement with the State. Restrictions on residential development and height limits have hindered OHA’s progress in this area.

The need for affordable housing in Hawai‘i is urgent. According to a recent report by the Economic Research Organization at the University of Hawai‘i (UHERO), homeownership is unattainable for most local residents, with only 20% of households able to afford the median-priced single-family home. Over half of renters are also rent-burdened, spending more than 30% of their income on rent. These issues contribute to outmigration and homelessness, with Hawai‘i now ranking among the top states for homelessness, largely due to escalating housing costs.

SB534’s focus on developing affordable workforce housing in Kaka‘ako Makai offers a solution to these critical issues.

Focusing on affordable housing for essential workers—such as educators, healthcare professionals, law enforcement, hospitality workers, civil servants, and construction workers—SB534 directly addresses a critical need in our community, while also ensuring public access to and use of Kaka‘ako Makai. This bill ensures that OHA can develop these parcels at their full potential to benefit Native Hawaiians, and all of Hawai‘i.

By allocating 50% + 1 of the residential units for individuals earning at or below 140% of the area median income, SB534 ensures that housing remains affordable for those who need it most,

especially the workforce that is the backbone of Hawai‘i’s economy. Furthermore, the development at Kaka‘ako Makai will generate revenue to support additional programs, grants, and services benefiting the Native Hawaiian community and all residents of Hawai‘i.

We strongly urge your committee to support SB534 as a vital step toward addressing the affordable housing crisis, while promoting economic opportunity, cultural preservation, and community well-being for all residents of Hawai‘i. The benefits of this initiative will be far-reaching, extending not only to Native Hawaiians but to everyone in our community who depends on affordable housing to thrive.

Founded in 1970, The Moanalua Gardens Foundation was established, in part, to protect the precious wahi pana of Moanalua Valley and other precious resources vital to Hawaiians and all people of Hawai‘i. As Aloha ‘Āina (those who care for the land), it is our kuleana (responsibility) to protect and speak for all wahi pana and all our precious resources. We support OHA in this sacred duty and believe that this measure works to fulfill the State’s obligations to OHA and Hawaiians by allowing OHA to fund the performance of its duties to the people of Hawai‘i.

The Moanalua Gardens Foundation urges the committee to pass S.B. No. 534 S.D. 1. Mahalo for your attention and consideration.

Me ke aloha,

Ian Keali‘i Custino

*Executive Director
Moanalua Gardens Foundation*

ian@mgfhawaii.org

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 12:21:55 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| JONATHAN LOTT | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Please don't open the door to residential towers makai of Ala Moana Blvd.

Mahalo,

-Jon

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 1:01:06 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Heidi A. Meeker | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Chair Donovan Dela Cruz, Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Chair Karl Rhoads, Senate Committee on Judiciary

My name is Heidi A. Meeker, I have been a resident of Kakaako for 32 years.

I am strongly opposed to SB534 SD1. This bill will permit the extension of Kakaako Mauka (Howard Hughes Town) down along Ala Moana Boulevard to the Foreign Trade Zone.

It is time that we are more honest and forthright about the purpose of this bill. It's not going to bring about more affordable housing for Native Hawaiians, native Hawaiians and current non-Hawaiian citizens of the state. It is going to permit private entities to build 4 or 5 towers. For there to be any interest in private development, the State will permit more luxury condos. The area will eventually look just like the rest of Kakaako across the street. Yes, there will be some token number of "affordable" units available, and they will get great publicity for them. BUT, 10 years later, those units will either be flipped or rented out.

When this happens in other privately owned parcels in Kakaako, there is little we can do. Here is are talking about State-owned land, the last open space on the south shore of urban Honolulu. Please think about the future. Ala Moana Beach Park is at capacity. The Waterfront Park gets more populated each year. What's going to happen 20 to 50 years from now?

OHA is owed ceded land revenue. Pay them the money they are owed, but don't steal the last potential open space from the future citizens of Honolulu. There was a reason this body prohibited residential development on these parcels a few years ago. I ask you to think back to what your reasoning was then. Yes, we are told the housing situation is getting much worse. But this bill will do nothing to improve the situation. Once the future Howard Hughes-types get this land, it will no longer be public open space. Think about the future, think about who will need open space. Thank you.

Testimony to the Hawaii Legislature JDC/WAM Committees Subject: Strong Opposition to the Building of Residential Housing Up to 400 Feet Tall in the Kewalo Basin of Kaka'ako in Honolulu, Hawaii

Dear Esteemed Members of the JDC and WAM Committees,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed construction of residential housing up to 400 feet tall in the Kewalo Basin of Kaka'ako. My name is Gwendolyn V. Kirkland. I am a retired Certified Financial Planner (CFP) and Registered Investment Advisor (RIA), and an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ. I moved to Honolulu in October 2022, and I carry with me the aloha spirit and mana for the Hawaiian land and the people and culture.

The overbuilding of Honolulu, particularly in the Kaka'ako area, is contributing to the displacement of native Hawaiians and working-class people. The oversupply of luxury condominiums that remain vacant for extended periods is pricing out those who call this beautiful land their home. The proposed construction will only exacerbate this issue, leading to further gentrification and loss of cultural identity.

Furthermore, the construction of such tall residential buildings in the Kewalo Basin will destroy access to highly desirable oceanfront areas used for swimming, surfing, and enjoying nature. The land in question has been flagged for potential environmental hazards, and proceeding with this bill without a thorough evaluation of these risks is a grave mistake.

The bill enacted twenty years ago to prevent building in this area reflected the wisdom and community concern for preserving an uninterrupted natural landscape. It is crucial that we honor this legacy and maintain the protections that were put in place for the benefit of the community and future generations. We cannot be enticed by short-term financial gains at the expense of our precious land and environment.

In closing, I emphatically oppose the construction of residential housing up to 400 feet tall in the Kewalo Basin of Kaka'ako. I urge you to reject this proposal and uphold the existing protections that reflect the values and spirit of our community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely, Gwendolyn V. Kirkland Retired CFP, RIA, and Ordained Minister United Church of Christ

I OPPOSE SB534:

SB534 does not provide affordable housing. The 2 bedroom units are listed at around \$659,000. The bill raised that average median income to 140%. The population being considered are essential workers working for an employer in the health care, hospitality, education, law enforcement, civil service, or construction industry. The average salary for this group is around \$41,000. Annual mortgage payment would be approximately \$38,000.

If SB534 is passed, it becomes legal for OHA to sell the land to anyone, even a developer, and there will be nothing the state, OHA, or anyone can do to protect the land or ocean from whatever is done with those parcels.

OHA President Stacey Ferreira at a hearing a few weeks ago stated that there was an environmental study done but she does not seem to know the name of the company who did the study and there are no documents available to the public. Why? Documents need to be submitted to the public for evaluation.

SB534 should not be passed. There are too many unvalidated assumptions and wishful thinking on the part of the legislature. As usual, the cart is before the horse.

Charles Knight

1350 Ala Moana #1208

Honolulu, HI

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 6:06:47 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Mackenzie manning | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Dear Legislators,

I wholly oppose consideration of SB 534 SD1 or any other version of this bill. Kaka‘ako Makai lands should be kept as open spaces for public use in perpetuity. No residential developments should commence on this property because of sea level rise and climate change impacts and the ability of our infrastructure to handle even more sewage and waste from these proposed developments. Please stop considering proposals and bills that promote the development of this land parcel. Please keep these lands open for public use in perpetuity.

Thank you,

Mackenzie Manning

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 7:01:37 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Channey Tang-Ho | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha, I am a local born and raised in Honolulu and believe we live in one of the most beautiful places and destinations in the world.

They are marketing the development on the makai side to be affordable which I don't believe it will be. There is a listing across Kewalo/Ala Moana park that is under 14 million and that's without an oceanfront view. I can't imagine what an oceanfront condo would go for. 20 years ago, they said the same thing about workforce housing on Kaka'ako mauka side and it ended up not being that way be and had to become high end luxury condos. How do we know that's not going to happen on the makai side? I'm not against gentrification and I'm not against Hawaiians, I just don't think it's going to be for the locals/Locals like they are stating its going to be. I would rather them be honest and straightforward than put some attractive words to get traction on a development like they're doing with Kaka'ako Makai.

Aside from this, there is a law that is protecting this land because the land on KM used to be a landfill so developing a 400ft structure on this would be reckless and unethical for the community. Building 400 ft would cause irreversible havoc.

If we decide to build something, please have it within height limits, contribute towards the community, the people of Hawai'i, the tourists that visit, and future of these islands.

I am voting to oppose SB 534 SD1, Mahalo.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 7:02:35 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Maya Young | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I strongly oppose bill SB534.

I persist in opposing the construction of large 400-foot buildings on the Makai side of Ala Moana Boulevard. Why would we want to add to the concrete jungle and encroach on our last remaining piece of beautiful seaside in Honolulu? We have building restrictions in place to ensure safety, to encompass the well-thought-out urbanized plan that calculates the flow of people, sewage, water, and electricity in the area, and to prevent the island from becoming a neglected dump. We all must adhere to the laws that protect our Hawaii. It would be a disservice to all the hard work and thought that went into creating such a plan if any group attempted to circumvent the system and laws in place for their own gain. We have invested a significant amount of thought and effort into the rules and regulations to safeguard Kakaako Makai. However, we lack sufficient sewage, power, parking, and roads to support the influx of people into this small, limited area. Furthermore, there is no plan in place to determine who will be responsible for the upgrades and maintenance of the infrastructure required to support this development. Placing this burden on our taxpayers is unacceptable. It is easy to allocate funds to new development because all the organizations and businesses that support it will generate profits. However, the problem arises when they take that money and disappear, leaving no one to testify and assist in maintaining the area, as this would incur costs for them. The city is already struggling to maintain its current infrastructure, and we want to add more to its plate?

I strongly oppose this bill.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 7:02:58 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Marvin Heskett | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Senator,

I am testifying in strong opposition to have residential development on Kaka'ako Makai. Our community worked hard with overwhelming support to keep this land in the hands of the public. People from all persuasions worked in unison to make our points heard loud and clear. I personally have a favorite memory from 2006 when Aunti Genoa Keawe entertained us during a rally, where Da Hui provided lunch, in support of keeping this land public. We need to protect this special land, the last oceanfront land on the South shore of Oahu from becoming another Waikiki.

It is clear, from much of the testimony provided in support of this bill that many parties have their eye on the personal value developoing the land will bring them. It is already too late for Mauka side of Kaka'ako but it is not too late for Kaka'ako Makai. Let's protect these open spaces for our children and our children's children. Let's also protect this land for the value that brings people to visit our island. Developing this space responsibly for public use in a park like setting will add value to our city and state as opposed to turning it into a less attractive overbuilt shoreline.

Aloha,

Marvin Heskett

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 7:15:52 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| mia young | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I strongly oppose bill SB534.

I persist in opposing the construction of large 400-foot buildings on the Makai side of Ala Moana Boulevard. Why would we want to add to the concrete jungle and encroach on our last remaining piece of beautiful seaside in Honolulu? We have building restrictions in place to ensure safety, to encompass the well-thought-out urbanized plan that calculates the flow of people, sewage, water, and electricity in the area, and to prevent the island from becoming a neglected dump. We all must adhere to the laws that protect our Hawaii. It would be a disservice to all the hard work and thought that went into creating such a plan if any group attempted to circumvent the system and laws in place for their own gain. We have invested a significant amount of thought and effort into the rules and regulations to safeguard Kakaako Makai. However, we lack sufficient sewage, power, parking, and roads to support the influx of people into this small, limited area. Furthermore, there is no plan in place to determine who will be responsible for the upgrades and maintenance of the infrastructure required to support this development. Placing this burden on our taxpayers is unacceptable. It is easy to allocate funds to new development because all the organizations and businesses that support it will generate profits. However, the problem arises when they take that money and disappear, leaving no one to testify and assist in maintaining the area, as this would incur costs for them. The city is already struggling to maintain its current infrastructure, and we want to add more to its plate?

I strongly oppose this bill.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 7:59:04 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Carole Chong | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I strongly oppose SB 534.

Because the last thing we need is another Waikiki in Kaka'ako.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 8:03:40 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Tuan Pham | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

No development on makai! Let future generations enjoy what is important. Even big cities like Chicago have a law that prohibits waterfront development.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 8:01:57 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Stephen T Hazam | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Please OPPOSE SB534 SD1 and protect our AINA

In 2006, the Hawai‘i State Legislature prohibited residential development in Kakaako Makai. This was largely in response to plan, by Alexander & Baldwin, for a luxury condominium project. The condo plan was fiercely opposed by the community and the ban had near-unanimous support in the legislature.

The community wanted to preserve open spaces for public use, and ensure that it would be available for recreational, community and cultural uses. It is the last remaining open shoreline in urban Honolulu and must be protected.

The community also feared that high rise residential development would place a severe strain on the underlying infrastructure, resulting in significant issues for water, sewer, traffic and parking.

Because of its industrial past there is toxic waste that must be considered. Its location next to the shore means that it is at risk from flooding and sea-level rise.

Six years later, in 2012, with the prohibition still in place, OHA accepted a conveyance of these lands as part of a settlement for the State of Hawai‘i’s \$200 million past-due Public Land Trust revenue debt. Contrary to a current characterization by OHA that at the time of the settlement between OHA and the legislature that it was envisioned that OHA would be given the authority to develop residential housing, there is nothing in the local media or the legislative record to support this statement. If this vision was merely the design of OHA, then it demonstrates that they did not act in good faith.

The fears of the community in 2006 not only remain, but are exacerbated by the development since 2006 in Kakaako Mauka. OHA has demonstrated that it cannot be trusted to be a better steward of the aina than those it has often criticized.

Please OPPOSE SB534 SD1 and protect our AINA.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 10:01:51 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Chrissy | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Dear Senator Donavan Dela Cruz and Senator Karl Rhoads,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed development of Kakaako Makai which threatens the natural beauty and integrity of this cherished area. As a lifelong surfer, I have had the privilege of enjoying these open spaces for decades, and I believe it is critical that we protect them for future generations.

This stretch of coastline is not just another parcel of land. It is a sanctuary, a place where people from all walks of life can connect with nature, find solace, and enjoy recreational activities that support their physical and mental well-being. For those of us who surf, it is a sacred space where the rhythm of the ocean is not drowned out by the noise of development. The waves, the vibrant ecosystem and the untouched landscape contribute to an experience that no man made development could ever replicate.

The proposed development stands to disrupt not only the local surf community but also the wider ecosystem that relies on this area for its balance. The impacts on wildlife, the delicate coastline, and the water quality are deeply concerning. This area has provided a home to countless species and a place for local families to enjoy the outdoors. Once altered, the natural beauty and biodiversity that make this area special could be lost forever.

I understand that development is often seen as a sign of progress, but true progress is ensuring that we protect the places that define us as a community. We must prioritize the well-being of our environment and future generations over short-term profits that benefit a select few.

This space is not for sale; it belongs to all of us, and it is our duty to protect it.

I urge you to listen to the voices of the people who value this open space—not as a commodity to be exploited but as an essential part of our heritage and quality of life. I ask that you reconsider this development and protect the shoreline for the future of our islands, our children, and all those who will come after us.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Chrissy

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 10:20:23 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Tyson Onishi | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I strongly oppose bill SB534.

I oppose the construction of large 400-foot buildings on the Makai side of Ala Moana Boulevard. We need to protect and preserve our last remaining piece of oceanfront land in urban Honolulu. People come to Oahu to enjoy pristine weather, breathtaking beaches and gorgeous scenery. I can't understand how so many locals that work for these organizations want to compromise this last rare piece of land for commercial and monetary gain. The infrastructure is operating at capacity and cannot handle more 400-foot buildings. The developers don't see it from our perspective and don't care about the safety and instability of the soil and impact that these buildings could bring. Furthermore, placing this heavy tax burden onto the people of Hawaii is truly unacceptable. Inflation and cost of living in Hawaii is at its all-time high and these buildings are really another failed solution for the Hawaiian people of Hawaii. We need to preserve the last oceanfront land in urban Honolulu and this is why I strongly oppose this bill.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2025 10:47:07 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Max Tourville | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I strongly oppose bill SB534.

I persist in opposing the construction of large 400-foot buildings on the Makai side of Ala Moana Boulevard. Why would we want to add to the concrete jungle and encroach on our last remaining piece of beautiful seaside in Honolulu? We have building restrictions in place to ensure safety, to encompass the well-thought-out urbanized plan that calculates the flow of people, sewage, water, and electricity in the area, and to prevent the island from becoming a neglected dump. We all must adhere to the laws that protect our Hawaii. It would be a disservice to all the hard work and thought that went into creating such a plan if any group attempted to circumvent the system and laws in place for their own gain. We have invested a significant amount of thought and effort into the rules and regulations to safeguard Kakaako Makai. However, we lack sufficient sewage, power, parking, and roads to support the influx of people into this small, limited area.

Furthermore, there is no plan in place to determine who will be responsible for the upgrades and maintenance of the infrastructure required to support this development. Placing this burden on our taxpayers is unacceptable. It is easy to allocate funds to new development because all the organizations and businesses that support it will generate profits. However, the problem arises when they take that money and disappear, leaving no one to testify and assist in maintaining the area, as this would incur costs for them. The city is already struggling to maintain its current infrastructure, and we want to add more to its plate?

I strongly oppose this bill.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 12:42:35 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Joyce Kamemoto | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose this bill. Preserving the residential ban was intended to do just that.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 3:38:14 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| GWEN YOUNG | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

As a resident of Kaka'ako and a 20-30 hour per week environmental and social justice and equity volunteer, I strongly Oppose SB534.

There are many reasons that we all should be in strong opposition of the proposed increase of height limit to 400ft for buildings makai of Ala Moana (between Forrest and Ilalo). The area is: in a flood plain and drainage area, in an area that would be inundated with rising seas (per the UH sea level rise studies), in an area of a former refuse dumping with toxic materials that would be exposed during excavation for such building heights, in the flight path of HNL, and numerous other reasons.

Additionally, the original approved plan included numerous open spaces for the local residents and access for Hawaiian people for recreation and for cultural practitioners to hold events. Paving over this critical space for intensive residences in one of the last open spaces on the South Shore is poor long-term planning for the needs of the Hawaiian people. A Hawaiian Hale with room for Hokule'a to be housed could be considered along with other places available to continue cultural growth.

Parking for ocean access, areas for our keiki to play, safe walking paths for kupuna and families, and connectivity to bike lanes and future rail service should be expanded and increased in the plans for this area.

Mahalo nui.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 5:46:08 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Janine Among | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose the development of Kaka'ako Makai for residential and commercial use because once this beautiful, spiritual space is gone, you will have taken away one of the last open, non-commercialized area for our 'ohanas.

no one is against affordable housing but we all know this is not the area for it.

please, my ancestors would not want this open ocean, beautiful coast line to be marred by buildings , cars, pollution!!

Enough development already!!!!!!

stop being so greedy. We need to protect open spaces!!!!!!

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 7:53:38 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Ernest K Moses Jr | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am against the OHA proposal of High Density condos on Kakaako Makai lands. Such projects may not be feasible on those lands, which were construction waste land fill, Tuna canning factory, and Shipyard. OHA has never had an EIS study done, so they can only speculate what are the conditions of the lands. Kakaako Waterfront Park is all construction waste fill, I watched the dump trucks dump concrete, demolition debris, and dirt to build up the shoreline, they even did some pollution treatments, using venting pipes, that's why the park has hills, they did not disturb the soil there. Cannery and Shipyard could be a wasteland, but no one has fully studied them. BTW all the area is a Tsunami Evacuation Zone, not ideal for high density housing, and let be real those Condos will be used for 'Workforce Housing', is going to the highest bidder. That is my position against high density housing on Kakaako Makao, Regards, Ernest K Moses Jr.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 9:32:14 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Robin Zeller | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Chairperson and members of the committee,

Aloha. My name is Robin Zeller, and I am a surfer who regularly enjoys the waters off Kakaako Makai. I am here today to express my strong opposition to the bill that seeks to allow for residential development in this area and raise building height limits.

As a local surfer and community member, I have a deep connection to the coastline, beaches, and waters that make Kakaako Makai one of the most unique and treasured parts of our island. This bill, while well-intentioned in its aims to provide affordable housing, raises serious concerns for those of us who rely on Kakaako Makai for recreational and cultural purposes.

Kakaako Makai is a critical area for ocean activities, and our surf spots here are not just places to ride waves—they are part of our cultural identity. The proposed developments will inevitably put pressure on the surrounding environment, including our access to the ocean and the safety of water sports. Increased residential density and taller buildings will create more traffic, increase pollution, and ultimately degrade the quality of life for those who come to this area for its natural beauty and connection to the ocean.

Furthermore, raising the building height and density limits will create a canyon-like environment in what has traditionally been a low-rise, open area, which will disrupt the wind patterns, alter ocean swells, and increase overcrowding in both the water and on land. The balance of nature that supports surfing conditions could be undermined, and we could lose what makes Kakaako Makai one of the best places to surf on Oahu.

While I understand the need for affordable housing, this area is not the right place for high-rise development. The bill's requirement for a portion of the units to be designated for low-income households is commendable, but this should not come at the expense of the very resources that locals and visitors cherish—our beaches, surf spots, and natural landscapes. There are other areas that can accommodate growth without sacrificing the ocean access and cultural value that Kakaako Makai holds.

In conclusion, I urge you to reconsider this bill in favor of more sustainable, community-focused solutions that prioritize preserving our natural resources, maintaining access to the ocean, and protecting our local surf culture. Let us find a way to balance development with preservation—because once the integrity of Kakaako Makai is lost, it will never come back.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Aloha,
Robin Zeller

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 9:54:46 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Keoni Shizuma | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Committee members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means and the Committee on Judiciary,

I am testifying in support of this bill.

While I do like this bill and support the development of the Kakaako properties by OHA, I would like to suggest an amendment, follow what is being proposed in bill HB739. I would support an amendment of a certain number of units being deed restricted to those who are working at least 30 hours per week at a legitimate business, or have retired from a business, having worked 30 or more hours per week for at least 10 consecutive years. This deed restriction should be placed on all properties, not just the affordable ones, and ensures that the property will be utilized by the working class.

Mahalo for your consideration.
Keoni Shizuma, Kaneohe, Oahu

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 10:19:37 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| David Chee | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I strongly oppose any highrise development of Kaka'ako Makai. I was born/raised and still reside and work within the Ala Moana/Kaka'ako area. With all the highrise devepolment inland in Kaka'ako, residents need open green space, especially open spaces which allow public access to the ocean. Approval of high density developments along the waterfront would prohibit and interfere with public access. Stop Kaka'ako from becoming another Waikiki. It's too late to save Kaka'ako Mauka, but we can still save Makai. Please turn Kaka'ako makai into open green park space, which would connect Ala Moana Park, Kewalo Basin Park and Kaka'ako Waterfront Park for everyone to use and enjoy.

Committee On Ways And Means And Committee On Judiciary Wednesday, February 26, 2025

To Chairs Dela Cruz and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Moriwaki and Gabbard and members of the committees,

I am in **strong opposition SB534-SD1** and its intent to give away public commons.

The bill intent is objectionable, but is also missing real guardrails to real long-term housing solutions.

For example, relying on the term “workforce housing” which is defined as including workers at 140% of area median income is a problem:

- For the 50% workforce housing requirement in the bill, we know we can expect a few token unit will be offered at 60% to 80% AMI as “community benefit”, while the rest of the units will go at 100% to 140%.
- The other remaining 50% of units will default to **luxury Hawaiian ocean front condos** that will go to luxury buyers or foreigners. We’ve seen this story play out for countless condo developments in Honolulu.
 - o As justification, OHA will say it’s not “financially viable” to construct workforce housing units without also building and offering multi-million-dollar ocean front condos. As a matter of principle, I’d rather be homeless on King Street than give an out-of-state millionaire an un-entitled ocean front condo for their 2nd vacation home.

I urge you to vote against this transparent land grab that benefits a minority of people at cost to everyone else.

If the legislature wants to truly have long term impact on local workforce housing, then I suggest you simply amend SB534 to require that:

- ***Residential development shall remain as affordable rental units in perpetuity. OHA shall oversee management of the affordable rentals.***
- ***Require 100% of units to go to workforce housing rentals at 100% or less of AMI.***
- ***Require all units in the same bed/bath category to have the same floor area size and parking privileges.***

This way, OHA will have long-term revenue streams after an initial investment outlay for construction.

If the proposed 400 feet tower is sold as condos, you are creating problems for the future. As condos, you’ll see issues such as:

- Workforce housing units turning into luxury-priced condos when they go for sale after any required holding period (if any) by the initial buyer.
 - o **The SB534 provision about “perpetuity” needs to be clearer. Does the bill mean each condominium units in the workforce housing category must be encumbered as workforce housing unit forever? Or does the bill mean the parcel must be encumbered only until after it is developed, after which, the condo can be flipped at market rates after the initial owner-buyer?**
 - o As real estate prices continue to outgrow wage growth, families will still struggle to live even if units are sold to “workforce housing” buyers.
- Relentless sea level rise issues complicated by condominium-ized ownership rights.
- Undesirable, undersized (or off-site, lower level, city view) affordable workforce units no one wants to buy or are only forced to buy out of necessity.
- **There is a serious issue right now in Hawaii and across the country with insurers refusing to insure condo/home owners at reasonable rates.** How will this affect affordability of these Kōākaʻokoʻi units?

Its unclear what regime of perpetual affordability SB534 is proposing, or if its proposing any at all.

The Legislature states it wants to maximize OHA profitability. Then by that logic the Legislature can and should just abolish all zoning laws so that all entities can maximize their shareholder returns by building 400 foot towers. Why have public planning policy if any entity with enough influence can just change public planning after agreeing to a land swap deal?

OHA's single-minded obsession to put 400 feet tall buildings on the coastline reeks of after-the-fact entitlement seeking; where developers acquire land, *then* find ways to get the entitlements they want knowing full well the parcels were not zoned for their plans.

I urge you to find other options for maximizing OHA revenues that doesn't require the people to lose priceless, public, city-accessible open spaces next to the ocean.

Chris Abe
Lifelong Honolulu Resident

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 12:12:13 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Maya Akana | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I strongly oppose SB534.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 12:35:24 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Bette Jo Nakahara | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I OPPOSE SB534.

My family, extended family, and friends grew up along the south shore of Oahu. Going surfing and having get-togethers at Kewalos was a regular event. I could see the beautiful ocean and the majestic mountains just with the turn of my head. With the development proposed the wonderful scenic views that we take for granted will cease to be.

I do not trust the departments, politicians, and developers to stick to their plans. Development makai of Ala Moana Blvd. will be a disaster for local people and the south shore.

Thank you.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 12:46:05 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Kaitlyn P Jacobs | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I strongly oppose any bill that authorizes building in Kaka'ako Makai. I am a resident in Kaka'ako, and not only is there already no space for parking, this area is the only urban area left in Honolulu that is not full of high rises. Residents need green space. Furthermore, Kaka'ako Makai is propped up on old landfill, and there is toxic ground water under the entire area. If there is any building on this land, toxic materials will be leached directly into the ocean, causing harm to our nearshore environment as well as people that use the ocean for fishing, recreation, etc. The community has time and time again spoken up to say that we refuse to have this space be built up, and I kindly urge the committee to continue to hear us. Thank you.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 12:46:17 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Lauren R. Kaiser | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB534, which would authorize residential development in Kaka'ako Makai. As a resident of Kaka'ako who values our limited coastal resources, I believe this bill threatens one of the last accessible oceanfront areas on our island's south shore. While I am not against OHA and making them whole to financially support its operations and the interests of native Hawaiians, this is not the solution.

Kaka'ako Makai represents a crucial environmental and cultural asset that must be preserved for current and future generations. The area is one of the last undeveloped oceanfront properties in urban Honolulu, offering a rare opportunity to maintain public access to the coastline in an increasingly congested city.

The environmental impacts of additional high-rise development in this area would be severe and irreversible:

Coastal Ecosystem Degradation: Development would increase impermeable surfaces, leading to greater stormwater runoff and pollutants entering our nearshore waters, harming coral reefs and marine ecosystems that are already under stress from climate change. Furthermore, any development that would disturb the EPA-classified brownfield in the Kaka'ako Makai area could not only negatively impact the surrounding ecosystem, but threaten the wellbeing and health of the surrounding communities.

Sea Level Rise Vulnerability: With [sea levels projected to rise](#) significantly in coming decades, developing this low-lying coastal area with permanent residential structures is environmentally unsound and economically short-sighted. A thorough, up-to-date EIS (not just an EA) is needed to consider sea level rise as well as other factors such as saltwater intrusion.

Urban Heat Island Effect: Additional concrete structures would intensify the urban heat island effect in an area that could otherwise serve as a cooling green space for our community. There are already at least 5 other condominium projects slated for [development mauka of Ala Moana Blvd. in Kaka'ako](#) in addition to another 5+ planned in the neighboring [Ward Village](#).

Loss of Open Space: Once these lands are developed for residential use, the opportunity for public open space is permanently lost. We have already witnessed the mauka side of Kaka'ako

transform into a forest of high-rises aimed at maximizing profits over local community benefit. Kai Kahele and OHA have openly stated that their goal is to profit from this development to generate money for OHA rather than specifically using the space to benefit and empower native Hawaiians.

Honolulu's south shore has been overdeveloped, with Waikīkī serving as a cautionary example of what happens when we prioritize development over environmental stewardship. The mauka portion of Kaka'ako has already been dramatically transformed, with numerous luxury high-rises either completed or under construction. This rapid development has not addressed our affordable housing crisis but has instead created more exclusive spaces accessible primarily to the wealthy. The guise of affordable housing is used to appease lawmakers and officials while the properties are not truly affordable to local people. These units are usually built to meet a quota rather than serve the homeowners they were meant to house (i.e., smaller square footage, limited access to amenities, skyrocketing HOA fees, etc.) and generally do not allow for the growth of generational wealth.

Our children and future generations deserve to inherit public shorelines and open spaces. The highest and best use of Kaka'ako Makai is not as another cluster of high-rise condominiums, but as a public shoreline area that provides recreational opportunities, cultural connections, and environmental benefits for all Hawai'i residents.

The pressure to develop Kaka'ako Makai for residential use is driven primarily by short-term economic interests that do not align with the long-term environmental and community interests of O'ahu residents. We must resist this pressure and maintain the current protections for this irreplaceable coastal area.

I strongly urge you to oppose SB534 and protect Kaka'ako Makai from residential development. Let us preserve this last stretch of accessible oceanfront on our south shore as a legacy for future generations.

Mahalo for your consideration.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 12:55:17 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Maliny Soukkhasem | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I strongly OPPOSE SB534.

I fear it won't be truly is affordable and the environmental affects are concerning. The law was in place for good reason.

I am also a surfer, recreational swimmer and ocean lover in the area. This open space is one of the last in the area and I would hate to see it affected by a new dynamic that could possibly push us out. Please consider the community.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 12:57:36 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| jayson fukumoto | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

3. 50% of housing can be bought by Transplants and foreign investors. As a local who has been here for four generations, many are not pleased with the number of transplants in the Kakaako/Honolulu area. They come and go and do not pay State income tax and do not provide community service to the areas they use. Typical stuff, all take and here for the clout of social media. Obviously not all but enough to reinforce the stereotype. 4. 17 years of nothing on these parcels of land. I am not Hawaiian and benefit nothing from OHA and DHHL. The advancement of Hawaiians using taxpayer monies that have accounted to nothing but lobbying and promoting victim mentalities. It is time for OHA to build something rather than waste their time lobbying the Leg year after year with the same result while seeking empathy from non-Hawaiians for their support. It's time to move on to Plan B. 5. Power struggle. OHA stated at the town hall earlier this year that their plan is to control the Leg. While I respect and agree that going through the Leg is the most effective way to push your agenda, this is not the Hawai'i way. This is capitalism masked as community cohesiveness. There is no Aloha in this bill, only Capitalism. This benefits only a select few at the expense of many. If this was a Haole or Asian agency pushing this Bill, locals and Hawaiians would be up in arms. No difference here strictly regarding this Bill. 6. Too many important details not addressed. I did not get a good feeling this plan will be executed in good faith to benefit Hawaiians and locals. Not enough information is being provided to questions asked. No contingency plans, no willingness to compromise by OHA. This plan appears flimsy and changing state law on a flimsy plan does not equate effectiveness. Mahalo, - Local surfer and current resident outside Kakaako area.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 12:58:52 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Maria Welvaert | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am in strong opposition to SB 534! Kaka‘ako Makai is too valuable to lose to development.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 1:25:06 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Kate Thompson | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Dear Senators of the WAM and JDC committees,

I'm writing to you today to ask you to stop SB 534 SD1, and keep this measure from progressing any further.

I strongly oppose SB 534. The OHA proposed build and requested 'height exception' are not reasonable.

We still don't know the full impact of the EIS, the condo maintenance fee, or the long-term effects of a height restriction variance.

OHA's current building plan (SB534) is controversial and it is to pitting Hawaiians against each other, which is shameful in itself. We all agree that we need affordable housing, but the current OHA proposal for the Kakaako Makai land is not the way to go.

We need OHA to follow the 200-foot building height law on the Kakaako Makai land. If OHA is unwilling to do this, they can trade this land for different land, or sell it.

OHA has a responsibility to work for the direct benefit of Hawaiians, and therefore OHA should drop this 'roundabout scheme'.

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony.

Best regards,

Kate Thompson

808-383-3334

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 3:13:21 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Jeannie Chesser | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Keep Hawaii beautiful and our ocean, and ocean views sacred and available to all!!

NO MORE HIGH RISES especially on the makai side of Ala Moana Blvd. Stop breaking the height limits...NUFF ALREADY

Kaka'ako looks like Singapore

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 3:39:32 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Erik Alvarez | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I strongly oppose bill SB534.

kakaako itslef is becoming inundated with towers, and the infrastructure is failing.

I oppose the development of Kakkaako Makai. Building a tower this close to the ocean will have a negative affect on the surrounding nature and ocean. not only crowding an already crowded area, but making it harder to access for locals that have been enjoying this area for 50+ years.

I am voitng to opose SB534

Erik Alvarez

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 4:00:22 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Cullen Pang | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am in strong opposition of real estate development on Kakaako Makai. This area is heavily used by the community and I am concerned that if this place is development as high rise condominiums, the whole community will not be able to access this area. Please preserve this area for community use. Thank you!

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 4:09:32 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Olivia Hughes | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Olivia Hughes. I have lived in Honolulu since 2009, and am a University of Hawai'i graduate with a bachelor's degree in Global Environmental Science. I am writing to testify my opposition of SB 534 Relating to the Hawai'i Community Development Authority.

I oppose the proposed development of Kaka'ako Makai. This area is one of the few places left in Honolulu that locals can still visit to surf and be temporarily separated from the urban development of areas like Waikiki. There is very little faith among the community, including me, that the proposed housing will be anywhere close to "affordable" as is claimed, or that it will truly be prioritized for families already living on O'ahu.

Moreover, the proposed area where these buildings would be constructed sits directly over a former landfill and current toxic brownfield. The construction costs to stabilize the land in order to safely build on top of it will be prohibitively costly. There is no way to assure the public that this level of development won't lead to another "rail" disaster of going over budget time and time again.

This is to say nothing of the environmental consequences of releasing these toxins into O'ahu's groundwater, soil, reefs, and ocean. At the absolute bare minimum, a proper environmental impact assessment should be done on Kaka'ako Makai.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 4:26:51 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Chris Lum | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose residential construction in Kakaako Makai. Enough is enough. We need to draw the line somewhere and keep it there

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 5:24:58 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| arleen velasco | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I strongly oppose HB534. In June 2009 an Environmental Hazard Evaluation was conducted that revealed that dangerous and toxic chemical were present in surface soil. The testing sample depth was a maximum of three feet. It is irresponsible to consider development of the old landfill site without testing to a depth that a foundation or pilings would be required to support any structures built. At a minimum, extensive remediation would be required to remove the known toxins and much more extensive soil testing should be required to determine how deep to excavate and what other harmful substances are present. It is an insult to the community and to the ocean ecosystem to allow development in an area so polluted a law was passed that forbids the building of any residencial structures in the area. The only thing that has changed since the 2009 report is that the sea level has risen and most likely inundating the landfill during high tides and returning the toxins to the ocean during low tides. Please do not support this bill.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 5:35:15 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Craig Jerome | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I strongly oppose allowing OHA to repeal the "no residential" restrictions in Kakaako Makai, no matter what newly minted marketing lingo they try to use to do so. Many of use have been fighting residential development in Kakaako Makai for nearly 20 years. Nothing has changed to make the idea more palatable in those 20 years. Allowing residential development in the last undeveloped area of our urban coastline will do nothing to ease housing costs for Hawaiian families. It will do nothing to reduce OHA's waiting lists. It will do nothing to improve quality of life for Honolulu families.

In fact, it will only make things worse. I see this as nothing more than a pure profit grab, with little foresight or long-term planning. OHA should have to live with the restrictions that existed on these lands when they took them in settlement. The rest of us should not have to pay the price for the bad deal that they made.

Kakaako makai is the last bit of coastline in our city that remains undeveloped. It should be a legacy that exists for the enjoyment of our people, not a path to even more profits for developers.

There is a reason why this land was protected against residential development. That reason has not disappeared. Instead, it has become even more important with the passage of time.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 5:52:06 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Germaine Meyers | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Rhoads and Dela Cruz, Vice Chairs Gabbard and Moriwaki, and Members of the Senate Committees on Judiciary and Ways and Means:

I'm a native Hawaiian OHA beneficiary and I STRONGLY SUPPORT SB534 for the following reasons:

SB534 will give OHA the authority to develop residential housing on specific parcels in Kaka‘ako Makai, as originally envisioned when OHA and the legislature reached a historic settlement of past due amounts in 2012.

Further, by raising residential height limits along Ala Moana Boulevard, this bill will enable OHA to maximize the value of Kaka‘ako Makai lands as intended by the 2012 settlement, and generate revenue to expand programs and services including loans and grants that directly benefit Native Hawaiians.

Finally, SB534 helps address Hawai‘i’s critical need for affordable workforce housing, by giving local families and essential workers the opportunity to live, work, and thrive in urban Honolulu through its workforce housing mandate. This bill does just that.

At the same, the bill maintains existing open space along the waterfront and dedicates funding for public infrastructure and more public access, setting the standard for developments across the islands.

In summary, passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians by the State of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo nunui for the opportunity to submit testimony. Please vote YES in support of SB534 SD1.

Ke Akua pu,

Germaine Meyers

OHA native Hawaiian Beneficiary

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 6:24:16 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Larry Asakawa | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I STRONGLY OPPOSE SB534. I live in Honolulu and do not want to see the beautiful coastlines along the Kewalo Basin and Point Panics ruined and overcrowded by high-rise condos in Kaka'ako Makai. In addition to the many unresolved infrastructure issues, there is very little parking, especially for bodysurfers who travel to Oahu from all over the world to ride Point Panics in the summer.

There is no need to build even more high-rise condos along the Honolulu coastline, especially in a traditionally quiet beach park area used by local families for generations. While OHA does good work creating affordable housing, there are other beautiful and much more appropriate areas for these massive development projects.

Mahalo, Larry Asakawa

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 6:33:17 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Brady Welvaert | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am in strong opposition to SB5345. This is the improper use of these areas. I support the Friends of Kewalos positions on this bill and vision for Kaka'ako Makai.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 7:17:21 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| michael wong | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose building any high rise on the makai side of Ala Moana Blvd. 300 ft was sufficient in Kakaako not 400ft. Look how disgusting Kakaako looks, i can barely see the mountains anymore from the ocean; also the extra sewage and water taken away from the Kamaainas. OHA should be ashamed for not being pono and selling out and raping the land. It will only set precedences for more High Rises. the Queen is rolling in the grave and Auwe, the local young Hawaiian generation cannot afford what you are building. Keep it low rise and Under \$500,000 or something for the kupunas. Be a true Hawaiian not a Sellout. Don't start the Presidences of abusing Hawaii again. We starting to look like Hong Kong.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 7:47:55 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Robert Marusko | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

As a Honolulu resident and outdoors enthusiast, I am **STRONGLY** in opposition to this measure. Although I have only been here for a few years, I have become acutely aware of the connection between Hawaii and Hawaii's oceans. They are a shared place of enjoyment, refuge and relaxation. They embody the character of this special place.

Watching the rapid development of Honolulu has made these shared spaces rare. And protecting them now feels even more important. In opposing this bill, I feel I am supporting Hawaii - the real, beautiful, **NATURAL** Hawaii.

Honolulu does not need more buildings, it needs more natural places for families and friends.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 7:48:53 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Ryan Willis | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Because of your proposed sea level rise, **I oppose** building close to the ocean.

keep Waikiki in Waikiki

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 7:51:27 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Erin Breakey | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB534, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai‘i. The passage of SB534 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

1. Failure to Complete a Proper Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The proposed development in Kaka‘ako Makai lacks a comprehensive and updated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that considers the full extent of harm to the area’s ecosystem, coastal integrity, and climate resiliency. Given the increasing threats of rising sea levels and shoreline erosion, pushing forward without due diligence disregards the long-term consequences of commercial residential expansion in a fragile coastal zone. Without an updated, independent EIS, this project represents reckless development that prioritizes short-term economic gains over the environmental and cultural sustainability of Hawai‘i.

2. The Delusion of Affordable Housing in Honolulu

Proponents of SB534 argue that it will provide much-needed affordable housing. However, history has shown that “affordable” housing in the Honolulu market is largely unattainable for local families due to inflated income thresholds and market-driven pricing. Previous high-rise developments in urban Honolulu have failed to provide truly affordable units for local residents—instead, they primarily serve out-of-state investors and high-income buyers. The promise of affordability is an illusion, and allowing high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai only deepens the crisis of displacement for Hawai‘i’s people.

3. Protecting the Last Shoreline of Honolulu from Commercial Residential Development

Kaka‘ako Makai is the last undeveloped shoreline in urban Honolulu, a rare and invaluable open space for residents and visitors alike. This land was intended to remain a public asset, providing community access to green space, cultural practices, and ocean recreation. High-rise development would permanently privatize and commercialize one of the last pieces of Honolulu’s coastline, restricting access for local families and severing the deep cultural and ancestral connection that Native Hawaiians have with the land and ocean. Once lost to concrete and steel, this shoreline cannot be reclaimed.

Conclusion

SB534 is not in the best interest of Hawai‘i, its people, or its cultural legacy. By neglecting environmental responsibility, perpetuating false promises of affordability, and threatening the last remaining shoreline of Honolulu, this bill prioritizes profits over people. Kaka‘ako Makai should be preserved as a public and cultural resource, not handed over to developers under the guise of housing that will not truly serve local residents.

I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Erin Breakey

[773-633-5007](tel:773-633-5007)

Resident of Honolulu

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 7:51:28 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Krista laremore | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

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I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Krista Laremore

Alohaqueen77@outlook.com

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 7:54:08 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Kanoe Willis | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose because Native Hawaiians aren't ment to be in high rise boxes. They are ment to be grounded to the aina.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 8:00:38 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| John Kobelansky Jr. | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Kakou,

We are tragically and swiftly losing our sacred lands and homes for the promise of affordable housing, super development and anticipated great “Rail” ridership. Sadly, this is mostly the result of out-of-control development, rampant greed, and tolerating a long standing tradition of widespread speculation that is driving an industry where prices are spiraling out of control.

However, to the Hawaiian person, these ideas are NOT acceptable at all because the Kanaka knows that the land is precious and limited and should be perpetuated in righteousness, not in dollars in cents, but rather in pride to Preserve and Protect what is vital to everyone, and I mean everyone, on the planet.

Just take walk around town and you realize that Our precious Aina is being filled in with high priced condos and highrises, endless automobiles, bike paths that go nowhere, inadequate infrastructure, out of control E-bikes and scooters, soaring crime rates, monster homes, Pop- Up potholes, nonstop traffic, no parking spaces, obstructed view planes , beaches contaminated with sewage, etc, etc, which further intensifies our already crowded and edgy conditions to live in.

How can that be good?!!

We need to step back and take a breath to realize what is going on here. What are we taking away from our paradise? It should be shared with everyone, but how can it be shared if paradise is gone? That’s the important message here because once it is gone, it’ll be gone forever...

Don’t let this happen! Please vote NO and oppose this bill. We need to rally behind the true meaning of Love & Aloha and Protect the Aina at all costs!!! We must set the tone for others to follow and not let “progress”become unbridled development and chaos in the name of money.

Always Protect, Preserve and Malama...

Mahalo,

John Kobelansky Jr of Kaka'ako

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 8:05:31 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Kaleimakalii Colburn | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534

Hawai‘i State Legislature

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB534, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai‘i. The passage of SB534 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

1. Failure to Complete a Proper Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The proposed development in Kaka‘ako Makai lacks a comprehensive and updated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that considers the full extent of harm to the area’s ecosystem, coastal integrity, and climate resiliency. Given the increasing threats of rising sea levels and shoreline erosion, pushing forward without due diligence disregards the long-term consequences of commercial residential expansion in a fragile coastal zone. Without an updated, independent EIS, this project represents reckless development that prioritizes short-term economic gains over the environmental and cultural sustainability of Hawai‘i.

2. The Delusion of Affordable Housing in Honolulu

Proponents of SB534 argue that it will provide much-needed affordable housing. However, history has shown that “affordable” housing in the Honolulu market is largely unattainable for local families due to inflated income thresholds and market-driven pricing. Previous high-rise developments in urban Honolulu have failed to provide truly affordable units for local residents—instead, they primarily serve out-of-state investors and high-income buyers. The promise of affordability is an illusion, and allowing high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai only deepens the crisis of displacement for Hawai‘i’s people.

3. Protecting the Last Shoreline of Honolulu from Commercial Residential Development

Kaka‘ako Makai is the last undeveloped shoreline in urban Honolulu, a rare and invaluable open space for residents and visitors alike. This land was intended to remain a public asset, providing

community access to green space, cultural practices, and ocean recreation. High-rise development would permanently privatize and commercialize one of the last pieces of Honolulu's coastline, restricting access for local families and severing the deep cultural and ancestral connection that Native Hawaiians have with the land and ocean. Once lost to concrete and steel, this shoreline cannot be reclaimed.

Conclusion

SB534 is not in the best interest of Hawai'i, its people, or its cultural legacy. By neglecting environmental responsibility, perpetuating false promises of affordability, and threatening the last remaining shoreline of Honolulu, this bill prioritizes profits over people. Kaka'ako Makai should be preserved as a public and cultural resource, not handed over to developers under the guise of housing that will not truly serve local residents.

I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 and protect Kaka'ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Kaleimakalii Colburn

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 8:16:13 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Doneileen Willets | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Doneileen Willets and I'm in opposition of bill SB534 because as a current resident undergoing displacement myself, it is causing a lot of distress. It's a domino effect with these big project developers coming in, drawing up a good plan, putting us tax payers in hindsight. We the people should have a say on what is necessary and what is not. We are taking away the lush land and building more supposed 'affordable units' when it really isn't necessary. How about more farms, more fishing ponds, more sources to bring our natives home. It hurts to see natives leave while we are marketing Hawaii to welcome the rich. Please, I urge you to oppose bill sb534.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify on this.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 8:16:22 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Preston Naparan | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

stimony in Strong Opposition to SB534

Hawai'i State Legislature

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I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Preston Naparan

(808)462-1048

Born& Raised Kanaka Maoli

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 8:32:57 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Amanda Britton | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534

Hawai‘i State Legislature

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SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 8:33:13 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Braden Iwami | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB534, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai‘i. The passage of SB534 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

1. Failure to Complete a Proper Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The proposed development in Kaka‘ako Makai lacks a comprehensive and updated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that considers the full extent of harm to the area’s ecosystem, coastal integrity, and climate resiliency. Given the increasing threats of rising sea levels and shoreline erosion, pushing forward without due diligence disregards the long-term consequences of commercial residential expansion in a fragile coastal zone. Without an updated, independent EIS, this project represents reckless development that prioritizes short-term economic gains over the environmental and cultural sustainability of Hawai‘i.

2. The Delusion of Affordable Housing in Honolulu

Proponents of SB534 argue that it will provide much-needed affordable housing. However, history has shown that “affordable” housing in the Honolulu market is largely unattainable for local families due to inflated income thresholds and market-driven pricing. Previous high-rise developments in urban Honolulu have failed to provide truly affordable units for local residents—instead, they primarily serve out-of-state investors and high-income buyers. The promise of affordability is an illusion, and allowing high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai only deepens the crisis of displacement for Hawai‘i’s people.

3. Protecting the Last Shoreline of Honolulu from Commercial Residential Development

Kaka‘ako Makai is the last undeveloped shoreline in urban Honolulu, a rare and invaluable open space for residents and visitors alike. This land was intended to remain a public asset, providing community access to green space, cultural practices, and ocean recreation. High-rise development would permanently privatize and commercialize one of the last pieces of Honolulu’s coastline, restricting access for local families and severing the deep cultural and ancestral connection that Native Hawaiians have with the land and ocean. Once lost to concrete and steel, this shoreline cannot be reclaimed.

Conclusion

SB534 is not in the best interest of Hawai‘i, its people, or its cultural legacy. By neglecting environmental responsibility, perpetuating false promises of affordability, and threatening the last remaining shoreline of Honolulu, this bill prioritizes profits over people. Kaka‘ako Makai should be preserved as a public and cultural resource, not handed over to developers under the guise of housing that will not truly serve local residents.

I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Braden Iwami

Hawaii resident

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 8:34:54 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Stefani Iwami | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

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I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Stefani Iwami
(808)722-5423

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 8:41:50 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Emily Greco | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

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I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 and protect Kaka'ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Emily Greco
860-921-1883
emilyngreco99@gmail.com

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 8:41:58 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Sean Panquites | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

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I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sean Panquites

spanquites@gmail.com

8087542735

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 8:44:37 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Jeffrey F Mizuno | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

No more buildings please

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 8:45:33 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| James Whelan | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I OPPOSE allowing OHA to repeal the "no residential" restrictions in Kaka'ako Makai.

I OPPOSE changing the max building height from 200' to 400'.

I OPPOSE allowing OHA, KS or any developer to build without a thorough EIS.

I OPPOSE allowing the Makai Side to look like the Mauka Side. Overcrowding and traffic will exasperate the area.

I OPPOSE the word "affordable", the prices given by OHA cannot be afforded by Hawaiians or Locals.

KAKA'AKO MAKAI IS THE LAST AREA OF COASTLINE THAT IS STILL NOT
OVERDEVELOPED. PLEASE KEEP WAIKIKI IN WAIKIKI! PLEASE KOKUA!!

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 8:55:18 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Jesse Juan | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony for SB534

Aloha Friends!

Mahalo for clicking this & supporting us on this movement to PROTECT KAKAAKO MAKAI!

There is info below, links to submit, and the testimony is at the ending of this doc!

Simply copy & paste into this link:

[Submit written testimony](#)

INFO FOR BILL ↓

The [public hearing for the OHA bill SB 534 Draft 1](#) is scheduled for:

Wednesday, February 26, 2025 at 10:05 am in Room 211

at the State Capitol

What we need from you:

1. [Submit written testimony](#) in Strong Opposition or show up on Wednesday with your red shirt. Even though you submitted testimony in previous hearings, you still must submit again. An easy way is to cut and paste your previous one. We recommend that you write out your testimony in your phone notes or a google doc so you can easily submit when and if the time is needed.

Last time there were more testimonies in support than in Opposition. We need to and can do better. Word of mouth (first) and social media (second) are the two most powerful marketing tools in your arsenal, so tell 5 family and friends and ask if they can do the same to support. The deadline is 10:05am on Tuesday, 2/25. You may submit later but it will be labeled late.

The screenshot shows a web form for submitting testimony. At the top, there are five navigation buttons: 'Submit Testimony', 'Hearing Notifications', 'Measure Tracking', 'My Account', and 'Find Legislator'. Below these is the title 'SUBMIT TESTIMONY' and a status message 'Testimony being submitted' and 'Upcoming hearing for SB554 (2)'. The form is divided into two main sections. The left section is titled 'Enter Bill or Measure and click Continue' and contains a text input field with the placeholder '(example: HB100 or SB100) (not case sensitive)', a 'Submit' button, and a 'Continue' button. Below this is a note: 'Please note that you will no longer receive email confirmation of testimony. If your testimony is posted in the list below, then it was successfully submitted and received.' The right section is titled 'Testimony' and contains a table with columns 'Bill', 'Committee Room', and 'Testimony'. The table has one row with the following data: 'SB554', 'Room 400', and 'Testimony'. Below the table are fields for 'Testifier's Full Name' (with a note '(first and last)'), 'Position Input' (with a note 'Your position on SB554 (2)'), and 'Testifying' (with a note 'On behalf of an organization (name of government agency, organization or business you are representing)'). There are also checkboxes for 'Support' and 'Oppose', and a 'Comments Only' checkbox.

2. Contact the Committee Chairs by phone (leave message) or email urging them to table(end)the bill with your reasons.

- Senator Donovan Dela Cruz- 808 586-6090 sendelacruz@capitol.hawaii.gov
- Senator Karl Rhoads - 808 5866130 senrhoads@capitol.hawaii.gov

This is the last chance to stop this before it crosses over to the House on March 6. Anticipating this, FOK has organized a [Rally on March 8](#), the Saturday following the crossover to show everyone that the People do not want this. More on this soon.

TOGETHER WE CAN DO THIS!

Protecting Open Spaces for Hawai'i's Future Generations

Mahalo,

Friends of Kewalos

PROTECT, PRESERVE, MĀLAMA!

Testimony

(Copy this and use as a template ↓)

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Mahalo for your time and consideration.

[Your Name]

[Your Contact Information]

Testimony for SB534

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SUBMIT TESTIMONY
Testimony being submitted
Upcoming hearing for SB534

| Bill | Committee Room | Date/Time | View |
|-------|----------------|-----------------------|------|
| SB534 | Room 211 | Feb 26, 2025 10:05 AM | View |

Enter Bill or Measure and click Continue
(Examples: SB534 or SB534 (not case sensitive))
[SEARCH] [Continue]

Please note that you will no longer receive email confirmation of testimony. If your testimony is posted in the list below, then it was successfully submitted and received.

Testifier's Full Name
(First and last)

*If planning on testifying via Zoom, this name must match your Zoom name exactly.

Position Input
Your position as SB534 test:
☒ Support
☒ Oppose
☒ Comments Only

Testifying
☒ As an individual citizen
On behalf of an organization (name of governmental agency, organization, or business you are representing)

2. Contact the Committee Chairs by phone (leave message) or email urging them to table(end)the bill with your reasons.

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Protecting Open Spaces for Hawai'i's Future Generations

Mahalo,

Friends of Kewalos

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Testimony

(Copy this and use as a template ↓)

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Hawai'i State Legislature

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I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Jesse Juan

929-8309

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 9:00:26 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Andrew Lau | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB 534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka'ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai'i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

1. Failure to Complete a Proper Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The proposed development in Kaka'ako Makai lacks a comprehensive and updated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that considers the full extent of harm to the area's ecosystem, coastal integrity, and climate resiliency. Given the increasing threats of rising sea levels and shoreline erosion, pushing forward without due diligence disregards the long-term consequences of commercial residential expansion in a fragile coastal zone. Without an updated, independent EIS, this project represents reckless development that prioritizes short-term economic gains over the environmental and cultural sustainability of Hawai'i.

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I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Andrew Lau

(808) 743-9040

lau.andrew95@gmail.com

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 9:06:04 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Matthew Sandrich | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha,

I think it's important to increase available housing for the people of Hawai'i, happy to have OHA create another source of income, and am happy that 51% of the prospective housing will be designated workforce housing. However, I have a few issues with Kaka'ako Makai that keep me from fully supporting the bill.

1. Important places like Point Panics need to be protected from development. Selling off public land like parks is not how government agencies should be stewarding the land. Once it falls into private and corporate hands, there's no getting it back.

2. With sea level rise, how much of this will even be a viable or safe place for people to live in the next 25-50 years.

3. Another hotel is not only unnecessary, it's irresponsible. We already have too many. We don't have the water resources to continue supporting more and more transient visitors. While it would be nice to have a hotel run and managed by a local organization, unless OHA stays in ownership of the parcel, it will do absolutely nothing to enrich anybody except for the Hotel Industry. Enough is Enough with hotels.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Matthew Sandrich

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 9:09:23 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Ms. Leona Souza | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

As a long time resident of Oahu and living in Kakaako, I have seen old store like Sport Authority, McDonald's, Dixi Grill and even the old Ward warehouse being thorn down and new buildings get built right in its place. I have witness buildings on top of buildings being thorn down and new ones built all in a couple block of Kakaako. THIS NEEDS TO STOP NOW! NO MORE BUILDINGS. From 2000 to now there have been countless High rises. From South Street and Ala Moana to Piikoi and Ala Moana. Nothing but new high rises. Our island cannot withstand anymore. Not to mention when our children and grandchildren grow up, they will not have anything left of our beautiful island. No more lush green trees and grass to absorb and appreciate anymore. There will be no beautiful ocean views to admire. NOTHING LEFT BUT Concrete BUILDINGS! So I urge you to take action and stop this bill SB534 and not any more buildings be built.

Sincerely,

Leona Souza

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 9:12:58 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Scott Kidd | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Please don't destroy our community and turn Kaka'ako into another Waikiki. This isnt about doing right by the people but furthering economic development at the detriment to the ecosystem and the people that live there.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 9:20:58 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| catherine iwami | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose develoment at the kakaako makai !

Enough is enough!

More tower residential buildings is destroying the little paradise we have.

Stop! Enough is enough !

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 9:25:29 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Christina Gray | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

I strongly oppose SB534, which threatens the integrity of Kewalo and accelerates the cycle of overdevelopment that disconnects the people of Hawai‘i from the land and ocean that sustain us.

Kewalo is not just another piece of real estate—it is a place of deep cultural and communal significance. Allowing this project to proceed sets a dangerous precedent: one where concrete replaces coastline, where luxury towers stand empty while local families are priced out, and where ocean views become meaningless because the waters beneath them are polluted.

Massive developments like this do not serve the people of Hawai‘i. They cast literal and figurative shadows—on our environment, our access to open space, and our connection to place. What is Hawai‘i if its land is hidden behind towering walls, its shorelines blocked from public use, and its natural beauty replaced with corporate interests?

Once this land is gone, it is gone forever. If we continue down this path, what will remain? There is no value in land that has been stripped of its essence, no future in an island that has been overrun by greed.

I urge you to reject SB534. Protect Kewalo. Protect Hawai‘i.

Mahalo

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 9:26:15 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Jill Kono | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Jill and I am once again submitting my testimony in strong opposition to SB 534, which seeks to authorize development in Kaka‘ako Makai. While I acknowledge the need for affordable housing, I do not believe that this proposal will resolve the issue, but instead will create more problems for residents and the environment.

I have seen similar bills trying to be passed through over the last few years, trying to develop this pristine parcel of land, and my stance remains the same. ‘A‘ole to development in Kaka‘ako Makai.

Besides the "affordable" issue with this proposed project, there is also the environmental issues with OHA’s plan to develop on this piece of land. With the effects of climate change, our shorelines are highly vulnerable and building a high-rise aimed to house hundreds of Hawaiians seems for lack of better words, dumb. Maintenance and insurance fees would probably skyrocket after a few years and the housing would no longer be affordable.

The community has consistently opposed residential development in Kaka‘ako Makai. The Hawai‘i State Legislature and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs have long debated this issue, with previous decisions to preserve the area for public and cultural use. Ignoring this history of opposition truly undermines my trust in government and public process.

I urge you to oppose SB 534 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for future generations. Compromising our precious coastal lands is not the answer to our housing crisis. I respectfully request that the committee reject this bill and explore other alternatives to address our housing crisis.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to submit my testimony on this issue that is extremely important to my ‘ohana.

Jill Kono

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 9:28:31 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| coltyn panquites | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB 534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka'ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai'i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

1. Failure to Complete a Proper Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The proposed development in Kaka'ako Makai lacks a comprehensive and updated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that considers the full extent of harm to the area's ecosystem, coastal integrity, and climate resiliency. Given the increasing threats of rising sea levels and shoreline erosion, pushing forward without due diligence disregards the long-term consequences of commercial residential expansion in a fragile coastal zone. Without an updated, independent EIS, this project represents reckless development that prioritizes short-term economic gains over the environmental and cultural sustainability of Hawai'i.

2. The Delusion of Affordable Housing in Honolulu

Proponents of SB534 argue that it will provide much-needed affordable housing. However, history has shown that “affordable” housing in the Honolulu market is largely unattainable for local families due to inflated income thresholds and market-driven pricing. Previous high-rise developments in urban Honolulu have failed to provide truly affordable units for local residents—instead, they primarily serve out-of-state investors and high-income buyers. The promise of affordability is an illusion, and allowing high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai only deepens the crisis of displacement for Hawai‘i’s people.

3. Protecting the Last Shoreline of Honolulu from Commercial Residential Development

Kaka‘ako Makai is the last undeveloped shoreline in urban Honolulu, a rare and invaluable open space for residents and visitors alike. This land was intended to remain a public asset, providing community access to green space, cultural practices, and ocean recreation. High-rise development would permanently privatize and commercialize one of the last pieces of Honolulu’s coastline, restricting access for local families and severing the deep cultural and ancestral connection that Native Hawaiians have with the land and ocean. Once lost to concrete and steel, this shoreline cannot be reclaimed.

Conclusion

SB 534 is not in the best interest of Hawai‘i, its people, or its cultural legacy. By neglecting environmental responsibility, perpetuating false promises of affordability, and threatening the last remaining shoreline of Honolulu, this bill prioritizes profits over people. Kaka‘ako Makai should be preserved as a public and cultural resource, not handed over to developers under the guise of housing that will not truly serve local residents.

I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

coltyn panquites

808 754 2182

born and raised oahu, live in kaimuki

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 9:35:19 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Hina Kono | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha,

I strongly oppose SB 534. I believe that the parcel of land should not be developed, but preserved and protected for the community.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit a testimony of this important issue.

Sincerely,

Hina Kono

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 9:38:13 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Mark Bautista | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

There is a limited space for this type of development in Honolulu already. Waikiki is a congested rat race and allowing homeless and chaos in already traffic jammed Honolulu, this is not something that is ideal for residents. Developers outside of Hawai'i cannot see the day to day living lifestyle driving to and from work on the H1. We do not approve this bill to pass.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 9:42:18 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Taryn Do | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose this bill.

We need to preserve the beauty of our land.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 9:48:37 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Myrtie Sasha Imamori | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose SB534 as a Realtor and resident of Honolulu. This is on unsafe and environmentally unstable land. The runoff will ruin our ocean and create issues with health and wellbeing. The ocean is the only thing we have left to surf and enjoy. Residents and Native Hawaiians will be priced out of this and it will not be affordable. I oppose new development on this land. Thanks for listening to us the people in Hawaii and the aina.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 9:49:25 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Colin | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

I strongly oppose bill SB 534! The continued development of "new" infrastructure has hit a breaking point. I understand that there is a housing crisis within the islands of Hawai'i, especially on O'ahu. However, building unaffordable highrise condos that will only be paritally occupied or owned by the super wealthy of Hawai'i or, the more likely case, foreign investors, is only going to cause more harm to the local populace. Additionally, building infrastructure on or near the ocean will ineviably cause harm to Hawai'i's already delicate ecosystem and place a burden on an already weaken infrastructure (e.g., underground pipes for flooding, power grid, and more noticeably take up the limited space Hawai'i has). Moreover, you, elected members of the people, should think carefully of not only how this will effect Hawai'i now, but the possibility of damaging the future of Hawai'i and its people.

Mahalo for your time

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 9:52:17 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Jason Smith | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB 534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka'ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai'i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

1. Failure to Complete a Proper Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The proposed development in Kaka'ako Makai lacks a comprehensive and updated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that considers the full extent of harm to the area's ecosystem, coastal integrity, and climate resiliency. Given the increasing threats of rising sea levels and shoreline erosion, pushing forward without due diligence disregards the long-term consequences of commercial residential expansion in a fragile coastal zone. Without an updated, independent EIS, this project represents reckless development that prioritizes short-term economic gains over the environmental and cultural sustainability of Hawai'i.

2. The Delusion of Affordable Housing in Honolulu

Proponents of SB534 SD1 argue that it will provide much-needed affordable housing. However, history has shown that “affordable” housing in the Honolulu market is largely unattainable for local families due to inflated income thresholds and market-driven pricing. Previous high-rise developments in urban Honolulu have failed to provide truly affordable units for local residents—instead, they primarily serve out-of-state investors and high-income buyers. The promise of affordability is an illusion, and allowing high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai only deepens the crisis of displacement for Hawai‘i’s people.

3. Protecting the Last Shoreline of Honolulu from Commercial Residential Development

Kaka‘ako Makai is the last undeveloped shoreline in urban Honolulu, a rare and invaluable open space for residents and visitors alike. This land was intended to remain a public asset, providing community access to green space, cultural practices, and ocean recreation. High-rise development would permanently privatize and commercialize one of the last pieces of Honolulu’s coastline, restricting access for local families and severing the deep cultural and ancestral connection that Native Hawaiians have with the land and ocean. Once lost to concrete and steel, this shoreline cannot be reclaimed.

Conclusion

SB 534 SD1 is not in the best interest of Hawai‘i, its people, or its cultural legacy. By neglecting environmental responsibility, perpetuating false promises of affordability, and threatening the last remaining shoreline of Honolulu, this bill prioritizes profits over people. Kaka‘ako Makai should be preserved as a public and cultural resource, not handed over to developers under the guise of housing that will not truly serve local residents.

I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Jason Smith

Ewa Beach

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 9:56:12 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Ryan Higgins | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB 534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka'ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai'i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

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I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Ryan Higgins

ryanp.higgs@gmail.com

808-557-1942

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 10:01:05 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|------------------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Phongphinit Siripornsawan | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

This land provides endless possibility of enjoyment for the public. To reduce it down for a few individuals by changing the laws that are already in place is not for a greater good. There are other options that are available and don't require making changes to the laws.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 10:04:26 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Ruth M Kobelansky | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha All,

Don't ruin Kaka'ako! Please keep it the way it is!
Mahalo,

Ruth Kobelansky

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 10:12:03 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Beau Acoba | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai‘i State Legislature

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB 534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai‘i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

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With the rising costs of construction, in order for the developer to turn a profit, these units will be out of reach to the targeted demographic. It's no secret that this coastline could fetch premiums on the housing market, so the premise of the project is already flawed. Let's keep the area open, revitalize the parks, and support conservation programs to keep the area pristine.

SB 534 SD1 is not in the best interest of Hawai'i, its people, or its cultural legacy. By neglecting environmental responsibility, perpetuating false promises of affordability, and threatening the last remaining shoreline of Honolulu, this bill prioritizes profits over people. Kaka'ako Makai should be preserved as a public and cultural resource, not handed over to developers under the guise of housing that will not truly serve local residents.

I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka'ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Beau Acoba

beauacoba@gmail.com

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 10:22:30 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Megan Denes | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB 534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka'ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai'i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

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Conclusion

SB 534 SD1 is not in the best interest of Hawai‘i, its people, or its cultural legacy. By neglecting environmental responsibility, perpetuating false promises of affordability, and threatening the last remaining shoreline of Honolulu, this bill prioritizes profits over people. Kaka‘ako Makai should be preserved as a public and cultural resource, not handed over to developers under the guise of housing that will not truly serve local residents.

I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Megan Denes

(321)986-7113

Kapolei

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 10:25:59 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Darryl Nordstrom | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am writing to STRONGLY OPPOSE bill SB534. The law was set many years ago to keep this area of Kakaako from being overdeveloped.

I have enjoyed surfing, swimming, biking, paddle boarding, snorkeling in this area for my entire adult life.

Kakaako already has numerous luxury and some ultra luxury high rise condos that have been built in the last 10 years and more are being built and more are planned to be built close to Ala Moana beach park and Kewalos Beach Park. This is prime land to build unaffordable housing for local working people, but for wealthy people that will pay top dollar to be as close to the water as possible. Very soon Kewalo harbor will be the parking lot for wealthy residents in ultra luxury condos with boats and yachts.

I can imagine how much more money people would pay to be even closer to the ocean if this bill gets approved. Does anyone really believe affordable housing will be built in Kakaako makai for local working families? I don't!

Does anyone really believe that there will be a majority of affordable housing built for local working families? I don't!

This bill SB534 is being cleverly sold as affordable housing, but it appears to be a smoke screen.

This bill if approved will allow OHA to sell the land to anyone and of course they will sell to the highest bidder so that OHA will maximize the amount of money they make. So I strongly believe that much more Ultra Ultra Luxury high rise condos and developments will be built in this prime area of land even closer to the ocean than only the wealthiest could afford.

Why would anyone sell land for a cheaper amount to build affordable housing when they can sell it for enormous amounts of money to build for the ultra wealthy.

I think this bill goes against Hawaiian Culture and Values. **Ua Mau ke Ea o ka 'Āina i ka Pono**

I feel as if OHA is doing to Hawaii what many mainland corporations and big money people have done. Destroy the land and resources for profit. Sell the land to the highest bidder to maximize the amount of money that can be made.

This is taken directly from OHA's website in the section "Aina - Land & Sea"

"Land is not a commodity to be exploited, it is a relative that is respected and cared for and, who, in turn, cares for us. Mālama 'āina expresses our kuleana to care for the land and to properly manage the resources and gifts it provides. Aloha 'āina expresses our love for this land and beyond that, our love of country – the sovereign nation stolen away but ever in our hearts."

What if this area could be converted into a honest and true Hawaiian Cultural area. With farms, culture, craftsmanship, music, food. A gathering place for Hawaiians, locals and visitor in town. A beacon of true Hawaiian Culture to the state and the world. And even affordable housing for Hawaiians.

I am **STRONGLY AGAINST** Kakaako Makai becoming overdeveloped and becoming a new Waikiki. I struggle to imagine high rise condos built right along the waterfront along this area. Of course the most expensive ultra luxury condos will be built closest to the water to preserve their un-obstructive of the ocean.

This is not about affordable housing, this is about making lots of money.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 10:30:24 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Pohaikealoha George | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha,

I OPPOSE allowing OHA to repeal the "no residential" restrictions in Kaka'ako Makai.

I OPPOSE changing the max building height from 200' to 400'.

I OPPOSE allowing OHA, KS or any developer to build without a thorough EIS.

I OPPOSE allowing the Makai Side to look like the Mauka Side. Overcrowding and traffic will exasperate the area.

I OPPOSE the word "affordable", the prices given by OHA cannot be afforded by Hawaiians or Locals.

KAKA'AKO MAKAI IS THE LAST AREA OF COASTLINE THAT IS STILL NOT OVERDEVELOPED. PLEASE KEEP WAIKIKI IN WAIKIKI! PLEASE KOKUA!!

Mahalo

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 10:31:44 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Chelsea Iwami | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Hi, I am writing testimony in opposition of SB534.

My first reason for opposition is safety and environmental concerns. Is there an enviornmental study that is proves that building residential, with sewer,waste, and construction, will not further harm our environment? Our economy is based on tourism, with Hawaii being an ideal "paradise." But Ala Moana and Kakaako is being less and less of a natural paradise. I was once able to surf out in Kewalos and Ala Moana and see the mountain landscape. I would paddle out and position myself in the lineup, according to natural features, like where trees lined up with mountain tops. That's how I knew I was in the perfect spot to catch waves. Now, buildings have blocked the mountains, with only slivers of pure nature to be seen between the concrete towers. If we want to keep our islands beautiful, and keep people visiting, we need to build smart. Thinking about the future, what will our children and future generations have when we pass? Will they have to fix our problems because we did not make informed and smart decisions? Before SB534 passes, we need to make the smart move and have a complete environmental impact study done.

Second reason I am in opposition of SB534 is I am a teacher, and I have a concern of education and community services available for the prospective children who will be living in this area. The Kakaako area is heavily developed, and with more housing, where are all of these children supposed to attend school or participate in community programs? Are we just going to shove more students into the surrounding schools? Do the existing schools have the infrastructure and staff to provide a safe and effective learning environment for these children? Also, I have a concern for the safety and overall well-being of the potential children to move into this residential area. With an influx of residents (some not local) are the streets of Kakakoo prepared to handle safety concerns for the "families" you intend to serve? Will local families feel safe living there? There should be a plan for community parks and services to keep children safe after school. If you are truly building for the locals, you need to make the smart choice, and ensure that their children will be provided a quality education, as in any other district, and it is a safe community.

My third reason for opposing SB534 is because of the reality of "affordable" housing for locals....single or not. The prices for a condo are not affordable, as a single public school teacher. Maybe on paper they are. But does it include monthly HOA fees? Like any other family or person, there are additional financial obligations like car payments, phone, gas, food, and insurance. As a single person, this all adds up. Let's continue to make smart decisions, and really

research if the housing you will be providing will be financially affordable for locals, and also attractive. Will the locals you intend to serve, be attracted to living in a condo?

Overall, we the people, and the decision makers for Hawaii's future generations, need to make smart decisions. Decisions that ensure the environmental and social well being for this generation and the next. Please do not make decisions based on the now. You do not want your keiki to clean up your mess. To the leaders and decision makers, please lay the ground and provide good role models for our youth by making the smart and right decisions.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 10:36:37 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Ann Pang | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose allowing OHA to repeal the "no residential" restrictions in Kaka'ako Makai.

I oppose changing the max building height to 400 feet.

I oppose allowing OHA, KS, or any developer to build without a thorough EIS.

I oppose allowing the Makai side to look like the Mauka side. Overcrowding and traffic will ruin the area.

I oppose the word "affordable", the prices given by OHA cannot be afforded by Hawaiians or Locals.

Sincerely,

Ann Pang

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 10:44:07 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Les O. | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Oppose to Kakaako Makai development! This is not Miami where buildings front the beaches. Oahu's south shore Kakaako Makai is special to all and the last "access to open spaces for future generations." Why disfigure the beauty of the Hawaiian islands and coastline access which natives and locals appreciate for healing/ recreation/ life. No more concrete jungles on the south shore of Oahu! Malama the Aina!

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 11:00:06 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Patrick Ogawa | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha,

As a concerned, local born and raised, Oahu citizen, I am opposed to SB534.

People from all walks of life enjoy the beautiful parks and beaches on the south side of Oahu. I am not opposed to development (high rise housing), let's just do it in the right places. Kakaako Makai is not one of them! It was zoned like this in the past for a reason, let's keep it that way! Do it on the Mauka side like everyone else.

Mahalo,

Patrick Ogawa

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 11:04:41 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Christie Becu | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am writing in opposition of SB534 SD1 which will would repeal building restrictions in Kaka’ako makai. This would be the first step of progressive development of the area, unleashing the floodgates to more and more development. The land which housing and likely future projects are to be located was previously an industrial dumping ground and digging this landfill up will release all the toxic waste into the air, surrounding land, and water. Increased density in this area will also only worsen pollution and traffic. This land is not meant to be a second New York City or Los Angeles. We must really ask, why does Kaka’ako need to be more densely populated and does it really serve people and the land as a sustainable, long term solution for Hawaii?

In the words of Israel Kamakawiwo’ole in his song Hawai’I ‘78

Ua mau, ke ea o ka aina, i ka pono, o Hawai’i
Ua mau, ke ea o ka aina, i ka pono, o Hawai’i

If just for a day our king and queen
Would visit all these islands and saw everything
How would they feel about the changes of our land

Could you just imagine if they were around
And saw highways on their sacred grounds
How would they feel about this modern city life

Tears would come from each others eyes
As they would stop to realize
That our people are in great great danger now

How, would they feel
Could their smiles be content, then cry
Cry for the gods, cry for the people
Cry for the land that was taken away
And then yet you'll find, Hawai’i

Could you just imagine they came back
And saw traffic lights and railroad tracks
How would they feel about this modern city life

Tears would come from each others eyes
As they would stop to realize
That our land is in great great danger now

All the fighting that the king had done
To conquer all these islands now these condominiums
How would he feel if he saw Hawai'i nei

How, would he feel
Would his smile be content, then cry
Cry for the gods, cry for the people
Cry for the land that was taken away
And then yet you'll find, Hawai'i

Thank you for your time and consideration. I hope you keep in mind the history of Hawaii and embrace Hawaiian values while making decisions for this land and peoples' future.

Best,

Christie Becu, MD

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 11:18:25 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Eugene Lee | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing.

I STRONGLY OPPOSE SB534_SD1 for the following issues:

The environmental impact of the construction of residential units on known contaminated areas of land, before proposing construction a environmental impact study should be examined which could further limit what could be constructed over the property as well as the cost to mitigate the contamination before construction which could greatly impact the cost of the residential units and the environment.

For years, citizens including members of OHA have opposed construction of the area to allow for public access and enjoyment of our last ocean front open spaces for our families to enjoy, this is a complete about face to protect our open spaces just to make money.

The sale or lease of units is proposed to provide funding through association fees to maintain existing public infrastructure is improbable given the current cost of maintaining this type of housing with the rising cost to maintain it, let alone to insure it. Current association fees for other Honolulu condos barely cover the cost to maintain and further cover the rising cost of building insurance. For individuals this would be additional expenses on top of a mortgage and their own insurance.

To change the restrictions currently in place would over turn years of efforts to protect our open spaces and ocean access. I am not against development but not without consideration for the environmental risk as well as the conversion of public space to private which would further limit access to our natural beauty. In addition, I am not opposed to affordable housing but will this truly be affordable?

For these reasons, I strongly oppose SB534_SD1. Thank you.

Thank you,

Gassho,

Gene Lee

*SENATOR DONOVAN DELA CRUZ. CHAIR OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS.*

SB 534

DATE: Wednesday, February 26, 2025
TIME: 10:05 AM
PLACE: Conference Room 211 State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

IN OPPOSITION OF SB 534

Dear Honorable Chair Senator Donovan Dela Cruz of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means and Committee Members:

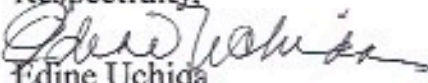
My name is Edine Uchida and I've lived in Honolulu for most of my 58 years of life and I'm testifying against SB 534.

I moved into the Kaka'ako area 9 years ago and lived and experienced a time of rapid development of massive concrete buildings and the congestion of humanity that comes along with it. There are an additional 11 high rises scheduled for development in the next 5-6 years and a potential 15,000 residents may overwhelm population density, traffic flow and the infrastructure of this 0.5 mile by 0.25 mile area of land. Kaka'ako makai and its beach park represents the last semblance of peace and tranquility in an over-developed area and another condo in Kaka'ako is not needed.

I also believe building any condo taller than 200 feet in Kaka'ako Makai may disrupt the potential toxic waste that have been buried in the area that was once a landfill. I'm afraid that drilling structural supports needed for a condominium 100 feet down into the fill could release toxic waste chemicals into the beaches of Ala Moana and Waikiki and pollute its water, damage its coral, destroy its beautiful sea life and Hawaii's world renown ocean activities.

We must protect Hawaii's beautiful natural resources and preserve low impact areas for the future generations to come. Please vote NO to SB534.

Respectfully,



Edine Uchida
600 Ala Moana Blvd.
Honolulu, HI 96813

*SENATOR KARL RHOADS, CHAIR OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON
JUDICIARY.*

SB 534

DATE: Wednesday, February 26, 2025
TIME: 10:05 AM
PLACE: Conference Room 211 State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

IN OPPOSITION OF SB 534

Dear Honorable Chair Senator Karl Rhoads of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Committee Members:

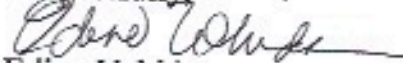
My name is Edine Uchida and I've lived in Honolulu for most of my 58 years of life and I'm testifying against SB 534.

I moved into the Kaka'ako area 9 years ago and lived and experienced a time of rapid development of massive concrete buildings and the congestion of humanity that comes along with it. There are an additional 11 high rises scheduled for development in the next 5-6 years and a potential 15,000 residents may overwhelm population density, traffic flow and the infrastructure of this 0.5 mile by 0.25 mile area of land. Kaka'ako makai and its beach park represents the last semblance of peace and tranquility in an over-developed area and another condo in Kaka'ako is not needed.

I also believe building any condo taller than 200 feet in Kaka'ako Makai may disrupt the potential toxic waste that have been buried in the area that was once a landfill. I'm afraid that drilling structural supports needed for a condominium 100 feet down into the fill could release toxic waste chemicals into the beaches of Ala Moana and Waikiki and pollute its water, damage its coral, destroy its beautiful sea life and Hawaii's world renown ocean activities.

We must protect Hawaii's beautiful natural resources and preserve low impact areas for the future generations to come. Please vote NO to SB534.

Respectfully,



Edine Uchida
600 Ala Moana Blvd.
Honolulu, HI 96813

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 11:27:37 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Curt Oishi | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I strongly oppose SB 534. Hawaii needs to keep some areas Hawaii. We don't need more development taking the coastline.

Mahalo,

Curt Oishi

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 11:28:14 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Alana Hu | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Aloha all,

I am writing in strong opposition of SB534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kakaako Makai. Is the intention to create more affordable housing or to make existing housing more affordable? Simply building more residential units will not address the core issue of affordable housing. We've seen this before with developments like Kakaako Mauka and other high-rise developments in Urban Honolulu. Previous high-rise developments have failed to provide truly affordable units for local residents—instead, they primarily serve out-of-state investors and high-income buyers. One of the most concerning aspects of this bill is the potential for ongoing displacement of long-time residents and Native Hawaiians. The development would also lead to environmental degradation, with which our islands are already struggling. Natural areas play a critical role in maintaining the health of our community. Furthermore, the development will put a strain on Hawai'i's already overburdened infrastructure. You can't miss that noticeable sewage smell as you walk through the high rises of Kakaako Mauka. The residents have made repeated complaints for over a decade, yet it remains unresolved. Furthermore, the increase in population would lead to increased traffic, more congestion, and strain on essential services. This is not sustainable, and we are already struggling to keep up with the demands. A comprehensive Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) conducted by an impartial contractor is needed. What even made Hawai'i so special in the first place? It sure is not what it looks like now or where we are headed. Solutions need to prioritize sustainability, the preservation of our environment, and the well-being of local communities and Native Hawaiians.

Mahalo,

Alana Hu

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 11:31:26 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Loren Watanuki | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am in opposition SB534. I hope Kaka'ako Makai will not be overdeveloped. There are enough areas already overdeveloped and overcrowded. Kaka'ako Makai doesn't need to be like the Mauka side.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2025 11:40:23 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Valerie Suzuki | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose SB 534 because no high rises at 400 feet should be built on the makai side of Ala Moana Blvd. It will ruin the open space that I enjoy along that stretch of Ala Moana Blvd. I walk to Kakaako park several times a week and enjoy the open space. I am so grateful to the Friends of Kewalo for saving the open space.

There is no such thing as affordable any more. Don't you know how much it cost to build just one bedroom units in Honolulu? Even building a parking stall in a parking structure for the one bedroom unit cost upwards of \$75,000. I myself live in a one bedroom unit that I paid \$500,000 back in 2017 in Kaka'ako . My maintenance went up from \$450/month to now \$740/month in 7 years! The condo insurance is so expensive now. My HO6 or homeowner's insurance is now \$800/year. Come on folks the cost of not just buying the unit is expensive but the monthly maintenance is high and only goes up every single year! This is the reality now.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 12:09:40 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Michael Orias | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB 534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka'ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai'i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

1. Failure to Complete a Proper Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The proposed development in Kaka'ako Makai lacks a comprehensive and updated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that considers the full extent of harm to the area's ecosystem, coastal integrity, and climate resiliency. Given the increasing threats of rising sea levels and shoreline erosion, pushing forward without due diligence disregards the long-term consequences of commercial residential expansion in a fragile coastal zone. Without an updated, independent EIS, this project represents reckless development that prioritizes short-term economic gains over the environmental and cultural sustainability of Hawai'i.

2. The Delusion of Affordable Housing in Honolulu

Proponents of SB534 SD1 argue that it will provide much-needed affordable housing. However, history has shown that “affordable” housing in the Honolulu market is largely unattainable for local families due to inflated income thresholds and market-driven pricing. Previous high-rise developments in urban Honolulu have failed to provide truly affordable units for local residents—instead, they primarily serve out-of-state investors and high-income buyers. The promise of affordability is an illusion, and allowing high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai only deepens the crisis of displacement for Hawai‘i’s people.

3. Protecting the Last Shoreline of Honolulu from Commercial Residential Development

Kaka‘ako Makai is the last undeveloped shoreline in urban Honolulu, a rare and invaluable open space for residents and visitors alike. This land was intended to remain a public asset, providing community access to green space, cultural practices, and ocean recreation. High-rise development would permanently privatize and commercialize one of the last pieces of Honolulu’s coastline, restricting access for local families and severing the deep cultural and ancestral connection that Native Hawaiians have with the land and ocean. Once lost to concrete and steel, this shoreline cannot be reclaimed.

Conclusion

SB 534 SD1 is not in the best interest of Hawai‘i, its people, or its cultural legacy. By neglecting environmental responsibility, perpetuating false promises of affordability, and threatening the last remaining shoreline of Honolulu, this bill prioritizes profits over people. Kaka‘ako Makai should be preserved as a public and cultural resource, not handed over to developers under the guise of housing that will not truly serve local residents.

I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Michael Orias

mdorias82@gmail.com

Resident of Moanalua in Honolulu, HI.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 12:10:13 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Makana Fronda | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Strongly oppose this bill. Please stop taking what little we have left

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 12:20:52 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Kainani Clark | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB 534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai‘i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

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2. The Delusion of Affordable Housing in Honolulu

Proponents of SB534 SD1 argue that it will provide much-needed affordable housing. However, history has shown that “affordable” housing in the Honolulu market is largely unattainable for local families due to inflated income thresholds and market-driven pricing. Previous high-rise developments in urban Honolulu have failed to provide truly affordable units for local residents—instead, they primarily serve out-of-state investors and high-income buyers. The

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Conclusion

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I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Kainani Clark

kainaniclark@gmail.com

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 12:31:32 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Virginia Kamakani | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB 534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka'ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai'i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

1. Failure to Complete a Proper Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

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2. The Delusion of Affordable Housing in Honolulu

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Kaka‘ako Makai is the last undeveloped shoreline in urban Honolulu, a rare and invaluable open space for residents and visitors alike. This land was intended to remain a public asset, providing community access to green space, cultural practices, and ocean recreation. High-rise development would permanently privatize and commercialize one of the last pieces of Honolulu’s coastline, restricting access for local families and severing the deep cultural and ancestral connection that Native Hawaiians have with the land and ocean. Once lost to concrete and steel, this shoreline cannot be reclaimed.

Conclusion

SB 534 SD1 is not in the best interest of Hawai‘i, its people, or its cultural legacy. By neglecting environmental responsibility, perpetuating false promises of affordability, and threatening the last remaining shoreline of Honolulu, this bill prioritizes profits over people. Kaka‘ako Makai should be preserved as a public and cultural resource, not handed over to developers under the guise of housing that will not truly serve local residents.

I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Virginia Kamakani

kamakani17@gmail.com

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 12:52:24 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Lorna Aratani | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Honorable Committee Chairs and Members:

I strongly oppose S.B. No. 534 SD1 because this bill creates an exception to the statutory prohibition against residential development in Kakaako Makai. The prohibition against residential development is codified in section 206E-31.5, Hawai‘i Revised Statutes, and was established to preserve this valuable waterfront location for the benefit of all Hawai‘i's residents.

In 2006, the 23rd Hawai‘i State Legislature passed H.B. No. 2555 that included this statutory prohibition. The Legislature did so because it listened to the voices of Hawai‘i's majority of residents rallying against the building of high density housing in Kakaako Makai, at a time when such housing was already being erected in Kakaako Mauka.

As the legislative history behind H.B. No. 2555 reflects, the Legislature was acutely aware of the compelling public interest in protecting Kakaako Makai from residential development when it passed this statutory prohibition. First, the House Committee on Water, Land and Ocean Resources (WLO) passed out the first House draft of the bill after noting that it was "Concerned over the tremendous public response to the contemplated action of HCDA to use the public lands in Kakaako Makai for residential purposes" and discussing its findings regarding the public's differing interests in Kakaako Makai and Mauka. H. Stand. Comm. No. 572-06, 23rd Leg., 2006 Reg. Sess., www.capitol.hawaii.gov. Please see at the end of this testimony the excerpt of WLO's committee report discussing its findings. Later, the Senate Committee on Ways and Means (WAM) added the residential development prohibition to the bill after finding that "[public] opposition extends to the development of any residential development [sic] in the district makai of Ala Moana Boulevard." S. Stand. Comm. Rep. No. 3524, 23rd Leg, 2006 Reg. Sess., www.capitol.hawaii.gov.

In conclusion, *as* the Legislature recognized back in 2006 when it passed H.B. No. 2555, there is a great public interest in protecting Kakaako Makai from residential development and preserving this precious waterfront location for the residents of Hawai‘i to use for recreation and learning. I respectfully ask your Committees to continue to protect Kakaako Makai from residential development by rejecting this bill.

WLO's Committee Report on H.B. No. 2555 (2006):

. . . Your Committee further finds that protecting and enhancing our scarce natural resources, including our shoreline, open space, and scenic resources are important public goals. Your Committee recognizes that open public space is scarce and of imperative priority in the densely populated urban core of Honolulu.

With these considerations in mind, your Committee discussed the appropriateness of allowing residential projects in Kakaako Makai.

Your Committee recognizes the importance of proper planning and development of the District. Reviewing the historical development of the District, your Committee understands the perception that Kakaako Makai and Kakaako Mauka are separate areas; however, they are not separate, but make up the entirety of the District where people work, live, learn and play. Kakaako Mauka with its existing highrise residential projects was designed to be the residential portion of the District, and Kakaako Makai was designed to be the learning and playing area of the District with open space and learning facilities, like parks and the University of Hawai‘i medical school.

H. Stand. Comm. No. 572-06, 23rd Leg., 2006 Reg. Sess., www.capitol.hawaii.gov. Notably, in its committee report, WLO also discusses the need for additional housing as well.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 1:09:21 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| James Connolly | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in STRONG OPPOSITION to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB 534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai‘i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

1. Failure to Complete a Proper Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The proposed development in Kaka‘ako Makai lacks a comprehensive and updated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that considers the full extent of harm to the area’s ecosystem, coastal integrity, and climate resiliency. Given the increasing threats of rising sea levels and shoreline erosion, pushing forward without due diligence disregards the long-term consequences of commercial residential expansion in a fragile coastal zone. Without an updated, independent EIS, this project represents reckless development that prioritizes short-term economic gains over the environmental and cultural sustainability of Hawai‘i.

2. The Delusion of Affordable Housing in Honolulu

Proponents of SB534 SD1 argue that it will provide much-needed affordable housing. However, history has shown that “affordable” housing in the Honolulu market is largely unattainable for local families due to inflated income thresholds and market-driven pricing. Previous high-rise developments in urban Honolulu have failed to provide truly affordable units for local

residents—instead, they primarily serve out-of-state investors and high-income buyers. The promise of affordability is an illusion, and allowing high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai only deepens the crisis of displacement for Hawai‘i’s people.

3. Protecting the Last Shoreline of Honolulu from Commercial Residential Development

Kaka‘ako Makai is the last undeveloped shoreline in urban Honolulu, a rare and invaluable open space for residents and visitors alike. This land was intended to remain a public asset, providing community access to green space, cultural practices, and ocean recreation. High-rise development would permanently privatize and commercialize one of the last pieces of Honolulu’s coastline, restricting access for local families and severing the deep cultural and ancestral connection that Native Hawaiians have with the land and ocean. Once lost to concrete and steel, this shoreline cannot be reclaimed.

Conclusion

SB 534 SD1 is not in the best interest of Hawai‘i, its people, or its cultural legacy. By neglecting environmental responsibility, perpetuating false promises of affordability, and threatening the last remaining shoreline of Honolulu, this bill prioritizes profits over people. Kaka‘ako Makai should be preserved as a public and cultural resource, not handed over to developers under the guise of housing that will not truly serve local residents.

I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

James Connolly

Kailua Resident

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 2:10:17 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Joshua Branco | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

I (Joshua Branco) am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB 534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka'ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai'i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

1. Failure to Complete a Proper Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The proposed development in Kaka'ako Makai lacks a comprehensive and updated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that considers the full extent of harm to the area's ecosystem, coastal integrity, and climate resiliency. Given the increasing threats of rising sea levels and shoreline erosion, pushing forward without due diligence disregards the long-term consequences of commercial residential expansion in a fragile coastal zone. Without an updated, independent EIS, this project represents reckless development that prioritizes short-term economic gains over the environmental and cultural sustainability of Hawai'i. I believe that it is known, that those lands are not to be used for the intended purpose of this bill.

2. The Delusion of Affordable Housing in Honolulu

Proponents of SB534 SD1 argue that it will provide much-needed affordable housing. However, history has shown that “affordable” housing in the Honolulu market is largely unattainable for local families due to inflated income thresholds and market-driven pricing. Previous high-rise developments in urban Honolulu have failed to provide truly affordable units for local residents—instead, they primarily serve out-of-state investors and high-income buyers. The promise of affordability is an illusion, and allowing high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai only deepens the crisis of displacement for Hawai‘i’s people.

3. Protecting the Last Shoreline of Honolulu from Commercial Residential Development

Kaka‘ako Makai is the last undeveloped shoreline in urban Honolulu, a rare and invaluable open space for residents and visitors alike. This land was intended to remain a public asset, providing community access to green space, cultural practices, and ocean recreation. High-rise development would permanently privatize and commercialize one of the last pieces of Honolulu’s coastline, restricting access for local families and severing the deep cultural and ancestral connection that Native Hawaiians have with the land and ocean. Once lost to concrete and steel, this shoreline cannot be reclaimed.

Conclusion

SB 534 SD1 is not in the best interest of Hawai‘i, its people, or its cultural legacy. By neglecting environmental responsibility, perpetuating false promises of affordability, and threatening the last remaining shoreline of Honolulu, this bill prioritizes profits over people. Kaka‘ako Makai should be preserved as a public and cultural resource, not handed over to developers under the guise of housing that will not truly serve local residents.

I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Joshua Branco

Joshuamkbranco@gmail.com

Resident of the island of O'ahu

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 3:38:37 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Shereen Goto | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am in strong opposition of this measure. Thank you.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 3:44:49 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Bruce H | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I strongly oppose SB534 SD1 for the following reasons:

Environmental Neglect – No proper Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) has been conducted, risking coastal erosion and long-term damage.

False Intention of building Affordable housing – Senator Hashimoto stated OHA has a golden ticket building affordable housing in Iwilei. OHA currently has no plans to build affordable housing there. Instead OHA is looking to build a luxury hi rise and double the height limit.

Loss of Public Shoreline – Kaka‘ako Makai is Honolulu’s last open shoreline and should remain a community resource, not private development.

I respectfully urge legislators to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for future generations.

Mahalo.

Bruce

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 4:48:21 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Kim A Zamorano | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Building high-rise buildings in Hawaii could have several negative impacts on the land, environment, and local communities. Firstly, Hawaii's natural beauty and unique ecosystems are among its most valuable assets. High-rise buildings could disrupt these ecosystems, leading to habitat loss for native species and potential harm to biodiversity. Additionally, the construction and maintenance of high-rise buildings often require significant resources and energy, contributing to environmental degradation and increased carbon emissions.

Secondly, high-rise buildings could alter the cultural and historical landscape of Hawaii. The islands have a rich cultural heritage that is closely tied to the land. The construction of high-rise buildings could overshadow historical sites and diminish the cultural significance of certain areas. This could lead to a loss of cultural identity and heritage for the local communities.

Lastly, high-rise buildings could exacerbate social and economic inequalities. The development of such buildings often caters to wealthy individuals and tourists, potentially driving up property values and living costs. This could make it difficult for local residents to afford housing and maintain their way of life. The focus on high-rise development might also divert attention and resources away from addressing the needs of local communities, such as affordable housing and sustainable development.

In conclusion, opposing the bill for building high-rise buildings in Hawaii is essential to preserve the natural environment, protect cultural heritage, and ensure social and economic equity for local communities. By prioritizing sustainable and community-focused development, we can safeguard Hawaii's unique landscapes and way of life for future generations.

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka'ako Makai. As someone who has lived in Hawai'i for three years and made it my permanent home in September, I have come to understand the deep cultural and environmental significance of this land. I moved here for work as a project engineer, helping to develop the infrastructure of the island. In my time here, I've witnessed the stark disconnect between tourists and locals—rightfully so, as many visitors treat the land as they please, with no regard for the people who live here or the long-term well-being of Hawai'i.

Hawai'i is the most visited state in the U.S., and yet, many tourists leave behind more harm than good, knowing they won't be the ones dealing with the consequences. The foundation of this place—its respect, its 'ohana, its cultural integrity—is what makes Hawai'i unique. To push forward with a development like SB534 SD1, which prioritizes commercial gain and the interests of transient outsiders over the local community, is a direct attack on that identity.

1. Environmental Neglect and Reckless Development

The proposed high-rises in Kaka'ako Makai lack a comprehensive and updated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that fully considers the risks of rising sea levels, shoreline erosion, and long-term climate impact. Developing in a fragile coastal zone without due diligence is irresponsible and places short-term economic benefits over the long-term sustainability of the island. If this project moves forward without proper assessment, we risk irreversible damage to the land and ecosystem that local families rely on.

2. The Last Undeveloped Shoreline Should Remain for the People

Kaka'ako Makai is the last undeveloped shoreline in urban Honolulu, a space that should be preserved for the people, not turned into another commercialized, inaccessible area. This land carries cultural, historical, and recreational value that high-rise development would permanently strip away. For generations, Native Hawaiians and local families have had a connection to this land and ocean. Once this shoreline is handed over to developers, it will no longer belong to the people—it will become another privatized space catering to outsiders rather than the community it truly belongs to.

3. The False Promise of Affordable Housing

Proponents of SB534 SD1 claim this development will provide affordable housing, but history has proven otherwise. “Affordable” in Honolulu’s market is far from what local families can actually afford, as pricing is dictated by inflated income thresholds and market-driven interests. Past developments have primarily catered to out-of-state investors and wealthy buyers rather than the local residents they claim to serve. This project would follow the same pattern—displacing more Hawaiians rather than housing them.

Conclusion

SB534 SD1 does not serve the best interests of Hawai‘i, its people, or its future. It disregards environmental responsibility, makes empty promises about affordability, and threatens to erase one of the last remaining public shorelines in Honolulu. The more we allow developments like this, the more Hawai‘i becomes a place that serves tourists and investors rather than the people who call it home.

I urge the committee to reject this bill and preserve Kaka‘ako Makai for future generations.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 5:05:55 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Tiernan Kawika Ponce | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB 534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka'ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai'i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

1. Failure to Complete a Proper Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The proposed development in Kaka'ako Makai lacks a comprehensive and updated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that considers the full extent of harm to the area's ecosystem, coastal integrity, and climate resiliency. Given the increasing threats of rising sea levels and shoreline erosion, pushing forward without due diligence disregards the long-term consequences of commercial residential expansion in a fragile coastal zone. Without an updated, independent EIS, this project represents reckless development that prioritizes short-term economic gains over the environmental and cultural sustainability of Hawai'i.

2. The Delusion of Affordable Housing in Honolulu

Proponents of SB534 SD1 argue that it will provide much-needed affordable housing. However, history has shown that “affordable” housing in the Honolulu market is largely unattainable for local families due to inflated income thresholds and market-driven pricing. Previous high-rise developments in urban Honolulu have failed to provide truly affordable units for local residents—instead, they primarily serve out-of-state investors and high-income buyers. The promise of affordability is an illusion, and allowing high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai only deepens the crisis of displacement for Hawai‘i’s people.

3. Protecting the Last Shoreline of Honolulu from Commercial Residential Development

Kaka‘ako Makai is the last undeveloped shoreline in urban Honolulu, a rare and invaluable open space for residents and visitors alike. This land was intended to remain a public asset, providing community access to green space, cultural practices, and ocean recreation. High-rise development would permanently privatize and commercialize one of the last pieces of Honolulu’s coastline, restricting access for local families and severing the deep cultural and ancestral connection that Native Hawaiians have with the land and ocean. Once lost to concrete and steel, this shoreline cannot be reclaimed.

Conclusion

SB 534 SD1 is not in the best interest of Hawai‘i, its people, or its cultural legacy. By neglecting environmental responsibility, perpetuating false promises of affordability, and threatening the last remaining shoreline of Honolulu, this bill prioritizes profits over people. Kaka‘ako Makai should be preserved as a public and cultural resource, not handed over to developers under the guise of housing that will not truly serve local residents.

I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Tiernan Kawika Ponce

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 5:21:44 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Brandon Tsuhara | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai‘i State Legislature

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB 534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai‘i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

1. Failure to Complete a Proper Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

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ecosystem, coastal integrity, and climate resiliency. Given the increasing threats of rising sea levels and shoreline erosion, pushing forward without due diligence disregards the long-term consequences of commercial residential expansion in a fragile coastal zone. Without an updated, independent EIS, this project represents reckless development that prioritizes short-term economic gains over the environmental and cultural sustainability of Hawai‘i.

2. The Delusion of Affordable Housing in Honolulu

Proponents of SB534 SD1 argue that it will provide much-needed affordable housing. However, history has shown that “affordable” housing in the Honolulu market is largely unattainable for local families due to inflated income thresholds and market-driven pricing. Previous high-rise developments in urban Honolulu have failed to provide truly affordable units for local residents—instead, they primarily serve out-of-state investors and high-income buyers. The promise of affordability is an illusion, and allowing high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai only deepens the crisis of displacement for Hawai‘i’s people.

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Conclusion

SB 534 SD1 is not in the best interest of Hawai'i, its people, or its cultural legacy. By neglecting environmental responsibility, perpetuating false promises of affordability, and threatening the last remaining shoreline of Honolulu, this bill prioritizes profits over people. Kaka'ako Makai should be preserved as a public and cultural resource, not handed over to developers under the guise of housing that will not truly serve local residents.

I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka'ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Brandon Tsutahara

btsuts@gmail.com

Hawai'i Resident

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 6:03:14 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Kawelinaonapua McShane | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB 534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka'ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai'i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

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Proponents of SB534 SD1 argue that it will provide much-needed affordable housing. However, history has shown that “affordable” housing in the Honolulu market is largely unattainable for local families due to inflated income thresholds and market-driven pricing. Previous high-rise developments in urban Honolulu have failed to provide truly affordable units for local residents—instead, they primarily serve out-of-state investors and high-income buyers. The promise of affordability is an illusion, and allowing high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai only deepens the crisis of displacement for Hawai‘i’s people.

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Conclusion

SB 534 SD1 is not in the best interest of Hawai‘i, its people, or its cultural legacy. By neglecting environmental responsibility, perpetuating false promises of affordability, and threatening the last remaining shoreline of Honolulu, this bill prioritizes profits over people. Kaka‘ako Makai should be preserved as a public and cultural resource, not handed over to developers under the guise of housing that will not truly serve local residents.

I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Lydia Kawelinaonāpua McShane

kawe.mcshane@gmail.com

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 6:46:51 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Fernando Mosqueda | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Friends!

Mahalo for clicking this & supporting us on this movement to PROTECT KAKA'AKO MAKAI!

There is info below on how to submit a testimony, the links to submit, and a sample testimony at the end of this doc!

Simply copy & paste into this link:

[Submit written testimony](#)

INFO FOR BILL ↓

The [public hearing for the OHA bill SB 534 Draft 1](#) is scheduled for:

Wednesday, February 26, 2025 at 10:05 am in Room 211

at the State Capitol

[Link to SB 534 SD1 PDF](#)

What we need from you:

1. [Submit written testimony](#) in Strong Opposition or show up on Wednesday with your red shirt. Even though you submitted testimony in previous hearings, you still must submit again. An easy way is to cut and paste your previous one. We recommend that you write out your testimony in your phone notes or a google doc

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai‘i State Legislature

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB 534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai‘i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

1. Failure to Complete a Proper Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The proposed development in Kaka‘ako Makai lacks a comprehensive and updated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that considers the full extent of harm to the area’s ecosystem, coastal integrity, and climate resiliency. Given the increasing threats of rising sea levels and shoreline erosion, pushing forward without due diligence disregards the long-term consequences of commercial residential expansion in a fragile coastal zone. Without an updated, independent EIS, this project represents reckless development that prioritizes short-term economic gains over the environmental and cultural sustainability of Hawai‘i.

2. The Delusion of Affordable Housing in Honolulu

Proponents of SB534 SD1 argue that it will provide much-needed affordable housing. However, history has shown that “affordable” housing in the Honolulu market is largely unattainable for local families due to inflated income thresholds and market-driven pricing. Previous high-rise developments in urban Honolulu have failed to provide truly affordable units for local residents—instead, they primarily serve out-of-state investors and high-income buyers. The

promise of affordability is an illusion, and allowing high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai only deepens the crisis of displacement for Hawai‘i’s people.

3. Protecting the Last Shoreline of Honolulu from Commercial Residential Development

Kaka‘ako Makai is the last undeveloped shoreline in urban Honolulu, a rare and invaluable open space for residents and visitors alike. This land was intended to remain a public asset, providing community access to green space, cultural practices, and ocean recreation. High-rise development would permanently privatize and commercialize one of the last pieces of Honolulu’s coastline, restricting access for local families and severing the deep cultural and ancestral connection that Native Hawaiians have with the land and ocean. Once lost to concrete and steel, this shoreline cannot be reclaimed.

Conclusion

SB 534 SD1 is not in the best interest of Hawai‘i, its people, or its cultural legacy. By neglecting environmental responsibility, perpetuating false promises of affordability, and threatening the last remaining shoreline of Honolulu, this bill prioritizes profits over people. Kaka‘ako Makai should be preserved as a public and cultural resource, not handed over to developers under the guise of housing that will not truly serve local resident

I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Fernando mosqueda

Makakauka.18@gmail.com

Citizen

[Your Name]

[Your Contact Information]

[Your Affiliation or Residency, if applicable]

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 6:50:02 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Lauren Anderson | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB 534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka'ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai'i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

1. Failure to Complete a Proper Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

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I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Lauren Anderson

lauren.sophia.anderson@gmail.com

Marysville WA

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 6:51:53 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Haley Kim | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Opposition to SB534**Submitted by:** Haley Kim, Medical Provider**Phone Number:** 931-255-3830**Date:** [Insert Date]**To whom it may concern,**

I am submitting this testimony in strong opposition to Senate Bill 534. As a medical provider, I am deeply concerned about the implications this bill would have on the well-being of local residents, particularly in relation to the proposed construction of high-rise buildings in our area.

This bill proposes to override local wishes and push forward the construction of high-rise buildings, which I believe poses significant risks to the health and safety of the population. There are several key points I would like to address:

1. **Impact on Mental and Physical Health:** The rapid expansion of high-rise buildings can significantly affect the mental and physical health of local residents. Studies show that urban congestion, noise, and air pollution commonly associated with high-density buildings can lead to increased stress, respiratory issues, and heart problems. As a medical professional, I have witnessed first-hand the toll that high-stress environments and poor air quality can take on my patients' well-being.
2. **Community Concerns and Local Voice:** The residents of Oahu have expressed clear opposition to the construction of these high-rise buildings. It is imperative that local communities have a voice in the development that directly affects their lives. Forcing such large-scale projects onto communities without addressing their concerns undermines the democratic process and creates an atmosphere of disregard for the people who live here.
3. **Strain on Health Infrastructure:** With the addition of high-rise buildings, the population density in the area will increase, potentially placing additional strain on our already stretched healthcare resources. More people in a concentrated space means more patients requiring medical care, which could overwhelm the local healthcare system. As a medical provider, I am deeply concerned about our ability to handle this burden without compromising the quality of care we provide to the community.

4. **Environmental Concerns:** Hawaii's natural beauty and environment are not just a treasure but a vital factor in the health of our residents. High-rise buildings contribute to urban sprawl and can damage the surrounding environment, affecting air quality, water resources, and the overall sustainability of the area. As healthcare providers, we know that the health of our environment is closely linked to the health of our people.

For these reasons, I strongly urge lawmakers to reconsider the passing of SB534. The voices of the community must be heard, and local wishes should be respected. We cannot prioritize profit and development at the expense of the health and well-being of the people who call Oahu home.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Haley Kim
Medical Provider
931-255-3830

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 6:52:58 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Kian Aquino | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB534 SD1, a bill that seeks to allow residential high-rises in Kaka'ako Makai. This proposal threatens not only the integrity of our land and the well-being of our people but also undermines the cultural identity that is deeply tied to the land and ocean of Hawai'i. I urge you to reject this bill for the following reasons, which I hold close to my heart as a Native Hawaiian

1. The Absence of a Proper Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The proposed development of Kaka'ako Makai has moved forward without a comprehensive and updated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), which would assess the full harm to this area's ecosystem, coastal integrity, and climate resilience. As someone who has lived and breathed the ocean my whole life, I can say with certainty that the impacts of rising sea levels and coastal erosion are not hypothetical—they are real and already happening. To move forward with this project without a thorough, independent EIS is an act of negligence. We cannot prioritize short-term economic interests over the long-term environmental health of Hawai'i. This is not just about protecting a piece of land; it's about ensuring the future for generations to come.

2. The Myth of Affordable Housing in Honolulu

Supporters of SB534 SD1 claim that this development will provide much-needed affordable housing, but this is a false promise. "Affordable" housing in Honolulu is often nothing more than a label used to justify luxury condos that local families cannot access. The truth is, most high-rise developments cater to out-of-state investors and affluent buyers, while native Hawaiians and kama'āina families are left displaced. The reality is that this bill will only exacerbate the housing crisis, not solve it. The promise of affordable housing in this bill is as empty as the ocean when the tide retreats.

3. The Protection of Honolulu's Last Shoreline

Kaka‘ako Makai is not just another parcel of land—it is the last undeveloped shoreline in urban Honolulu. As a Native Hawaiian, I know firsthand how sacred the ocean is to our culture, our spirituality, and our sense of belonging. For me, the ocean has always been a place of refuge, a place where I can reconnect with my ancestors and the land. The beach and the shoreline are not just for recreation—they are integral to our cultural practices, our livelihoods, and our identity. To allow high-rises here would not just block views or access—it would sever a deep, ancestral bond that we have with the ocean. Once this land is lost to development, it is gone forever. It cannot be replaced.

Conclusion

SB534 SD1 is not in the best interest of Hawai‘i, its people, or its cultural legacy. This bill disregards the environmental needs of the land, perpetuates the myth of affordable housing, and threatens the very essence of what it means to be Hawaiian. Kaka‘ako Makai should remain a public and cultural resource, accessible to all and protected from the greed of developers. The ocean is not just my refuge—it is our collective heritage. I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and preserve Kaka‘ako Makai for future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Kian Aquino

808-259-1577

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 7:06:23 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Ken Barrow | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I strongly oppose this motion. We must save land for education and free space for Keiki and all in future generations. There is already way to many buildings being built and planned to be built. Infrastructure and traffic cannot handle all of this. Use the land for the people as was promised. Not to make developers rich. Thank you

Ken Barrow

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 7:25:38 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Anna Truax | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

There should be no more development in Kewalo. This land is protected and must remain this way. This is NOT what the PEOPLE want. More development would lead to destruction of the land and ocean, and utter disregard/disrespect to the local/native people of O'ahu. Please protect Kewalo!!!

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 7:35:52 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Keola Hayes | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB 534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka'ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai'i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

1. Failure to Complete a Proper Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The proposed development in Kaka'ako Makai lacks a comprehensive and updated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that considers the full extent of harm to the area's ecosystem, coastal integrity, and climate resiliency. Given the increasing threats of rising sea levels and shoreline erosion, pushing forward without due diligence disregards the long-term consequences of commercial residential expansion in a fragile coastal zone. Without an updated, independent EIS, this project represents reckless development that prioritizes short-term economic gains over the environmental and cultural sustainability of Hawai'i.

2. The Delusion of Affordable Housing in Honolulu

Proponents of SB534 SD1 argue that it will provide much-needed affordable housing. However, history has shown that “affordable” housing in the Honolulu market is largely unattainable for local families due to inflated income thresholds and market-driven pricing. Previous high-rise developments in urban Honolulu have failed to provide truly affordable units for local residents—instead, they primarily serve out-of-state investors and high-income buyers. The promise of affordability is an illusion, and allowing high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai only deepens the crisis of displacement for Hawai‘i’s people.

3. Protecting the Last Shoreline of Honolulu from Commercial Residential Development

Kaka‘ako Makai is the last undeveloped shoreline in urban Honolulu, a rare and invaluable open space for residents and visitors alike. This land was intended to remain a public asset, providing community access to green space, cultural practices, and ocean recreation. High-rise development would permanently privatize and commercialize one of the last pieces of Honolulu’s coastline, restricting access for local families and severing the deep cultural and ancestral connection that Native Hawaiians have with the land and ocean. Once lost to concrete and steel, this shoreline cannot be reclaimed.

Conclusion

SB 534 SD1 is not in the best interest of Hawai‘i, its people, or its cultural legacy. By neglecting environmental responsibility, perpetuating false promises of affordability, and threatening the last remaining shoreline of Honolulu, this bill prioritizes profits over people. Kaka‘ako Makai should be preserved as a public and cultural resource, not handed over to developers under the guise of housing that will not truly serve local residents.

I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Keola Hayes

keolahayes@yahoo.com

Oahu native since birth

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 7:36:08 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Tyneski Quintel | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

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Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Tyneski Quintel

8083569095

po box 380 waiialua hi 96791

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 7:47:30 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Tiare Medeiros | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

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I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Tiare Medeiros

808-382-1497

Kalihi, Oahu

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 7:52:00 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Sharlei Duncan | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha,

As a lifelong Oahu resident, I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB 534. Our parks and beaches on the south side of Oahu are cherished by all, and they must be protected. I do not support any development in Kaka'ako Makai. The area has been zoned for a reason, and we should respect that decision. Development should not encroach on these vital spaces—let's keep our focus on preserving what makes our community special.

Sincerely,

Sharlei Duncan

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 8:04:53 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Keola Kaleimamahu | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

As heir to Kalaimamahu, and as affidavit in court as a lineal decedent lay my opposition to any commercial and or none Ko pae aina o Hawaii nei , plans that commits desecration inform of sacrilege as Stipulated with precedence.

Aole

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 8:07:08 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Katia Worley | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am testifying against SB534.

I OPPOSE allowing OHA to repeal the "no residential" restrictions in Kaka‘ako Makai.

I OPPOSE changing the max building height from 200‘ to 400‘.

This is the last area of this ahupua‘a that is not overdeveloped. Our communities are urging you to protect and preserve our land.

Mahalo.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 8:14:29 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Anabel Cepero | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB 534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai‘i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

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Proponents of SB534 SD1 argue that it will provide much-needed affordable housing. However, history has shown that “affordable” housing in the Honolulu market is largely unattainable for local families due to inflated income thresholds and market-driven pricing. Previous high-rise developments in urban Honolulu have failed to provide truly affordable units for local residents—instead, they primarily serve out-of-state investors and high-income buyers. The promise of affordability is an illusion, and allowing high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai only deepens the crisis of displacement for Hawai‘i’s people.

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ancestral connection that Native Hawaiians have with the land and ocean. Once lost to concrete and steel, this shoreline cannot be reclaimed.

Conclusion

SB 534 SD1 is not in the best interest of Hawai'i, its people, or its cultural legacy. By neglecting environmental responsibility, perpetuating false promises of affordability, and threatening the last remaining shoreline of Honolulu, this bill prioritizes profits over people. Kaka'ako Makai should be preserved as a public and cultural resource, not handed over to developers under the guise of housing that will not truly serve local residents.

I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka'ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Anabel Cepero

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 8:21:46 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Lana Rose Olson | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Rhoads, and Members of the Committee,

I **OPPOSE SB 534 SD1**, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai‘i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

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2. Sea level rise studies that have already been completed predict significant impacts in next 20 years with 3 feet of sea level rise.

Relevant research and studies:

- **"Hawai‘i Sea Level Rise Vulnerability and Adaptation Report":**

This report by the State of Hawaii highlights the significant threat of sea level rise to coastal areas like Kakaako, outlining potential impacts and adaptation strategies.

- **"Kakaako Makai - Hazard Assessment":**

This study specifically examines the vulnerability of the Kakaako Makai area to sea level rise, including potential inundation scenarios.

- **University of Hawaii research:**

Researchers at the University of Hawaii have conducted studies analyzing the impacts of sea level rise in Kakaako, including the use of interactive art projects to visualize future flooding scenarios.

3. The Delusion of Affordable Housing in Honolulu

Proponents of SB534 SD1 argue that it will provide much-needed affordable housing. However, history has shown that “affordable” housing in the Honolulu market is largely unattainable for local families due to inflated income thresholds and market-driven pricing. Previous high-rise developments in urban Honolulu have failed to provide truly affordable units for local residents—instead, they primarily serve out-of-state investors and high-income buyers. The promise of affordability is an illusion, and allowing high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai only deepens the crisis of displacement for Hawai‘i’s people.

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It needs:

- **Coastal restoration:**

Protecting and restoring natural coastal features like beaches and wetlands to act as buffers against rising sea levels.

- **Community planning and awareness:**

Engaging residents and stakeholders in developing adaptation strategies and raising awareness about the risks of sea level rise

Not DEVELOPEMT!

Conclusion

SB 534 SD1 is not in the best interest of Hawai'i, its people, or its cultural legacy. By neglecting environmental responsibility, perpetuating false promises of affordability, and threatening the last remaining shoreline of Honolulu, this bill prioritizes profits over people. Kaka'ako Makai should be preserved as a public and cultural resource, not handed over to developers under the guise of housing that will not truly serve local residents.

I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka'ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Lana Olson

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 8:33:19 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Haley Greene | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I strongly oppose SB534 SD1. This bill puts developers first while local communities pay the price, and it threatens one of the last open shorelines in Honolulu.

The idea that this will create affordable housing just isn't true. Time and time again, we've seen these "affordable" units priced way out of reach for most residents. The only ones who really benefit are wealthy buyers and out-of-state investors, while locals get pushed out.

Once this land is gone, it's gone forever. Please reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka'ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 8:45:11 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Noah Onishi | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose, we get nuff buildings already Wake Up this ain't the mainland!!! Don't do it!!!

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 8:47:05 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Joann Sy | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 Hawai‘i State Legislature

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB534, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai‘i. The passage of SB534 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

1. Failure to Complete a Proper Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

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Honolulu's coastline, restricting access for local families and severing the deep cultural and ancestral connection that Native Hawaiians have with the land and ocean. Once lost to concrete and steel, this shoreline cannot be reclaimed.

Conclusion

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I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 and protect Kaka'ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Joann Sy
(808) 352-5029
Honolulu, HI 96814

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 8:54:21 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Lola Solveig | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Lola Solveig, Ewa Resident

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 8:58:53 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Garrett Littman | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony for SB 534 SD1

Aloha Friends!

Mahalo for clicking this & supporting us on this movement to PROTECT KAKA'AKO MAKAI!

There is info below on how to submit a testimony, the links to submit, and a sample testimony at the end of this doc!

Simply copy & paste into this link:

Submit written testimony

INFO FOR BILL ↓

The public hearing for the OHA bill SB 534 Draft 1 is scheduled for:

Wednesday, February 26, 2025 at 10:05 am in Room 211

at the State Capitol

Link to SB 534 SD1 PDF

What we need from you:

1. Submit written testimony in Strong Opposition or show up on Wednesday with your red shirt. Even though you submitted testimony in previous hearings, you still must submit again. An easy way is to cut and paste your previous one. We recommend that you write out your testimony in your phone notes or a google doc so you can easily retrieve and submit when and if the time is needed again.

Last time there were more testimonies in support than in Opposition. We need to and can do better. Word of mouth (first) and social media (second) are the two most powerful marketing tools in your arsenal, so tell 5 family and friends and ask if they can do the same to support. The deadline is 10:05 am on Tuesday, 2/25/25. You may submit later but it will be labeled late.

2. Contact the Committee Chairs by phone (leave message) or email urging them to table (end) the bill with your reasons.

Senator Donovan Dela Cruz - 808 586-6090 sendelacruz@capitol.hawaii.gov

Senator Karl Rhoads - 808 5866130 senrhoads@capitol.hawaii.gov

This is the last chance to stop this before it crosses over to the House on March 6. Anticipating this, FOK has organized a Rally on March 8, the Saturday following the crossover to show everyone that the People do not want this. More on this soon.

TOGETHER WE CAN DO THIS!

Protecting Open Spaces for Hawai'i's Future Generations

Mahalo,

Friends of Kewalos

PROTECT, PRESERVE, MĀLAMA!

Sample Testimony

(Feel free to copy this and use as a template ↓ Please edit to your liking and put your own touch in your testimony)

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai‘i State Legislature

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

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I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Garrett Littman
Resident and Citizen of Honolulu

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 8:59:09 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Frank Roldan | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aole to sb534 sd1

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:02:34 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Alexandra Britt | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB 534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka'ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai'i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

1. Failure to Complete a Proper Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The proposed development in Kaka'ako Makai lacks a comprehensive and updated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that considers the full extent of harm to the area's ecosystem, coastal integrity, and climate resiliency. Given the increasing threats of rising sea levels and shoreline erosion, pushing forward without due diligence disregards the long-term consequences of commercial residential expansion in a fragile coastal zone. Without an updated, independent EIS, this project represents reckless development that prioritizes short-term economic gains over the environmental and cultural sustainability of Hawai'i.

2. The Delusion of Affordable Housing in Honolulu

Proponents of SB534 SD1 argue that it will provide much-needed affordable housing. However, history has shown that “affordable” housing in the Honolulu market is largely unattainable for local families due to inflated income thresholds and market-driven pricing. Previous high-rise developments in urban Honolulu have failed to provide truly affordable units for local residents—instead, they primarily serve out-of-state investors and high-income buyers. The promise of affordability is an illusion, and allowing high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai only deepens the crisis of displacement for Hawai‘i’s people.

3. Protecting the Last Shoreline of Honolulu from Commercial Residential Development

Kaka‘ako Makai is the last undeveloped shoreline in urban Honolulu, a rare and invaluable open space for residents and visitors alike. This land was intended to remain a public asset, providing community access to green space, cultural practices, and ocean recreation. High-rise development would permanently privatize and commercialize one of the last pieces of Honolulu’s coastline, restricting access for local families and severing the deep cultural and ancestral connection that Native Hawaiians have with the land and ocean. Once lost to concrete and steel, this shoreline cannot be reclaimed.

Conclusion

SB 534 SD1 is not in the best interest of Hawai‘i, its people, or its cultural legacy. By neglecting environmental responsibility, perpetuating false promises of affordability, and threatening the last remaining shoreline of Honolulu, this bill prioritizes profits over people. Kaka‘ako Makai should be preserved as a public and cultural resource, not handed over to developers under the guise of housing that will not truly serve local residents.

I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Alexandra Britt

Alex.britt96@gmail.com

Resides in Mānoa

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:04:38 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Lynn Free | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB 534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka'ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai'i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

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Conclusion

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I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Lynn Free

lbfree76@gmail.com

Resident of Oahu/Honolulu

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:07:22 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Deven English | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am in strong opposition of this bill.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:10:50 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Alan Arimoto | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I strongly oppose SB534 SD1 for the following reasons:

I have been surfing at Kewalos from 1999 this park has given me so much in that amount of time. It's a meeting place for friends, families and full access to what our island has to offer the surf and the sea. Private residential buildings should not have the right to own and block our shoreline. Sure they'll be public access but it's not the same walking through a hallway of buildings to get to the ocean when you can have the full natural experience. High Rises can still enjoy the view set back before Ala Moana boulevard. Keep this natural beauty of the shoreline open for the people please. That's what people from all over the world come here to see.

I Respectfully urge you to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka'ako Makai for future generations.

Mahalo.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:13:39 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Jesi Bautista | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose SB534.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:17:23 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Katherine Tracy | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I strongly oppose SB534, which threatens Kaka‘ako Makai’s environment, cultural heritage, and public access. Increasing building heights and density will worsen congestion, block ocean views, and reduce open space. The community has consistently opposed high-rise residential development in this area.

Moreover, SB534 is premature. The environmental suitability of the proposed high-rise developments remains uncertain. Without thorough environmental and geotechnical analysis, proceeding with such large-scale construction could pose significant risks to the area’s stability and ecosystem.

Additionally, the required association fee raises concerns over financial burden and accountability. While affordable housing is essential, this bill lacks guarantees for long-term affordability and risks exacerbating displacement.

For these reasons, I urge you to reject this measure. Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:18:32 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Conrad Morgan | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha kakou,

My name is Conrad Morgan and I am writing in strong opposition of SB534. We have lost so much of our home to high rise developments and it breaks my heart that SB534 would perpetuate the gentrification and urbanization of one of the last areas townside that we have left. As a young person, as a local boy, as a bodysurfer, as someone whose worked in ocean conservation for almost ten years, and as a constituent, I ask that you put a stop to SB534 now.

Mahalo and Aloha,

Conrad Morgan

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:20:11 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Marvin Yoshizumi | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I strongly oppose SB534. I do not want condominiums in Kakaako Makai. We already have so many in Kakaako Mauka. Also building hotels in the area is not responsible development. Essentially bringing Wailiki into Kakaako Makai. Please do not allow the law restricting residential development in Kakaako Makai to be changed.

Aloha

Marvin Yoshizumi

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:20:43 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Kayla G | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I strongly oppose this!

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:25:25 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Tyler Crook | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Stand with the people. Oppose.

Tyler Crook

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:28:52 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| christy Kalama | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

May our Hawaii be safe from greed, unsustainable development and all plans that cause harm to our community and our environment.

keep Waikiki in waikiki

mahalo

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:31:59 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Cassandra Park | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chairs Inouye, Richards, and Chang and members of the Senate Committees on Water and Land, Hawaiian Affairs, and Housing:

As a Native Hawaiian who frequents the Kaka‘ako Waterfront Park often I STRONGLY OPPOSE SB534 for the following reasons:

Kaka‘ako is already overwhelmed with high rises and condos. There are very few spaces left for Native Hawaiians and local families to enjoy the area. This area is one of those places where I observe local families enjoying picnics in the park or surfers catching breaks at Kewalos. Building housing in the area will create more congestion and traffic in an already crowded area which may limit access to the waterfront park.

The proposed bill requires that "fifty percent plus one of the units developed on CERTAIN parcels" to be allocated for Hawai‘i households making less than 140% of the Area Median Income (AMI). According to the City and County of Honolulu Department of Planning and Permitting (2024) the income amount for a single person household at 140% AMI is \$136,500 and for a family of four the amount is \$194,880.

How does this high income limit support Native Hawaiian families experiencing poverty? Why must we be forced to compete against each other for the limited housing availability?

While I believe there is a need to address the housing crisis we are experiencing here in Hawai‘i this is not the solution.

Mahalo for the opportunity to voice my OPPOSITION to this bill.

Sincerely,

Cassandra Park

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:33:40 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Kristine Wallerius Chung | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Chair

Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair

Dear Committee Chairs Rhoads and Dela Cruz and Committee Members,

1. am writing in **STRONG OPPOSITION to SB534**. This bill is not in the best interest of Hawaii. HCDA is currently receiving community input on a new plan for Kakaako Makai; as such, this bill is premature.

Kakaako Makai is the last public shoreline in urban Honolulu -- OHA's plan to build 400 foot residential towers for the "highest and best use" on Kakaako Makai (the shoreline on the makai side of Ala Moana Blvd) is dangerous to the health of our land, coral, ocean and people not to mention the impact on our shoreline and Makai public parks for generations to come.

OHA's land is a brownfield --built on a toxic landfill of lead, arsenic, asbestos, PCB and more-- so any building must first clear an environmental review of the land, social and cultural and other issues. But OHA is AGAIN asking legislators to pass a bill—SB534-- to lift the long-standing prohibition against building residential; allowing OHA to build 400 foot towers (when the zoning maximum allowable is 200 feet) and create a heavy burden on the land (and toxic materials below) with 6.0 floor area ratio (FAR) when the current maximum allowable is 2.5 FAR -- all this without first doing serious study of the impacts and costs of their building on our treasured last public shoreline in urban Honolulu.

This will drastically impact view planes, shows no regard for the impact of sea-level rise, and will endanger sea-life and the health and purity of our ocean waters.

This is the third time in as many Legislative Sessions that OHA has asked that they be made exempt from rules designed to protect our fragile environment. Each time their marketing and “vision” puts a different shade of lipstick on the same pig. Whether it’s “creating a cultural oasis” or “affordable workforce housing”, what is clear is that the financial benefit to OHA outweighs any concern the community has. Please vote no on SB534.

Not to mention the companion bill that would allow OHA to simply cash out and sell to another developer, where all of the current "affordable housing" goals for "workforce workers" would simply disappear.

We are not fooled- nor should you be. PLEASE VOTE NO ON SB534.

Respectfully,

Kristine Chung

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:33:57 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Kekoa Pader | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB 534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai‘i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

1. Failure to Complete a Proper Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The proposed development in Kaka‘ako Makai lacks a comprehensive and updated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that considers the full extent of harm to the area’s ecosystem, coastal integrity, and climate resiliency. Given the increasing threats of rising sea levels and shoreline erosion, pushing forward without due diligence disregards the long-term consequences of commercial residential expansion in a fragile coastal zone. Without an updated, independent EIS, this project represents reckless development that prioritizes short-term economic gains over the environmental and cultural sustainability of Hawai‘i.

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Conclusion

SB 534 SD1 is not in the best interest of Hawai'i, its people, or its cultural legacy. By neglecting environmental responsibility, perpetuating false promises of affordability, and threatening the last remaining shoreline of Honolulu, this bill prioritizes profits over people. Kaka'ako Makai should be preserved as a public and cultural resource, not handed over to developers under the guise of housing that will not truly serve local residents.

I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka'ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai'i.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:34:49 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Haley Smith | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB 534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka'ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai'i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

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I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Haley Smith

Haleysmith598@gmail.com

Resident and UH Mānoa MPH Native Hawaiian & Indigenous Health Student

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:36:39 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Connor Ogletree | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

My name is Connor Ogletree, and I am opposing SB534. Kaka'ako water front as well as Kewalos and Ala Moana have been gathering places on the south shore for local families. Taking away this place (Kewalo water front) to instead build, what I can assume, luxury waterfront condos and apartments is wrong. Taking away a place where many gather so only a few can reside is wrong. Thank you.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:42:56 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Alyssa Wooten | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB 534

My name is Alyssa Wooten, and I am a single mother who grew up surfing the south shore of Oahu. I am writing today to share my opposition to SB 534 because I feel the need to stand up for someplace that is extremely special to me. My community has asked me to come to the Friends of Kewalo meetings, and I learned so much. I always thought I was just one person, that I could not make a difference. After hearing Ron Iwami's stories I felt extremely inspired and felt compelled to stand up for what I love and believe in.

I am against residential development in Kakaako Makai, regardless of who those developers may be. I am for protecting open spaces for the people and for future generations. I grew up recreating in this area, and now I get to take my son to these same spaces and share my childhood with him. I am very blessed to be able to take my son to do the same things, I did as a child. We have a community that we can rely on, that is something that I treasure and that I am very thankful for.

I also oppose because they are asking for an exemption from 200ft towers to 400ft. I don't think that logical when it is ocean front property. We all know that isn't for local people. Who can afford that? How many local families are living in the existing residential development in Kakaako Mauka? Let's be honest and real.

I also oppose because there has not been an EIS done. Is that land truly safe to build on? So close to people who fish, surf, bodysurf, recreate at the park etc? What will the environmental impact be with 400ft towers so close to the ocean?

I feel already very pushed out, and I would really hate to loose the one place that I feel like home. I feel safe at the park, and I know my son and I have our community there.

Thank you for letting me share my story.

Aloha,

Alyssa Wooten

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:45:00 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Katrina | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB 534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai‘i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

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SB 534 SD1 is not in the best interest of Hawai'i, its people, or its cultural legacy. By neglecting environmental responsibility, perpetuating false promises of affordability, and threatening the last remaining shoreline of Honolulu, this bill prioritizes profits over people. Kaka'ako Makai should be preserved as a public and cultural resource, not handed over to developers under the guise of housing that will not truly serve local residents.

I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka'ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai'i.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:50:52 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Cole Quintos | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony In Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

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I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Cole Quintos

Dear Senators of the WAM and JDC committees,

I'm writing to you today to ask you to stop SB 534 SD1 and prevent it from progressing any further.

I strongly oppose this bill. OHA's proposal to build and has requested 'height exception' are not reasonable.

We still don't know the full impact of the EIS, the condo maintenance fee, or the long-term effects of a height restriction variance.

OHA's current plan is to placing Hawaiians against each other, which is shameful in itself. We all agree that we need affordable housing, but the current OHA proposal for the Kakaako Makai land is not the best solution.

We need OHA to follow the 200-foot building height law on the Kakaako Makai land. If OHA is unwilling to do this, they can trade this parcel for a different one, or potentially sell it.

OHA has a responsibility to work for the direct benefit of Hawaiians, and therefore OHA should drop this 'roundabout scheme' to develop a large-scale vertical property on this land.

Thank you for taking the time to review my testimony.

Mahalo nui loa,

Karen Boyer

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 10:02:05 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Kaelin Tancayo-Spielvogel | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

I strongly oppose SB534, which would allow residential development in Kaka‘ako Makai, one of the last remaining open shoreline areas in urban Honolulu. This bill prioritizes high-rise housing over Hawai‘i’s cultural integrity, environmental health, and Native Hawaiian access to ancestral spaces.

Why This Bill Must Be Rejected:

- Kaka‘ako Makai was never meant for residential development. The 2012 land transfer to OHA was meant to benefit Native Hawaiians—not to be sold off for condos. This bill contradicts years of planning and community vision.
- Overdevelopment threatens Native Hawaiian access. These shoreline areas are essential for traditional fishing, limu gathering, and cultural practices. High-rise construction will restrict access and further degrade the ecosystem.
- Hawai‘i is losing its identity to unchecked development. This bill accelerates the transformation of Kaka‘ako into a concrete jungle where Native Hawaiians are displaced, and public spaces become privatized.
- A dangerous precedent for Native Hawaiian lands. Allowing residential construction here opens the door for future land grabs, further stripping Native Hawaiians of the resources meant to uplift them.

A Better Path Forward

Instead of high-rise condos, Kaka‘ako Makai should remain a place for culture, education, and community gathering. OHA and the state should focus on culturally appropriate development that truly serves Native Hawaiians, not wealthy investors.

Hawai‘i is not just land—it is identity, history, and home. Once lost, we can never get it back. Reject SB534.

Mahalo.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 10:03:05 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Remy Hirai | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I OPPOSE the development of Kaka'ako makai. I OPPOSE changing the max build height from 200ft to 400 ft. I OPPOSE OHA/KS/ANY OTHER ENTITY from developing/building without a thorough EIS. I OPPOSE SB534. Aue.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 10:04:26 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Gregory Misakian | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose SB534 SD1.

Open spaces must be preserved in Hawaii, and there is too much overdevelopment.

Our legislators need to protect the lands, and understand that there are limited resources to even support the many new high-rises that keep being built.

Gregory Misakian

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 10:15:12 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Janai | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

In **Strong opposition** of Bill SB534 SD1 which is aimed in building on our Makai side of Kewalo. Our beach fronts are slowly and surely being taken away. Kewalo is a place that many go to for leisure walks, picnic, surfing, paddling etc. We want to preserve Kewalo for our future generations. This bill threatens the integrity of our land and the well being of our people and cultural identity of Hawai'i, The passage of this bill will do more harm than good and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons.

1. Failure to complete a proper environmental impact statement.
2. The Delusion of affordable housing in Honolulu
3. Protecting the last shoreline of Honolulu from "Commercial Residential Development

For this reason I strongly oppose Bill SB534 SD1 and urge you to reject it.

mahalo

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 10:16:00 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Chalsa M Loo, Ph.D. | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am a Chinese American, born and raised in Honolulu, a licensed psychologist in the State of Hawaii, who specializes in clinical psychology and environmental psychology. I am a Fellow of the American Psychological Association's Divisions of: a) Environment and Population, b) the Study of Ethnic Minorities and Mental Health, and c) Women & Psychology. I have previously testified to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors on the adverse effects of crowding and have done research and published on this topic.

I STRONGLY OPPOSE SB534 SD1 for the following reasons:

1. I was opposed high rise development on Kakaako Makai many years ago and protested when it was Alexander & Baldwin wanting to build high rises there; my position is consistent regardless of who is wanting to build high rise development on the makai side of Kakaako. Kakaako Mauka already looks like Hong Kong; don't destroy Hawaiian lands further! Don't make it an extension of Waikiki! Kakaako Makai is for ALL PEOPLES of HAWAII, not just rich condo owners many of whom may not be Hawaii residents or Native Hawaiian.
2. OHA and the State should renegotiate these beachfront lands for lands where OHA can provide land for homes for Native Hawaiians. If OHA is allowed to build high rise condos on Makai Kakaako lands, those condos will go to persons of any race and likely not to Native Hawaiians; the only benefit to Native Hawaiians is indirect; OHA will get the money, but there's no promise that that money will be spent to give Hawaiians lands for homes.
3. The environment will be ruined for the public if SB423 is passed. It will harm the public who picnic, surf, kayak, or rest in the public and spacious area that is now Kewalo/ Kakaako Makai. Hawaii needs public lands for public use/enjoyment. High density in this area will harm Hawaii. If high rise condos are allowed in the Makai area, it will create crowded conditions and high density is antithetical to relaxation and mental health.

To build high rise condos in this public space is NOT PONO for HAWAII! Please oppose SB534!

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 10:23:11 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Nikole McGreevey | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB 534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka'ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai'i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

1. Failure to Complete a Proper Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The proposed development in Kaka'ako Makai lacks a comprehensive and updated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that considers the full extent of harm to the area's ecosystem, coastal integrity, and climate resiliency. Given the increasing threats of rising sea levels and shoreline erosion, pushing forward without due diligence disregards the long-term consequences of commercial residential expansion in a fragile coastal zone. Without an updated, independent EIS, this project represents reckless development that prioritizes short-term economic gains over the environmental and cultural sustainability of Hawai'i.

2. The Delusion of Affordable Housing in Honolulu

Proponents of SB534 SD1 argue that it will provide much-needed affordable housing. However, history has shown that “affordable” housing in the Honolulu market is largely unattainable for local families due to inflated income thresholds and market-driven pricing. Previous high-rise developments in urban Honolulu have failed to provide truly affordable units for local residents—instead, they primarily serve out-of-state investors and high-income buyers. The promise of affordability is an illusion, and allowing high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai only deepens the crisis of displacement for Hawai‘i’s people.

3. Protecting the Last Shoreline of Honolulu from Commercial Residential Development

Kaka‘ako Makai is the last undeveloped shoreline in urban Honolulu, a rare and invaluable open space for residents and visitors alike. This land was intended to remain a public asset, providing community access to green space, cultural practices, and ocean recreation. High-rise development would permanently privatize and commercialize one of the last pieces of Honolulu’s coastline, restricting access for local families and severing the deep cultural and ancestral connection that Native Hawaiians have with the land and ocean. Once lost to concrete and steel, this shoreline cannot be reclaimed.

Conclusion

SB 534 SD1 is not in the best interest of Hawai‘i, its people, or its cultural legacy. By neglecting environmental responsibility, perpetuating false promises of affordability, and threatening the last remaining shoreline of Honolulu, this bill prioritizes profits over people. Kaka‘ako Makai should be preserved as a public and cultural resource, not handed over to developers under the guise of housing that will not truly serve local residents.

I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Nikole McGreevey

44-053 Kaimalu Pl.

Kaneohe, HI, 96744

Hawaii resident

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 10:31:59 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Keenan Yoshizawa | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair

Senate Committee on Judiciary

Senator Karl Rhoads, Chair

February 25, 2025

Testimony in opposition to SB534.

Dear Chairs Dela Cruz and Rhoads, Vice Chairs Moriwaki and Gabbard, and members of the Senate Committees on Ways and Means and Judiciary,

My name is Keenan Yoshizawa and I am a sophomore undergraduate student testifying in opposition to SB534.

The construction of 400-foot buildings on the Makai side of Ala Moana Boulevard would further diminish the natural environment that our one-of-a-kind waterfront provides. The disregard for the building restrictions in the area are concerning. These laws were put into place for a reason and to by-pass them would be a disservice to our community.

I also have concerns on how this development would affect existing sewage, power, parking, and road infrastructure in the area. Not only is this an extremely dense development proposal, but the many high-rise buildings being constructed in the Kakaako area also need to be taken into consideration. The continued maintenance of existing infrastructure without any long-term plans

would be detrimental to the community that the development seeks to benefit. According to a section in the bill, OHA would have the power to raise association fees for those living in the designated parcels. There is nothing in the bill that regulates the price of the units being sold, only sets aside half of the units to those with an income at or below one hundred forty per cent of the area's median income.

I hope you will oppose SB534.

Thank you for your time,

Keenan Yoshizawa

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 10:34:52 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| RAMIE Kaeli | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB 534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai‘i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

1. Failure to Complete a Proper Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The proposed development in Kaka‘ako Makai lacks a comprehensive and updated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that considers the full extent of harm to the area’s ecosystem, coastal integrity, and climate resiliency. Given the increasing threats of rising sea levels and shoreline erosion, pushing forward without due diligence disregards the long-term consequences of commercial residential expansion in a fragile coastal zone. Without an updated, independent EIS, this project represents reckless development that prioritizes short-term economic gains over the environmental and cultural sustainability of Hawai‘i.

2. The Delusion of Affordable Housing in Honolulu

Proponents of SB534 SD1 argue that it will provide much-needed affordable housing. However, history has shown that “affordable” housing in the Honolulu market is largely unattainable for local families due to inflated income thresholds and market-driven pricing. Previous high-rise developments in urban Honolulu have failed to provide truly affordable units for local residents—instead, they primarily serve out-of-state investors and high-income buyers. The promise of affordability is an illusion, and allowing high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai only deepens the crisis of displacement for Hawai‘i’s people.

3. Protecting the Last Shoreline of Honolulu from Commercial Residential Development

Kaka‘ako Makai is the last undeveloped shoreline in urban Honolulu, a rare and invaluable open space for residents and visitors alike. This land was intended to remain a public asset, providing community access to green space, cultural practices, and ocean recreation. High-rise development would permanently privatize and commercialize one of the last pieces of Honolulu’s coastline, restricting access for local families and severing the deep cultural and ancestral connection that Native Hawaiians have with the land and ocean. Once lost to concrete and steel, this shoreline cannot be reclaimed.

Conclusion

SB 534 SD1 is not in the best interest of Hawai‘i, its people, or its cultural legacy. By neglecting environmental responsibility, perpetuating false promises of affordability, and threatening the last remaining shoreline of Honolulu, this bill prioritizes profits over people. Kaka‘ako Makai should be preserved as a public and cultural resource, not handed over to developers under the guise of housing that will not truly serve local residents.

I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Ramie Kalei

Honolulu, HI

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 10:45:07 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Lindsey Ilagan | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Members of the Committee,

Hawai‘i’s housing crisis, particularly for Kānaka ‘Ōiwi, must be addressed; however, this proposal raises significant concerns about environmental, cultural, and community impacts that cannot be ignored. This issue has long been debated with previous decisions to preserve the area for public and cultural use for current and future generations. We urgently need affordable housing, but is compromising our precious coastal lands the answer? In the midst of the climate crisis, it seems negligent to prioritize a short-term "solution" that may not be sustainable and has the potential to further exacerbate housing and health disparities experienced by Kānaka ‘Ōiwi. Other options should be considered.

Mahalo nui.

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 11:26:22 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Kari Goodbar | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am a resident of Manoa Valley and a loyal surfer of Kewalo Basin. I oppose this bill for the dangerous development precedent it would set as well as numerous environmental issues that would stem from ground breaking and construction in this area. Additionally, the expected cost of these residences is not "affordable" to the average worker.

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 11:27:16 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Kaiulani Bowers | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose this bill for so many reasons. I oppose development on the makai side in that area, I oppose the traffic it will cause, I oppose development in that area because the sewage is already messed up and often ends up in the ocean, I oppose every aspect of this bill

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 11:28:28 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Cole | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I would like to open with we are not against residential development nor are we against OHA, but when anyone attempts to change a landmark law that has been protecting this last open public oceanfront land on the South Shore of Oahu, under the guise of being environmentally safe and feasible to build, and under the guise of being affordable, that is not Pono: Kaka‘ako is unsafe to build being on toxic brownfields and unstable filled land to support 400 ft towers. KM was underwater and the shoreline was Ala Moana Blvd. Imagine that... We would like to require OHA to take a pause to complete a full EIS by a neutral contractor and a full feasibility study before they even think of changing the law.

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 11:36:24 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Rhonda Jones | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534

I strongly oppose SB534, which pushes for high-density residential development in Kaka‘ako Makai, disregarding decades of community planning, environmental concerns, and the long-term sustainability of our islands. This bill is a thinly veiled attempt to justify private development under the guise of addressing Native Hawaiian housing needs—without ensuring that the housing will be truly affordable or accessible to those most affected by Hawai‘i’s housing crisis.

Lack of Environmental Review

SB534 moves forward without a comprehensive **Environmental Impact Study (EIS)** on the consequences of large-scale residential development in Kaka‘ako Makai. The absence of an EIS is reckless and irresponsible given the serious environmental risks.

Before any consideration of SB534, a comprehensive Environmental Impact Study (EIS) must be a prerequisite to assess the full consequences of high-rise development on a municipal landfill in Kaka‘ako Makai. **The environmental risks of building on landfill—unstable soil conditions, methane gas emissions, toxic leachate contamination, and long-term structural integrity concerns—are far too significant to ignore.** Without a thorough EIS, there is no accountability for how this development will affect public health, marine ecosystems, groundwater quality, and overall sustainability. **Rushing to pass SB534 without first conducting a rigorous environmental review is reckless and irresponsible.** Any legislation that proposes large-scale development on environmentally sensitive land must require an EIS before being considered, not after the fact, when irreversible damage may already be done.

Kaka‘ako’s Pattern of Unsustainable Development

The existing high-rise developments in Kaka‘ako have already revealed **serious construction and planning failures**. Adding more buildings without addressing these ongoing issues is irresponsible.

- **Defective Construction** – Many of Kaka‘ako’s new high-rise condos have suffered from **plumbing failures, water intrusion, and construction defects**, leaving residents with massive repair costs and proving that **rapid development has prioritized profit over quality**.

- **Gentrification & Displacement** – High-rise development in Kaka‘ako has catered to **luxury buyers and foreign investors**, escalating property values and pushing local families and businesses out. The promise of “workforce housing” under SB534 is deceptive unless strict affordability requirements and anti-speculation protections are in place. Without them, this bill will **accelerate the displacement of Native Hawaiians** rather than provide them with housing.

False Promises of Affordable Housing

SB534 exploits the urgent need for Native Hawaiian housing **without guaranteeing that it will actually serve those most in need.**

- **Native Hawaiians Suffer Disproportionately** – Native Hawaiians have the **highest poverty rates, lowest median household income, and the highest rates of displacement and homelessness** in the state. Yet, SB534 fails to define affordability standards or prevent speculative development that will **price them out of their own homeland.**
- **Pattern of Developer Exploitation** – History has shown that “affordable” and “workforce” housing designations in Hawai‘i often cater to **income brackets that exclude** those in greatest need, while developers take advantage of tax incentives to maximize profits.
- **Threat to Public Lands** – Kaka‘ako Makai is **one of the last remaining public waterfront spaces in urban Honolulu.** Allowing residential development **opens the door to irreversible privatization**—a loss that cannot be undone.

Ignoring Community Plans & Public Trust

SB534 **directly contradicts** the **2011 Kaka‘ako Makai Conceptual Master Plan, 2013 Kaka‘ako Makai Strategic Management Plan, 2017 Kaka‘ako Makai Area Parks Master Plan,** and the **2023 Kaka‘ako Community Development District Makai Area Plan**—all created with extensive public input and **all explicitly opposed residential development** in Kaka‘ako Makai.

The people of Hawai‘i have already spoken: **Kaka‘ako Makai must remain a public, cultural, and recreational space—not a playground for developers.** Overriding years of community-driven planning to serve development interests is unacceptable.

Conclusion

SB534 is a reckless attempt to force high-density development without considering environmental consequences, community impacts, or long-term sustainability. There has been **no comprehensive environmental review, no commitment to truly affordable housing, and no respect for existing community-driven plans.**

For these reasons, I strongly urge you to **VOTE NO on SB534** and protect Kaka‘ako Makai from exploitation.

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 12:16:22 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Brayden | Individual | Comments | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose SB534,

“Passage of SB534 would be a critical step forward in creating systemic housing change, addressing development inequities, and fulfilling promises made to Native Hawaiians.”
(OHA.ORG)

I am Pro Hawaiian; I want to see the promises made to Native Hawaiians fulfilled. I understand the need for affordable homes for future generations. Owning property is getting increasingly more difficult and I welcome all potential solutions. Increasing amounts of Native Hawaiians and Local people are feeling forced to move away. As a state we need to find an answer to keep our people home.

Are 400-foot oceanfront towers and hotels a solution?

OHA’s statement regarding Kakaako Makai is false, Kakaako and oceanfront do not go hand in hand with being affordable. A million-dollar “affordable” condominium is not beneficial to the people, it only serves the interest of developers and those who wish to invest. We don’t need that.

It's also an eye sore from the ocean

Save the oceanfront. Protect it for future generations.

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 1:29:44 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Sarah Tiritas | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

SB 534 SD1 is not in the best interest of Hawai'i, its people, or its cultural legacy. By neglecting environmental responsibility, perpetuating false promises of affordability, and threatening the last remaining shoreline of Honolulu, this bill prioritizes profits over people. Kaka'ako Makai should be preserved as a public and cultural resource, not handed over to developers under the guise of housing that will not truly serve local residents.

I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka'ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 2:20:54 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Musco Adams | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB 534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai‘i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

1. Failure to Complete a Proper Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The proposed development in Kaka‘ako Makai lacks a comprehensive and updated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that considers the full extent of harm to the area’s ecosystem, coastal integrity, and climate resiliency. Given the increasing threats of rising sea levels and shoreline erosion, pushing forward without due diligence disregards the long-term consequences of commercial residential expansion in a fragile coastal zone. Without an updated, independent EIS, this project represents reckless development that prioritizes short-term economic gains over the environmental and cultural sustainability of Hawai‘i.

2. The Delusion of Affordable Housing in Honolulu

Proponents of SB534 SD1 argue that it will provide much-needed affordable housing. However, history has shown that “affordable” housing in the Honolulu market is largely unattainable for local families due to inflated income thresholds and market-driven pricing. Previous high-rise developments in urban Honolulu have failed to provide truly affordable units for local residents—instead, they primarily serve out-of-state investors and high-income buyers. The

promise of affordability is an illusion, and allowing high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai only deepens the crisis of displacement for Hawai‘i’s people.

3. Protecting the Last Shoreline of Honolulu from Commercial Residential Development

Kaka‘ako Makai is the last undeveloped shoreline in urban Honolulu, a rare and invaluable open space for residents and visitors alike. This land was intended to remain a public asset, providing community access to green space, cultural practices, and ocean recreation. High-rise development would permanently privatize and commercialize one of the last pieces of Honolulu’s coastline, restricting access for local families and severing the deep cultural and ancestral connection that Native Hawaiians have with the land and ocean. Once lost to concrete and steel, this shoreline cannot be reclaimed.

Conclusion

SB 534 SD1 is not in the best interest of Hawai‘i, its people, or its cultural legacy. By neglecting environmental responsibility, perpetuating false promises of affordability, and threatening the last remaining shoreline of Honolulu, this bill prioritizes profits over people. Kaka‘ako Makai should be preserved as a public and cultural resource, not handed over to developers under the guise of housing that will not truly serve local residents.

I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Musco Adams

[743-207-4628](tel:743-207-4628)

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 2:28:28 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

LATE

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| De Andre Makakoa | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

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

I submit this testimony in **strong opposition** to **SB534 SD1**, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in **Kaka‘ako Makai**. This bill represents reckless urban expansion that threatens **our environment, our cultural identity, and the ability of future generations to access this last open shoreline in urban Honolulu**.

1. Ignoring Environmental Consequences

Pushing forward with high-rise development in **Kaka‘ako Makai without a comprehensive, independent Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)** is irresponsible and dangerous. This is a **coastal zone already facing rising sea levels and erosion**, and any large-scale development will only make these issues worse. Hawai‘i cannot afford more shortsighted planning that prioritizes **short-term profits over long-term sustainability**.

2. The False Promise of Affordable Housing

Developers claim this project will provide affordable housing, but **history has proven otherwise**. Previous high-rise developments in Honolulu have been marketed as "affordable," yet local families are continually priced out due to **inflated income thresholds, speculative pricing, and the influence of out-of-state investors**. **SB534 SD1 will not serve working-class Hawaiians—it will only deepen the displacement crisis**.

3. Protecting One of Honolulu’s Last Open Shorelines

Kaka‘ako Makai is **one of the last remaining undeveloped shorelines in Honolulu**. This land was never meant for commercial residential development—it was meant to remain a **public space**, preserving cultural and community access to the ocean, open green space, and cultural practices. Once it is handed over to developers, **it is gone forever**.

Conclusion

SB534 SD1 is a direct **threat to our land, our people, and our cultural future**. It prioritizes corporate interests over environmental responsibility, sells a false promise of affordability, and **permanently takes away public shoreline access** from future generations.

I urge you to **reject SB534 SD1** and protect **Kaka‘ako Makai** from becoming yet another concrete wasteland catering to outside investors rather than the people of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and commitment to preserving what little remains of our open coastline.

De Andre Makakoa

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 2:28:59 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Marisela Mora | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I confirm this testimony

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 2:54:21 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Lana Albright | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha, I'm writing in strong opposition of Bill SB534

Kewalos is a community space that residents enjoy as is and should be left untouched.

To build there would have a negative impact on community and environment.

Mahalo for your time.

Lana Albright

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 3:13:02 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Rachel Webster | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB 534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka'ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai'i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

1. Failure to Complete a Proper Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The proposed development in Kaka'ako Makai lacks a comprehensive and updated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that considers the full extent of harm to the area's ecosystem, coastal integrity, and climate resiliency. Given the increasing threats of rising sea levels and shoreline erosion, pushing forward without due diligence disregards the long-term consequences of commercial residential expansion in a fragile coastal zone. Without an updated, independent EIS, this project represents reckless development that prioritizes short-term economic gains over the environmental and cultural sustainability of Hawai'i.

2. The Delusion of Affordable Housing in Honolulu

Proponents of SB534 SD1 argue that it will provide much-needed affordable housing. However, history has shown that “affordable” housing in the Honolulu market is largely unattainable for local families due to inflated income thresholds and market-driven pricing. Previous high-rise developments in urban Honolulu have failed to provide truly affordable units for local residents—instead, they primarily serve out-of-state investors and high-income buyers. The promise of affordability is an illusion, and allowing high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai only deepens the crisis of displacement for Hawai‘i’s people.

3. Protecting the Last Shoreline of Honolulu from Commercial Residential Development

Kaka‘ako Makai is the last undeveloped shoreline in urban Honolulu, a rare and invaluable open space for residents and visitors alike. This land was intended to remain a public asset, providing community access to green space, cultural practices, and ocean recreation. High-rise development would permanently privatize and commercialize one of the last pieces of Honolulu’s coastline, restricting access for local families and severing the deep cultural and ancestral connection that Native Hawaiians have with the land and ocean. Once lost to concrete and steel, this shoreline cannot be reclaimed.

Conclusion

SB 534 SD1 is not in the best interest of Hawai‘i, its people, or its cultural legacy. By neglecting environmental responsibility, perpetuating false promises of affordability, and threatening the last remaining shoreline of Honolulu, this bill prioritizes profits over people. Kaka‘ako Makai should be preserved as a public and cultural resource, not handed over to developers under the guise of housing that will not truly serve local residents.

I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Rachel Webster

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 3:57:05 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

LATE

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Shane | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

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I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka'ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Shane d vejar

[8088565979]

Born and raised in Maui ,Lahaina

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 4:09:22 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

LATE

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Helene Phillips | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am very concerned about the plans for Kakaako makai.

I am very concerned about OHAs plans for Kakaako makai.

The open spaces around this area are so important as the area gets denser and denser.

More luxury highrises with the lure of workforce and kupuna housing.

Please be cautious of this open area.

Lastly, please do a DEIS on the landfill area, there are still vent pipes there.

Mahalo for a chance to give my input.

Helene Phillips

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 4:35:54 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Christopher VanWart | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Committee,

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB 534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai‘i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

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Conclusion

SB 534 SD1 is not in the best interest of Hawai‘i, its people, or its cultural legacy. By neglecting environmental responsibility, perpetuating false promises of affordability, and threatening the last remaining shoreline of Honolulu, this bill prioritizes profits over people. Kaka‘ako Makai should be preserved as a public and cultural resource, not handed over to developers under the guise of housing that will not truly serve local residents.

I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 5:00:27 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Megan Nixon | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka'ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai'i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Megan Nixon
mnixon423@gmail.com

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 5:14:50 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

LATE

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Francis Labra | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Francis Labra

labrafp@gmail.com

Pearl City, HI

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 5:15:49 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Lauren Palakiko | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 5:36:38 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Emi Nollar | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

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I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

-Emi N.

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 5:44:15 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Yvonne Alvarado | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I, Yvonne Alvarado Strongly Oppose this Bill SB534 SD1

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 6:15:20 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM



| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Clardean Lehano | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I strongly oppose this bill. Keep our beaches free from development.

Clardean Lehano

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 6:35:09 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

LATE

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Keoni Kaloi | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

My name is Keoni Wiliama Kaloi, and I am submitting this testimony in strong opposition to SB534 SD1, which seeks to allow residential high-rises in Kaka'ako Makai. This bill threatens the land, the people, and the cultural integrity of Hawai'i. It does not serve those who call Hawai'i home—it serves developers and outside investors at the cost of our future.

1. Disregard for Environmental Responsibility

Kaka'ako Makai is a coastal area already at risk due to rising sea levels, erosion, and the long-term impacts of climate change. Yet, this project is being pushed forward without a proper Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that fully evaluates the damage it will cause. Reckless development in such a fragile area prioritizes profit over responsibility and will result in permanent consequences for the land and the people who rely on it.

2. The False Promise of Affordable Housing

Developers love to claim that projects like this will help local families, but history has shown otherwise. “Affordable” housing in Honolulu is not truly affordable to local residents. Instead, these high-rise units end up in the hands of out-of-state buyers and high-income investors while Native Hawaiians and local families continue to struggle with rising costs and displacement.

If this bill were truly about helping local people, it would focus on sustainable solutions that keep Hawaiians in Hawai'i—not sell off what little land we have left under the illusion of affordability.

3. The Last Shoreline of Honolulu Must Be Protected

Kaka'ako Makai is the last remaining undeveloped shoreline in urban Honolulu. It was never meant for private high-rises—it was meant to remain a public space for the people. This land

holds cultural and ancestral significance, where Hawaiians have practiced their traditions and maintained their connection to the ocean for generations.

Allowing high-rise development in Kaka‘ako Makai would permanently privatize one of the last open spaces in Honolulu, limiting public access and cutting off a critical piece of Hawai‘i’s cultural identity. Once it’s gone, we can’t get it back.

Conclusion: SB534 SD1 Must Be Rejected

This bill is not in the best interest of Hawai‘i or its people. By neglecting environmental protections, making false promises about affordability, and threatening the last open coastline in Honolulu, SB534 SD1 prioritizes corporate greed over the well-being of our community.

I urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and ensure that Kaka‘ako Makai is preserved for future generations.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Keoni Wiliama Kaloi
1819 W 19th Ave Unit B, Kennewick, WA 99337
walk4545@icloud.com
(509)-714-9891

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 6:52:32 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Dean Nakamaru | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose this bill.

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 6:59:28 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Janice Giles | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Our island can't handle any more development. We don't have enough resources! It's too crowded and most locals couldn't afford to live there. And, there is barely any more natural beauty in town. Let's keep Hawai'i pristine.

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 7:08:24 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| irene kloepfer | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha. Please kill this bill, SB534. Kakaako does not need more condos. This project is so abstract - called affordable housing has become a cruel misnomer. 1/2 million is not affordable for Hawaii residents. Plus they want to build this on a toxic waste site - if someone gets sick and sues, who pays, we do. No. And lastly the infrastructure would be overwhelming to the area. We do not want to become another Waikiki. Has anyone done research on all these condos built and being built - how many are owned by Hawaii residents and how many owned from other states and other countries. How many are short term rentals. Oahu is not for sale, please listen to the people. Please kill this bill. Mahalo. Irene

LATE

February 25, 2025

Aloha members of the Senate Judiciary and Ways and Means Committee,

I submitted testimony in support of SB534 and I would like to again encourage full support for the SD1 version, which further strengthens the goal of providing affordable housing for essential workers as owner occupants in perpetuity. It also reiterates the due diligence required of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Hawaii Community Development Authority and Department of Health including additional community meetings, before proceeding on the development of the properties.

Approving this Bill will address two of Hawaii's critical needs: 1) making affordable housing available to the essential workforce in the area and 2) enhancing the revenue generating capacity of certain parcels of land in the Kaka'ako Makai area, including parcels that were conveyed to the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) pursuant to Act 15, for the purposes of bettering the conditions of native Hawaiians.

There are some who oppose this bill saying that they want to protect open space. That open space has already been secured by the city and county who owns the Kakaako Park extending to the waterfront. In reality, this is an underutilized park that has been occupied at times by homeless people. The community that would grow from occupants in the newly built towers will bring new life to areas adjacent to the park, and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs will collect association fees to fund various services and projects in the Kakaako Makai area.

Some who oppose this development already have homes or affordable places to live. They have time for recreation that young working families do not. Having affordable housing in town near safe recreational spots as well as access to medical care and educational opportunities would be Godsend to these families who work hard to make our way of life possible.

For too long, the units being built in Kakaako have been for the affluent, investors both foreign and local and retirees with resources. Homeownership and even renting have become increasingly difficult for local residents resulting in more young people and families leaving the islands. While HCDA requires all Kaka'ako properties to have at least 20% affordable housing, SB 534, SD1 requires 50% cent plus one of the residential units developed on certain parcels to be allocated to households with income at or below one hundred forty per cent of the area median income, with priority given to individuals who are essential workers working within a five-mile radius of Kakaako makai, including but not limited to essential workers working for an employer in the health care, hospitality, education, law enforcement, civil service, or construction industry; This will create much more affordable housing for our people than has been created by other developments.

Furthermore, the bill addresses investor issues by limiting the sale of residential units developed to prospective owner occupants in perpetuity.

SB534, SD1 also limits the new 400 feet height to OHA parcels, excluding those properties owned by Kamehameha Schools. It should also be noted that two parcels that OHA hopes to build towers on likely has the least amount of contaminated fill as it is on the areas that were mud flats, salt pans, and fringing reefs, that were filled in in the late 1800's to 1940's when the most concerning contaminants (plastics, heavy metals, etc) did not exist. Truly, Kakaako Park is an area that has the most serious contaminants, yet our State determined it was safe enough to make it a park for public use.

2) OHA was established under article XII, section 5, of the Hawaii State Constitution to "hold title to all the real and personal property now or hereafter set aside or conveyed to it which shall be held in trust for native Hawaiians and Hawaiians." OHA's board of trustees is authorized by article XII, section 6, of the Hawaii State Constitution "to manage and administer the proceeds from the sale or other disposition of the lands • . . and income derived from whatever sources for native Hawaiians and Hawaiians, including all income and proceeds from that pro rata portion of the trust referred to in section 4 of this article [the public land trust] for native Hawaiians".

In 2012, in lieu of hundreds of millions of owed to OHA as its pro rata portion, OHA received the Kaka'ako Makai lands instead. The State represented that the value of the Kaka'ako Makai lands was \$198 Million, based on the State's appraisal by the Hallstrom Group, assuming a 400-foot height limit for Parcels E and I, which exceeded the current allowable heights for these parcels. They promised those restrictions would be changed. However, for more than a decade, OHA has been prohibited from developing the lands, greatly crippling OHA from its fiduciary responsibility to use its resources to the best and highest use for the benefit of the Native Hawaiian people.

It's time to make good on that promise for the betterment of not just Native Hawaiian people but for Hawaii citizens who want to live, work and play in their place of birth. Approving SB 534, SD1 is just the first step in the process for HCDA to allow for residential development of certain lands owned by OHA.

Please vote yes to SB534, SD1. It's time for action to proceed and explore the best options for our people not just to survive but to thrive in Hawaii.

Respectfully,

Sharlene Chun-Lum
99-546 Iwaiwa Street
Aiea, HI 96701

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 8:55:24 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Jun Shirota | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB 534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka'ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai'i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

1. Failure to Complete a Proper Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The proposed development in Kaka'ako Makai lacks a comprehensive and updated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that considers the full extent of harm to the area's ecosystem, coastal integrity, and climate resiliency. Given the increasing threats of rising sea levels and shoreline erosion, pushing forward without due diligence disregards the long-term consequences of commercial residential expansion in a fragile coastal zone. Without an updated, independent EIS, this project represents reckless development that prioritizes short-term economic gains over the environmental and cultural sustainability of Hawai'i.

2. The Delusion of Affordable Housing in Honolulu

Proponents of SB534 SD1 argue that it will provide much-needed affordable housing. However, history has shown that “affordable” housing in the Honolulu market is largely unattainable for local families due to inflated income thresholds and market-driven pricing. Previous high-rise developments in urban Honolulu have failed to provide truly affordable units for local residents—instead, they primarily serve out-of-state investors and high-income buyers. The promise of affordability is an illusion, and allowing high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai only deepens the crisis of displacement for Hawai‘i’s people.

3. Protecting the Last Shoreline of Honolulu from Commercial Residential Development

Kaka‘ako Makai is the last undeveloped shoreline in urban Honolulu, a rare and invaluable open space for residents and visitors alike. This land was intended to remain a public asset, providing community access to green space, cultural practices, and ocean recreation. High-rise development would permanently privatize and commercialize one of the last pieces of Honolulu’s coastline, restricting access for local families and severing the deep cultural and ancestral connection that Native Hawaiians have with the land and ocean. Once lost to concrete and steel, this shoreline cannot be reclaimed.

Conclusion

SB 534 SD1 is not in the best interest of Hawai‘i, its people, or its cultural legacy. By neglecting environmental responsibility, perpetuating false promises of affordability, and threatening the last remaining shoreline of Honolulu, this bill prioritizes profits over people. Kaka‘ako Makai should be preserved as a public and cultural resource, not handed over to developers under the guise of housing that will not truly serve local residents.

I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Jun Shriota

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:00:03 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Jeanne D. Rice | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha, I am writing to express my opposition to SB434 - to allow OHA to build any high rise condo or office building on any of their nine parcels of land in Kaka'ako Makai. This land was formerly home to ancient Hawaiians growing taro, fishing and other Hawaiian needs and ultimately became a landfill/dump by the City & County of Honolulu. This land is toxic and really unsafe for any use.

However, allowing OHA to build is unconscionable given the fact that in the past, the State Legislature voted against their plan to build three times....and they just keep pushing to build when the majority of the population is not in favor of their project (s)/

In addition, what will happen 25-30-40 years from now is construction is allowed to happen and people get sick and then sue the State due to the fact that OHA was given approval to build. The Taxpayers throughout the State, not just on Oahu - will have to foot the bill. This is wrong.

Also, if they wish to provide affordable housing, with prices starting at \$400,000 - how is that even affordable? Also, let's be clear, if anyone is fooled by the fact that OHA will not sell to those who may not live in Hawaii full time or are foreign investors -- this will keep the prices higher than they are now proposing and they will surely price kama'aina out of the opportunity to own a home in any of their structures.

Allowing one sector of Hawaii's population to build, just because they own is wrong. Give them their \$200million and let's end this push on OHA's behalf and return Kaka'ako Makai back to the people of Oahu.

Mahalo

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:18:05 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| joe shirota | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

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I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Joe Shirota

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 9:53:48 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Miranda scarola | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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

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I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Miranda Scarola

[Mirandascarola@gmail.com]

Big Island, Hawai'i

LATE

Chair Karl Rhoads

Vice Chair Mike Gabbard

Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary

Chair Donovan M Dela Cruz

Vice Chair Sharon Moriwaki

Members of the Senate Committee on Ways & Means

Thirty-Third Legislature, Regular Session of 2025

RE: **Strong Support** for SB 534 SD1 -Relating to The Hawaii Community Development Authority

Hearing Date: February 26, 2025, at 1005 AM

Aloha Chairs Rhoads, Dela Cruz

Vice Chairs Gabbard, Moriwaki and Members of the committee's

Aloha, my name is Dwayne Bautista. I'm here today, speaking from my heart, to offer my strong **support** for SB 534 SD1, Relating to the Hawaii Community Development Authority. While I work with the Iron Workers Local 625 Stabilization Fund, this testimony is my own.

I truly believe the Kakaako Makai development is essential for Hawaii's future. It's about giving our local trades good jobs, strengthening the backbone of our economy, and creating a real chance for homeownership. It's about ensuring our families can afford to stay on the islands we love. SB 534 SD1 is an investment in our community's future, a chance to build a better Hawaii for everyone. I implore you to **support** its passage."

Thank you for your consideration



LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2025 11:31:13 PM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Holly Neves | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I STRONGLY OPPOSE SB 534, which proposes allowing developers to build high-rises on the ocean side of Ala Moana Boulevard in Kakaako, raises significant concerns. Firstly, constructing high-rises in this area would disrupt the natural beauty and scenic views that are cherished by both residents and visitors. The oceanfront is a public treasure, and transforming it into a high-density urban zone would compromise its aesthetic and recreational value.

Additionally, the environmental impact of such developments cannot be overlooked. High-rise constructions often lead to increased pollution, strain on local infrastructure, and potential harm to marine ecosystems. The delicate balance of Kakaako's coastal environment could be jeopardized, affecting marine life and water quality.

Moreover, this bill could exacerbate existing issues of overdevelopment and congestion in Honolulu. The influx of new residents and businesses would likely lead to increased traffic, noise, and pressure on public services. Instead of prioritizing short-term economic gains, it is crucial to consider the long-term sustainability and quality of life for the community. Therefore, it is essential to oppose SB 534 to preserve the unique character and environmental integrity of Kakaako's oceanfront. Mahalo nui

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 12:06:23 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Cynthia Dell | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I strongly oppose the damage that SB 534 would do to current and future O'ahu residents and the natural resources of Kakaako. Developing 400 foot towers on the Makai side of Ala Moana Blvd is unnecessary and destructive.

Living in the urban density of today's Kakaako, on the mauka side, is offset by residents access to a wide stretch of peaceful coastline. If 400 ft towers occupy the makai side, we will be living in a tunnel of towers on both sides of Ala Moana. The roads and frail infrastructure cannot handle that level of additional residential volume that will already be stretched to the limit with the legally approved towers on the makai side.

The prohibition on 400 ft towers has existed for many years for good reason and for the good of all. OHA's stated goals of affordable housing will not be met with towers in this location. They can better serve their constituents away from this protected coastline area.

The people of O'ahu deserve to have that land developed for better community uses including recreation, an open coastline, access to the ocean and surrounding land, and outdoor spaces that nurture families and keiki.

We need our elected officials to work for the benefit of all stake holders in Honolulu, not for the financial interests of the land owner.

Please do not prioritize OHA's interests over the health and well being of all Honolulu residents. Mahalo.

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 12:21:58 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Michelle R Stefanik | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose SB534. I kdo not want developers to build high rises on the Makai Side of Ala Moana Blvd. I urge you to vote NO.

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 1:29:07 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Caitlyn Shigaki | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee, & whomever it may concern,

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB 534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai‘i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

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I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Caitlyn Shigaki

Cell number: 808-783-5316

Email: caitlynshigaki@gmail.com

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 1:41:14 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Mara Handle | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai'i State Legislature

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Mahalo for your time and consideration.

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 5:35:05 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| karin omahony | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB 534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of our land, the well-being of our people, and the cultural identity of Hawai‘i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

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I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 6:12:36 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Tristan Schrager | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

There is no justification for building any more high rises in Kaka'ako, when a majority of the units in these buidlings are nothing but investment properties, and tax shelters for the wealthy. The thought of doing so on the Makai side of Ala Moana Blvd is terrible and so upsetting to me. I have watched this area transform right in front of my eyes in a way that does not benefit the local community whatsoever. Kewalo basin is one of the last places in Kaka'ako that still feels like home, thanks to the hard work of so many. A better path would be to give Kewalo basin the attention it deserves, and make it a place that everyone can enjoy. A good start would be updating the restroom and shower facilities, cleaning up the parking lot, and revitalizing the park with native plants. Keeping recreational spaces like Kewalo Basin accessible and free of overdevelopment is absolutely necessary for the prosperity of locals and visitors alike!

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 7:15:15 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Renee Dacanay | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai‘i State Legislature

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

My name is Renee Dacanay, and I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB534 SD1. I have deep love and appreciation for this island and the privilege of living here. Hawai‘i is more than just a place—it is a home, a culture, and a way of life that must be protected for future generations. The proposed development in Kaka‘ako Makai threatens everything that makes this land so special and goes against the best interests of local residents.

While this bill is being presented as a solution for affordable housing, the reality is that these high-rise developments historically do not serve local families. Instead, they drive up rental prices in surrounding areas, pushing many of us further from our homes and making it even harder to afford to live here. Time and time again, so-called "affordable housing" projects have ended up benefiting wealthy investors and non-local buyers more than the people who truly need housing stability.

Beyond the economic concerns, Kaka‘ako Makai is one of the last remaining undeveloped shorelines in urban Honolulu—a rare public space that belongs to the people, not private developers. This area is a community gathering place, a cultural treasure, and an important

coastal environment that must be protected. Once high-rises take over, this space will be lost forever, and public access will inevitably become restricted.

Additionally, there has not been a comprehensive, updated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that fully assesses the damage this project would cause to the area's ecosystem and climate resiliency. With rising sea levels and shoreline erosion already affecting our coasts, building high-rises here is reckless and irresponsible.

The people of Hawai'i need real solutions—not developments that claim to serve us but ultimately push us out. This bill is not in alignment with the true needs of the local community, and I urge you to reject SB534 SD1 in favor of policies that genuinely prioritize the well-being of Hawai'i's residents.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Renee Dacanay

615-364-5571

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 7:34:07 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Jordan Spalding | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai‘i State Legislature

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I strongly urge this committee to reject SB534 SD1 and protect Kaka‘ako Makai for the future generations of Hawai‘i.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Jordan Spalding

Jordanns1124@gmail.com

Diver, Ocean recreator, public parks user, Friend of Kewalos

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 7:39:01 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Candace Vizcarra | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

NO, ABSOLUTELY NOT!!! WE DONT NEED ANYMORE DEVELOPMENT, HIGH RISES, ETC that take away from our natural island beauty!! Our islands are inundated with too many of these as it is and I personally don't want anymore foreigners buying up all our properties and pushing out the locals who are born and raised here. GOD KNOWS AND SEES ALL!!!

LATE

SB-534-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2025 7:42:24 AM

Testimony for JDC on 2/26/2025 10:05:00 AM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Christopher Brandao | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Testimony in Strong Opposition to SB534 SD1

Hawai‘I State Legislature

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

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to SB534 SD1, which seeks to develop residential high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai. This bill threatens the integrity of the land, the well-being of the people, and the cultural identity of Hawai‘i. The passage of SB534 SD1 would do more harm than good, and I urge you to reject it for the following critical reasons:

1. Failure to Complete a Proper Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

The proposed development in Kaka‘ako Makai lacks a comprehensive and updated Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that considers the full extent of harm to the area’s ecosystem, coastal integrity, and climate resiliency. Given the increasing threats of rising sea levels and shoreline erosion, pushing forward without due diligence disregards the long-term consequences of commercial residential expansion in a fragile coastal zone. Without an updated, independent EIS, this project represents reckless development that prioritizes short-term economic gains over the environmental and cultural sustainability of Hawai‘i.

2. The Illusion of Affordable Housing in Honolulu

Proponents of SB534 SD1 argue that it will provide much-needed affordable housing. However, history has shown that “affordable” housing in the Honolulu market is largely unattainable for local families due to inflated income thresholds and market-driven pricing. Previous high-rise developments in urban Honolulu have failed to provide truly affordable units for local residents—instead, they primarily serve out-of-state investors and high-income buyers. The promise of affordability is an illusion, and allowing high-rises in Kaka‘ako Makai only deepens the crisis of displacement for Hawai‘i’s people.

3. Protecting the Last Shoreline of Honolulu from Commercial Residential Development

Kaka‘ako Makai is the last undeveloped shoreline in urban Honolulu, a rare and invaluable open space for residents and visitors alike. This land was intended to remain a public asset, providing community access to green space, cultural practices, and ocean recreation. High-rise development would permanently privatize and commercialize one of the last pieces of Honolulu’s coastline, restricting access for local families and severing the deep cultural and ancestral connection that Native Hawaiians have with the land and ocean. Once lost to concrete and steel, this shoreline cannot be reclaimed.

Conclusion

SB534 SD1 is not in the best interest of Hawai‘I, its people, or its cultural legacy. By neglecting environmental responsibility, perpetuating false promises of affordability, and threatening the last remaining shoreline of Honolulu, this bill prioritizes profits over people. Kaka‘ako Makai should be preserved as a public and cultural resource, not handed over to developers under the guise of housing that will not truly serve local residents.

Christopher Brandao

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