

LATE  
TESTIMONY



Via Capitol Website

February 9, 2009

**Senate Committees on Education and Housing &  
Transportation, International and Intergovernmental Affairs  
Hearing Date: Monday, February 9, 2009, 1:15 p.m. in CR 225**

**Testimony in support of SB 737 – Relating to Housing**

(Allows expedited review process for mixed-use housing and infrastructure projects.)

Honorable Chairs Sakamoto/English, Vice-Chairs Kidani/Gabbard  
& EDH-TIA Members:

My name is David Arakawa, and I am the Executive Director of the Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii (LURF), a private, non-profit research and trade association whose members include major Hawaii landowners, developers and a utility company. One of LURF's missions is to advocate for reasonable, rational and equitable land use planning, legislation and regulations that encourage well-planned economic growth and development, while safeguarding Hawaii's significant natural and cultural resources and public health and safety.

LURF is writing to provide testimony in support of **SB 737**, which authorizes mixed-use housing projects and infrastructure projects that are associated with a housing or mixed-use housing project to be eligible for the expedited review process currently offered to qualifying housing projects.

**Background.** The lack of affordable housing remains a significant problem affecting Hawaii. Finding ways to provide sufficient affordable housing and market housing for Hawaii's residents has been a major objective for our elected officials, and state and county agencies, and members of the housing industry and business community. For the past two years, LURF has participated in a statewide task force comprised of representatives from all four counties, business, labor, developers, architects, nonprofit providers of services, the State, and the legislature, whose purpose was to identify, address and propose regulatory reform and solutions to remove the barriers to the production of affordable housing.

**SB 737.** The purpose of this bill is to implement the legislative recommendations of the task force by authorizing mixed-use housing projects and infrastructure projects that are associated with a housing or mixed-use housing project to be eligible for the expedited review process currently offered to qualifying housing projects. This bill affords third

party reviews of mixed-use housing projects and infrastructure projects. Current law only allows third party reviews for housing projects under HRS Chapter 201H-38.

This bill adds defines mixed-use housing projects and infrastructure projects as follows:

""Infrastructure" means any facility, public work, or utility installed or improved by the government for the functioning of a community, or private or government-owned facility.

"Mixed-use housing" means the combination of different types of structures in a housing project including commercial, public facilities, industrial, and residential, which may include single-family, multi-family, for sale, lease, rental, low, moderate, workforce, affordable, and market housing, or combinations of some or all of the above; provided that at least twenty per cent of the housing units shall be for individuals and families that meet the affordable income threshold under section 201H-202(e)(2)."

**LURF's Position.** The housing crisis in Hawaii has affected many families who are now forced to live with extended families because of high costs. Access to affordable housing is critical to our communities and any further delay of any affordable housing type projects will cause an even bigger crisis in the near future. The housing crisis is a statewide issue and will allow state and county leaders to focus resources where they will have significant impacts. In allowing an expedited review process and third-party review of mixed-use, affordable housing projects and infrastructure, affordable housing can be made available on a more timely basis.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify **in support** SB 737.