



Aloha!

This year, I dedicated my annual survey to see what kind of government policies people are willing to support to build "affordable" housing, and what you consider "affordable."

Over 650 people filled out the survey – thank you! We'll be posting the results on my Web page: www.SenatorLauraThielen.com Here are some highlights:

Over half of you think "affordable" housing should be priced for people earning up to 250% of poverty (\$72,175 family of four).

The majority don't think "affordable" housing has to stay "affordable" forever.

Super-majorities (over 80%) want to restrict "affordable" homes to Hawaii residents, and to owner-occupied (no subleasing or investment property buyers).

Over 80% support increasing government subsidies to private developers to build "affordable" housing.

Most are open to new ideas:

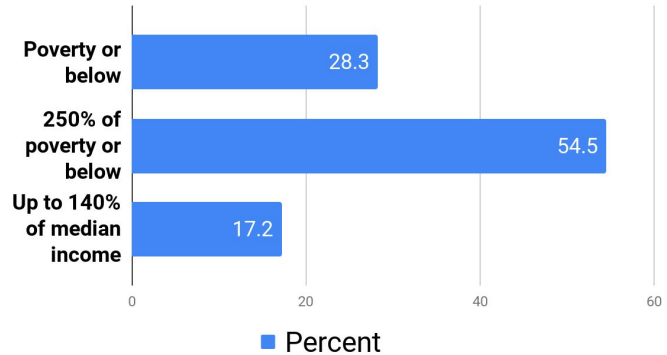
- 80% support or will try a state lending program for down payments (like the federal VA loans);
- 75% support or are willing to try leasehold sales on state land;
- 96% support or are willing to try "Affordable rent-to-buy."

This Session we're looking at many housing bills, including leasehold on state land, a state loan program for down payments, increased incentives for developers to build affordable homes, and "affordable" prices that work for families and individuals earning around 250% of poverty.

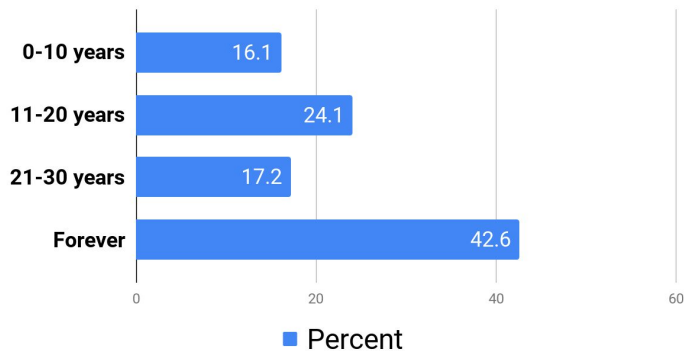
Mahalo,

Legislative Pre-Session Survey Results

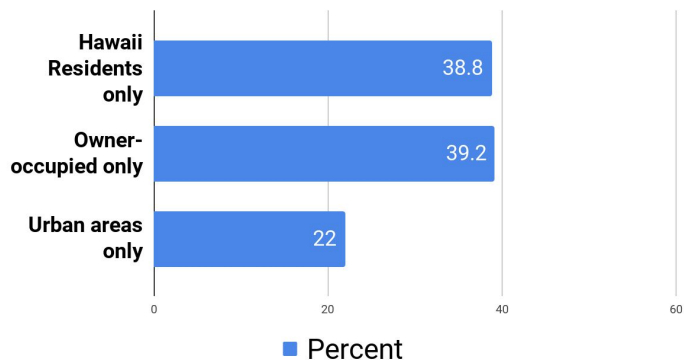
1) "Affordable" means priced for what level of income?



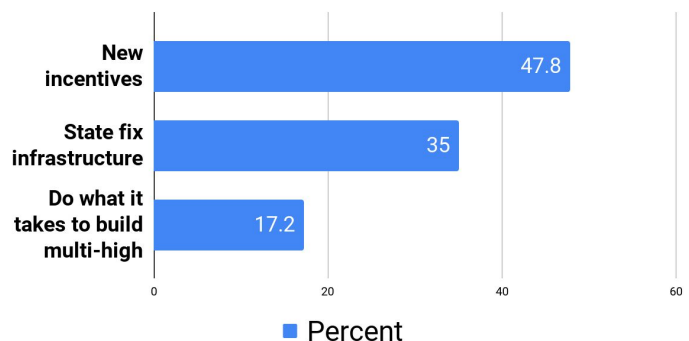
2) Units have to stay "affordable" for how long?



3) Other Minimum Requirements



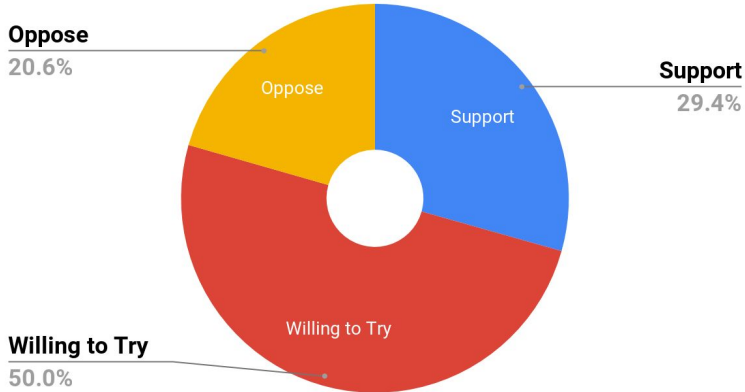
4) Current state incentives only produce a few hundred "affordable" units per year, but we need at least 1,000 per year to keep up with population.



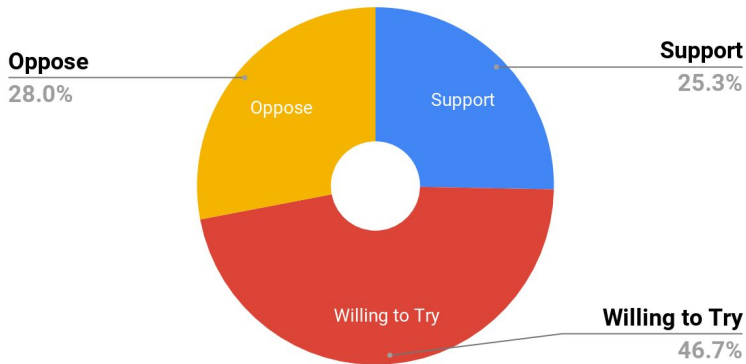
Legislative Pre-Session Survey Results

5) Lower-and-gap income families can't come up with security deposit or down payment to get into affordable units. What do you think of the following ideas?

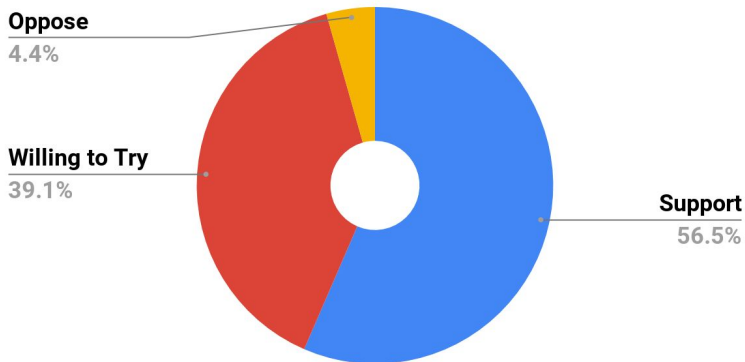
A. State lending program for down payments/damage deposits



B. Leasehold sales on state land (Buy house and long-term lease on land)



C. Affordable "Rent to Buy" (Renter builds credit to purchase unit)



Community Outreach Courts (COC)

The Community Outreach Court (COC) launched in January 2017 as a collaborative pilot project of the Judiciary, the City and County of Honolulu Department of Prosecuting Attorney, and the State of Hawaii Office of the Public Defender. It is designed to help residentially-challenged individuals charged with quality-of-life related offenses such as park use and traffic violations. Entry to the program is voluntary, and available to only nonviolent offenders.

The COC connects the participants to social services, while providing accountability for outstanding charges and bench warrants. Under this model, the court holds hearings on cases for which the Prosecutor and Public Defender have negotiated plea agreements on the disposition of the cases, including community service, fines, court-ordered treatment, or other conditions.

From January 2017 to October 2018, COC has had 102 participants and 1,145 cases cleared. Twenty-four participants obtained housing; 23 got jobs; 15 now have driver's license permits; 17 received substance abuse assessment/treatment; 13 were sheltered; and 19 were living with family or friends.

Mahalo to all who are involved in the program.

2019 Office Staff



2019 Office Staff: L-R: Zachary Espino (Legislative Assistant), Eliza Wilcox (Legislative Aide), Jennifer Barra (Office Manager and Committee Clerk), and Ruby Gordon (Intern).