

---

## A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE COUNTIES.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1 SECTION 1. Section 46-15, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
2 amended to read as follows:

3 "§46-15 **Experimental and demonstration housing projects[.]**  
4 **or commercial projects.** (a) The mayor of each county, after  
5 holding a public hearing on the matter and receiving the  
6 approval of the respective council, shall be empowered to  
7 designate areas of land for experimental and demonstration  
8 housing projects[.] **or commercial projects,** the purposes of  
9 which are to research and develop ideas that would reduce the  
10 cost of housing **or support commercial development** in the State.  
11 Except as **[hereinafter]** provided[.] **in this section,** the  
12 experimental and demonstration housing projects **or commercial**  
13 **projects** shall be exempt from all statutes, ordinances, charter  
14 provisions, and rules or regulations of any governmental agency  
15 or public utility relating to planning, zoning, construction  
16 standards for subdivisions, development and improvement of land,  
17 and the construction and sale of homes thereon; provided that



1 the experimental and demonstration housing projects or  
2 commercial projects shall not affect the safety standards or  
3 tariffs approved by the public ~~utility commissions~~ utilities  
4 commission for such public utility.

5 (b) The mayor of each county, with the approval of the  
6 respective council, may designate a county agency or official  
7 who shall have the power to review all plans and specifications  
8 for the subdivisions, development and improvement of the land  
9 involved, and the construction and sale of homes thereon. The  
10 county agency or official shall have the power to approve or  
11 disapprove or to make modifications to all or any portion of the  
12 plans and specifications.

13 (c) The county agency or official shall submit preliminary  
14 plans and specifications to the legislative body of the  
15 respective county for its approval or disapproval. The final  
16 plans and specifications for the project shall be deemed  
17 approved by the legislative body if the final plans and  
18 specifications do not substantially deviate from the approved  
19 preliminary plans and specifications. The final plans and  
20 specifications shall constitute the standards for the particular  
21 project.



1        (d) No action shall be prosecuted or maintained against  
2 any county, its officials, or its employees, on account of  
3 actions taken in reviewing, approving, or disapproving such  
4 plans and specifications.

5        (e) Any experimental or demonstration housing project [for  
6 ~~the purposes hereinabove mentioned~~] or commercial project may be  
7 sponsored by any state or county agency or any person as defined  
8 in section 1-19[.] for the purposes of this section.

9        (f) The county agency or official shall apply to the state  
10 land use commission for an appropriate land use district  
11 classification change, except where a proposed project is  
12 located on land within an urban district established by the  
13 state land use commission. Notwithstanding any law, rule, or  
14 regulation to the contrary, the state land use commission may  
15 approve the application at any time after a public hearing held  
16 in the county where the land is located, upon notice of the time  
17 and place of the hearing being published in the same manner as  
18 the notice required for a public hearing by the planning  
19 commission of the appropriate county.

20        ~~[(b)]~~ (g) Experimental and demonstration  
21 homes or commercial projects may be sold to the public under



1 terms and conditions approved by the county agency or official  
2 who has been designated to review the plans and specifications.

3 [←] (e) (h) The county agency or official may adopt [and  
4 ~~promulgate~~] rules and regulations [~~which are~~] necessary or  
5 desirable to carry out the purposes of this section."

6 SECTION 2. Section 46-15.01, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
7 amended to read as follows:

8 "[§] 46-15.01[] Limitation of application. This chapter  
9 shall not be construed to exempt counties from the application  
10 of chapter 104 to experimental and demonstration housing  
11 projects or commercial projects pursuant to section 46-15."

12 SECTION 3. Section 104-1, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
13 amended by amending the definition of "public work" to read as  
14 follows:

15 ""Public work" means any project, including development of  
16 any housing or commercial project pursuant to section 46-15 or  
17 housing project pursuant to chapter 201H and development,  
18 construction, renovation, and maintenance related to  
19 refurbishment of any real or personal property, where the funds  
20 or resources required or used to undertake the project are to  
21 any extent derived, either directly or indirectly, from public



1 revenues of the State or any county, or from the sale of  
2 securities or bonds whose interest or dividends are exempt from  
3 state or federal taxes."

4 SECTION 4. Section 104-2, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
5 amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

6 "(a) This chapter shall apply to every contract in excess  
7 of \$2,000 for construction of a public work project to which a  
8 governmental contracting agency is a party; provided that this  
9 chapter shall not apply to experimental and demonstration  
10 housing or commercial project developed pursuant to section 46-  
11 15 or housing developed pursuant to chapter 201H if the cost of  
12 the project is less than \$500,000 and the eligible bidder or  
13 eligible developer is a private nonprofit corporation.

14 For the purposes of this subsection:

15 "Contract" includes but is not limited to any agreement,  
16 purchase order, or voucher in excess of \$2,000 for construction  
17 of a public work project.

18 "Governmental contracting agency" includes:

19 (1) Any person or entity that causes either directly or  
20 indirectly the building or development of a public  
21 work; and



9 SECTION 5. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed  
10 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

11 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect upon its approval;  
12 provided that the amendments made to section 104-2(a), Hawaii  
13 Revised Statutes, by section 4 of this Act shall not be repealed  
14 when that section is reenacted on June 30, 2030, pursuant to  
15 section 5 of Act 54, Session Laws of Hawaii 2017, as amended by  
16 section 4 of Act 39, Session Laws of Hawaii 2018.

17

INTRODUCED BY:



JAN 22 2026



# H.B. NO. 1799

**Report Title:**

Counties; Experimental and Demonstration Housing Projects and Commercial Projects

**Description:**

Expands on a county's experimental and demonstration project authority to include the development of commercial projects.

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

