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February 1, 2026

House Committee on Housing

Hearing Date: Wednesday, February 4, 2026, 9 a.m.

Honorable Chair Evslin, Vice Chair Miyake, and Members of the House Committee on Housing

**Subject: HB 1721, Relating to Housing
Testimony in Support**

Dear Chair Evslin, Vice Chair Miyake, and Committee Members:

The American Council of Engineering Companies of Hawaii (ACECH) represents 68 member firms with over 2,000 employees throughout Hawaii. ACECH strongly supports this measure to clarify language related to insurance in Act 295, passed by the legislature in 2025.

After the passage of Act 295, Legislative Session of 2025, ACECH was alerted by professional liability insurance brokers that the new law inadvertently provides uninsurable conditions, as well as inaccurate citation regarding professional liability insurance. These concerns are likely to limit the design professionals willing to engage in the expedited permit process.

Our proposed language corrects these concerns. Revising the language will encourage more design professionals to conduct this work and is in the State's interest.

Respectfully submitted,

AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES OF HAWAII



Charles Jury, P.E.
President

GRASSROOT INSTITUTE OF HAWAII

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Removing barriers to Hawaii's prosperity

Feb. 4, 2026, 9 a.m.
Hawaii State Capitol
Conference Room 430 and Videoconference

To: House Committee on Housing

Rep. Luke Evslin, Chair

Rep. Tyson Miyake, Vice Chair

From: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

Ted Kefalas, Director of Strategic Campaigns

RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB1721 — RELATING TO HOUSING

Aloha chair, vice chair and other members of the Committee,

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii **supports** [HB1721](#), which would clarify liability rules for professionals participating in the self-certification program established by Act 295 (2025).

This self-certification program has the opportunity to streamline the permitting process for single-family and multifamily homes. In it, licensed architects and engineers would be able to sign off on their own permits if the county permitting agency does not approve them within a certain time frame.

Streamlining this process is critical because Hawaii suffers from chronic permitting delays, which were reported by the Economic Research Organization at the University of Hawai'i to have been 188 days for single-family homes and 410 days for multifamily homes, on average, over the last five years.¹

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Ted Kefalas
Director of Strategic Campaigns
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

¹ Daniela Bond-Smith, Trey Gordner and Rachel Inafuku et al., "[The Hawaii Housing Factbook 2025](#)," Economic Research Organization at the University of Hawai'i, May 14, 2025, p. 27.

HB-1721

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 1:40:19 AM
Testimony for HSG on 2/4/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jay M. K. Stone	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a civil engineer licensed in Hawai‘i for 28 years. HB1721 requires design professionals to carry professional and general liability insurance, but the terms listed in the previous version of the bill are not insurable per my insurance broker. I support the revisions contained in HB1721. These revisions remove uninsurable terms. By removing such uninsurable terms, more design professionals will be encouraged to participate in this important program.

HB-1721

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 9:00:35 AM
Testimony for HSG on 2/4/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ikaika Kincaid	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha and thanks for allowing me to submit testimony on this Bill. I'm a licensed engineer in the state of Hawaii for the last 20 years and feel that this bill is very important to the engineering community and the insurability of engineering firms and the projects that we work on.

This bill requires design professionals to carry professional and general liability insurance, but we have been cautioned by our insurance brokers that certain terms are not insurable. I support the corrections contained in this bill that will encourage more design professionals to participate in this important program.

Mahalo!

HB-1721

Submitted on: 2/2/2026 8:21:52 PM
Testimony for HSG on 2/4/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janice Marsters	Individual	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

I own a small business consulting firm on Maui, focused on environmental and civil engineering for Hawaii essential infrastructure projects. This bill requires design professionals to carry professional and general liability insurance, but we have been cautioned by our insurance brokers that certain terms are not insurable. Uninsurable terms are particularly scary for small businesses, which comprise the majority of engineering firms in the state. I support the corrections contained in this bill that will encourage more local small business design professionals to participate in this important program.