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GOVERNOR OF HAWAII
KE KIA'ĀINA O KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII

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STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON AGING
NO. 1 CAPITOL DISTRICT
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HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-2831

Testimony COMMENTING on HB2498 HD2
RELATING TO HEALTH

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
REP. CHRIS TODD, CHAIR
REP. JENNA TAKENOUCI, VICE CHAIR

Testimony of Caroline Cadirao
Director, Executive Office on Aging
Attached Agency to the Department of Health

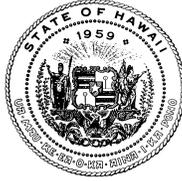
Hearing: Friday, February 27, 2026, 10:00 A.M.

Conference Room: 308

- 1 **EOA Position:** The Executive Office on Aging (EOA), an attached agency to the Department of
2 Health (DOH), appreciates the intent and offers comments. EOA requests that this program and
3 appropriation not conflict with, reduce, or replace priorities identified in the executive budget.
4 **Purpose:** This measure establishes the Central O'ahu Care Home Community Resilience Pilot
5 Program. This measure would protect our most vulnerable kūpuna residing in licensed care
6 homes within the 96797- zip code, EOA supports protections for our most vulnerable adults.
7 However, we would like to provide some considerations:
8 First, this measure has a limited geographic scope that may raise fairness concerns among long-
9 term care facilities outside the 96797-zip code. Second, many Adult Residential Care Homes
10 (ARCH) rely largely on private-pay residents, often generating significant monthly revenue. This

1 raises questions about whether taxpayer-funded subsidies are necessary for providers that may be
2 financially capable of covering their own upgrades or can support a partial payment and include
3 a sliding scale fee. Finally, the bill does not appear to include safeguards to prevent upgraded
4 facilities from being sold. To safeguard the risk to the State and to support the supply of needed
5 facilities, we recommend that the homes must remain as intended for a minimum of 10 years to
6 receive these State-funded improvements.

7 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
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**Testimony in SUPPORT of HB2498 HD2
RELATING TO CARE HOMES.**

REPRESENTATIVE CHRIS TODD, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Hearing Date and Time: FRI., February 27, 2026 @ 10:00 am

Room Number: 308

- 1 **Fiscal Implications:** No impact to the Department of Health (Department).
- 2 **Department Position:** The Department submits testimony in support of HB2498 HD2.
- 3 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health, Office of Health Care Assurance (OHCA)
- 4 establishes regulatory requirements to protect patients and licenses health care facilities,
- 5 including care homes. Aging care homes in Central Oahu, serving kupuna, people with
- 6 disabilities, and medically fragile individuals, are highly vulnerable to natural hazards such as
- 7 hurricanes, extreme heat, wildfire smoke, and prolonged utility outages. The Department
- 8 supports this pilot in its effort to help care home providers enhance their resilience against
- 9 natural hazards by helping to implement structural and operational resilience improvements.
- 10 Strengthened care homes reduce risk to residents, mitigate strain on emergency responders,
- 11 and accelerate community recovery post-disaster, protecting some of our most vulnerable
- 12 residents while reinforcing community resilience and public health infrastructure.

13 We defer to the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency (HIEMA) regarding
14 enhancements to physical structures beyond regulatory requirements for emergency
15 preparedness purposes.

1 Should this measure be enacted, OHCA will commit to providing technical assistance to
2 HIEMA in interpreting the relevant sections of Hawaii Revised Statute (HRS) and Hawaii
3 Administrative Rules (HAR) that relate to the physical environment of licensed facilities to help
4 ensure its activities through this pilot do not conflict with regulatory requirements.

5 **Offered amendments:** None

6 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



STEPHEN F. LOGAN
MAJOR GENERAL
ADJUTANT GENERAL
KA 'AKUKANA KENELALA

JAMES DS. BARROS
ADMINISTRATOR OF
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
KAHU HO'OMALU PŪLIA

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
KA 'OIHANA PILI KAUA
HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY
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STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2498 HD2,
RELATING TO CARE HOMES

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
FINANCE

BY

JAMES DS. BARROS
ADMINISTRATOR
HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

February 27, 2026

Aloha Chair Todd, Vice-Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

HIEMA strongly **SUPPORTS** House Bill 2498 HD2, which establishes the Central O'ahu Care Home Community Resilience Pilot Program to assist licensed care homes within the 96797 zip code area in implementing structural and operational resilience improvements. This measure directly advances the state's capacity to protect medically fragile residents, kūpuna, and individuals with disabilities—populations disproportionately impacted by natural hazards and long-duration utility disruptions.

Many of the facilities covered by this bill operate in older structures that face elevated vulnerability to wind damage, extreme heat, wildfire smoke, flooding, and power outages. HB2498 HD2 appropriately targets these risks by authorizing support for infrastructure hardening, safe-room or shelter-in-place modifications, emergency power capabilities, and hazard-specific mitigation measures. These upgrades are essential not only for safeguarding life and health, but also for reducing emergency response burdens and strengthening overall community resilience in Central O'ahu.

The bill's programmatic framework—including grants or contracted services, vulnerability assessments, technical assistance, training, and priority for homes serving high-risk and low-income residents—provides a comprehensive and operationally sound approach for improving safety and continuity of care. By situating the program within HIEMA, HB2498 HD2 ensures alignment with statewide emergency management strategies and hazard-mitigation planning.

HIEMA is committed to supporting this pilot program and executing its requirements, including reporting to the Legislature on program outcomes, completed improvements, and recommended pathways for statewide expansion.

For these reasons, HIEMA strongly supports HB2498 HD2 and respectfully urges the Committee to pass this important measure.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

James Barros: james.barros@hawaii.gov; 808-733-4300

TESTIMONY OF LESLIE DOOR

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Representative Chris Todd, Chair
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

Friday, February 27, 2026
10:00 a.m.

HB 2498, HD2

Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the Committee on Finance, my name is Leslie Door, Director of Product, Risk & Regulatory Compliance for Zephyr Insurance Company and Property Chair for Hawaii Insurers Council. The Hawaii Insurers Council is a non-profit trade association of property and casualty insurance companies licensed to do business in Hawaii. Member companies underwrite approximately forty percent of all property and casualty insurance premiums in the state.

Hawaii Insurers Council (HIC) **supports** this bill, which establishes the Central Oahu Care Home Community Resilience Pilot Program.

This measure addresses a critical and increasingly urgent gap in Hawai'i's disaster preparedness framework: the resilience of licensed care homes serving kupuna, individuals with disabilities, and medically fragile residents. Many of these facilities operate in aging structures, have limited financial capacity, and serve residents who cannot safely evacuate or endure prolonged power outages without significant risk to life and health.

This bill takes a practical, targeted, and fiscally responsible approach by establishing a pilot program in a defined geographic area, allowing the State to evaluate effectiveness before considering broader expansion. Importantly, it emphasizes mitigation and preparedness rather than post-disaster response alone, which is both more humane and more cost-effective.

Coordination between the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency and the Office of Health Care Assurance will be key to aligning emergency preparedness with licensing and resident safety

oversight. The inclusion of evacuation planning requirements and a clear reporting obligation to the Legislature reinforces accountability while allowing flexibility in implementation.

Finally, the bill's rulemaking authority allows the administering agency to adapt technical standards as hazards, building practices, and mitigation technologies evolve, without the need for repeated statutory changes.

HIC believes that investing in care home resilience is not only a moral obligation to protect our most vulnerable residents, but also a sound public policy decision that can reduce emergency response costs, minimize displacement, and support faster community recovery.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this important legislation.



**WAIANAЕ COAST
COMPREHENSIVE
HEALTH CENTER**

Friday, 02-27-26 10:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

House Committee on Finance

To: Representative Chris Todd, Chair,
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

From: Ian Ross
Public Affairs Director
ianross@wcchc.com | (808) 697-3457

RE: SUPPORT FOR HOUSE BILL 2498 - RELATING TO CARE HOMES

Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center (WCCHC) **supports** H.B. 2498 H.D. 2, which would establish the Central O'ahu Care Home Community Resilience Pilot Program.

Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center (WCCHC) is a Federally Qualified Health Center dedicated to improving the health and well-being of the West O'ahu community by providing accessible and affordable medical care. We serve over 36,000 annually with clinics spanning from Wai'anae to Waipahu. With 53 years of service, WCCHC is committed to providing comprehensive healthcare that supports the whole person and the improves long-term health outcomes for the communities we serve.

WCCHC has operated the Waipahu Family Health Center for more than thirty years, providing care to the Waipahu community, including many kupuna, individuals with disabilities, and medically fragile residents who rely on licensed care homes for daily support.

This measure supports resident safety and continuity of care during natural disasters, climate-related hazards, and prolonged utility disruptions. Investments in resilience protects vulnerable residents and reduces strain on emergency response systems and healthcare providers during crises.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.



February 27, 2026

House Committee on Finance
Rep. Chris Todd, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

RE: HB2498 HD2, Relating to Care Homes

Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the committee –

Navian Hawaii is a nonprofit organization supporting the needs of Hawai'i's aging population, including through hospice, palliative care, and integrated support services. We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony **in support** of HB2498 HD2, Relating to Care Homes. This bill would enhance the resilience of care home settings in Central Oahu against natural disasters, climate-related risks, and extended utility disruptions.

Navian Hawaii currently works with a number of care homes and patients throughout Oahu, including in the 96797 postal zip code, to provide hospice and palliative care. We are acutely aware of the operational and structural difficulties many of these facilities face.

Care homes often serve individuals with complex medical and social needs, making them particularly vulnerable during natural disasters or other emergencies. Many of these facilities are also decades old, which poses a significant risk particularly as the frequency and severity of natural disasters increase.

The proposed Central Oahu Care Home Community Resilience Pilot Program emphasizes both physical infrastructure improvements and operational preparedness. This would reduce risks, maintain continuity of care, and ensure that kupuna can remain safely housed and supported even in adverse conditions.

The pilot program's focus on Central Oahu is a prudent initial step in making care home settings more sustainable, offering a model to inform statewide efforts in the long term.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

HB-2498-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/25/2026 12:06:33 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/27/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rosemarie S. Sebastian	SEBASTIAN'S ARCH LLC	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TO: The Honorable Chris Todd, Chair and All Members of Finance Committee:

Thank you for HB2498--that is to establish the Central Oahu Care Home Community Resilience Pilot Program.

SHOULD THIS MEASURE PASSES, many licensed care homes in central Oahu will greatly benefit. Not only the care homes are benefited but most importantly, its clients who are the Elderly/Kupunas and vulnerable residents who face heightened risks during natural disasters, climate related events and extended utility outages.

This measure is good and it's the right thing to do; therefore, as a care home provider myself, I STRONGLY SUPPORT PASSING OF THIS BILL.

Your kind support & consideration of HB2498 would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Rosemarie S. Sebastian

SEBASTIAN'S ARCH LLC

1630 Leilani St., Honolulu, HI 96819

(808) 842-3736

Email: rose.sebastian808@gmail.com

HB-2498-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/25/2026 10:44:11 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/27/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Raelene Tenno	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Support HB2498 & comments

I do have a concern of good intended state monies be used and then being abused.

As noted in the bottom of John McDermott's (LTC Ombusman) testimony, there needs to be a protection in place to prevent the recipient of this program to later sell the home that would have a higher value thanks to the handout from the state.

The recipient should be required to remain the owner of the home and the care facility by at least 10 years or a payback provision if sold within the 10 years.

Thank you for allowing this testimony

Raelene Tenno

HB-2498-HD-2

Submitted on: 2/25/2026 4:27:21 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/27/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, Support

TO INCLUDE 96792

2498 HB RELATING TO CARE HOMES.