



MARCH 31, 2026

HCR 185/HR 175

CURRENT REFERRAL: WAL

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POSITION: SUPPORT

Imua Alliance supports HCR 185/HR 175, urging all county planning and permitting agencies to deny all permit applications related to the construction, expansion, or use of warehouses by United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement for the purpose of detaining individuals facing deportation.

Imua Alliance is a Hawai'i-based organization dedicated to ending sexual exploitation and gender violence, and combating all forms of systemic exploitation in our society. We have encountered numerous migrant survivors of sexual exploitation in our work, which is why we strongly support measures that advance community safety and survivor protections by reducing the harmful spillover of immigration enforcement into local institutions people rely on for protection, care, and due process.

Trafficking survivors are particularly vulnerable to heightened immigration enforcement practices. Survivors often face language barriers, trauma, threats from traffickers, and fear of retaliation. When immigration enforcement expands into community spaces or becomes more aggressive, survivors are less likely to report trafficking, seek protective orders, access emergency shelter, or obtain medical care because they fear detention or deportation. This reduces reporting, weakens prosecutions of traffickers, and ultimately makes communities less safe.

Recent national data underscore why these concerns matter. Immigration detention data analyzed by Syracuse University's Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse (TRAC) found that **a large share of individuals held in immigration detention have no criminal convictions**, and recent reporting has shown that a growing number of immigration arrests involve individuals without criminal charges. When enforcement expands beyond serious public safety threats, the predictable result is broader community fear and increased vulnerability for victims of crime and exploitation.

Hawai'i would not be alone in taking steps to limit immigration detention infrastructure. Several states and local governments across the country have already adopted policies to restrict or prohibit immigration detention facilities, contracts, or land use for detention purposes. For example, New Jersey enacted a law prohibiting both private and public facilities from entering contracts with ICE to detain immigrants, effectively preventing new immigration detention facilities from operating in the state.

Similarly, Illinois enacted a statewide ban preventing local governments from entering into detention agreements with ICE, and courts upheld the law, allowing the state to limit local participation in immigration detention. More recently, New Mexico passed legislation banning local governments from contracting with ICE for immigration detention, continuing a national trend of states limiting detention infrastructure within their borders.

At the local level, cities and counties have also used zoning laws, moratoriums, land-use restrictions, and permit requirements to prevent the construction or expansion of immigration detention centers. For instance, Seattle and several surrounding jurisdictions enacted moratoriums on new detention facilities, and other cities have changed zoning codes to prevent detention centers from being built.

These policies reflect a growing recognition that while immigration enforcement is federal policy, the land, facilities, and local infrastructure used for detention often fall under state and local control, giving states and local governments an important role in determining whether detention facilities operate within their communities.

Limiting the purchase, development, or use of facilities for immigration detention is not simply an immigration policy issue; it is a public safety, community stability, and land use issue. Detention facilities are large-scale institutional operations that affect local infrastructure, housing markets, public services, and community trust. Communities across the country have raised concerns about detention facilities due to reports of poor conditions, lack of oversight, medical neglect, and prolonged detention in facilities not designed for long-term confinement.

This resolution sends an important message that Hawai'i's resources shall be reserved for the public trust, not the propagation of fear.

With aloha,

Kris Coffield

President, Imua Alliance

HR-175

Submitted on: 3/27/2026 8:16:15 PM

Testimony for WAL on 3/31/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mike Golojuch, Sr.	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HCR185.