



**STATE HEALTH PLANNING
AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH - KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO

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

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March 31, 2026

TO: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & HOMELESSNESS
Representative Lisa Marten, Chair
Representative Ikaika Olds, Vice Chair
Honorable Members

FROM: John C. (Jack) Lewin, MD, Administrator, SHPDA, and Sr. Advisor to
Governor Josh Green, MD on Healthcare Innovation

RE: HCR 8 -- RELATING TO BUILDING PERMIT APPLICATIONS

HEARING: Wednesday, April 1, 2026 @ 10:00 am; Conference Room 329

POSITION: SUPPORT with COMMENTS

Testimony:

HCR 8 urges Hawai'i's counties to act within 45 days on complete building permit applications for home modifications that a licensed health care provider says are essential for the safety or health of an older adult or person with a disability. HCR 8 could help older adults and people with disabilities get needed home safety modifications approved faster, which may reduce the risk of falls, injuries, and health complications. SCR 8 could also reduce delays and stress for families trying to make homes safer and more accessible for loved ones.

Thank you for hearing HCR 8.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

■ -- Jack Lewin, MD, Administrator, SHPDA

HR-7

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 7:26:54 PM

Testimony for HSH on 4/1/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Louis Erteschik	Hawaii Disability Rights Center	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We were supportive of a Bill this session to expedite permitting for housing for individuals with disabilities and we are similarly supportive of this measure as we would be for any attempt to help this situation.



Hawai'i State House of Representatives
Committee on Human Services and Homelessness
Wednesday, April 1, 2026, at 10:00 am
Conference Room 329 & Videoconference
Hawai'i State Capitol

Good morning, Chair Marten, Vice Chair Olds, and Members of the House Committee on Human Services and Homelessness.

My name is Palani Smith, and I serve as the Regional Vice President for Hawai'i and Guam of Liberty Dialysis. We are an affiliate of Fresenius Kidney Care. The Sisters of St. Francis pioneered dialysis care in Hawai'i and entrusted us with the honor of continuing their legacy of care.

I submit testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT of HCR 8** which urges counties to act on building permit applications for medically necessary home modifications within forty-five days of receiving a complete application.

While people of all ages receive dialysis, the average age of patients starting dialysis in the United States is approximately sixty-four. Many patients live with diabetes or high blood pressure and related conditions such as vascular disease or neuropathy. Together, these conditions can affect eyesight, mobility and increase the risk of falls, stroke, and heart attack. Some patients require a wheelchair, cane, walker or specialized eyeglasses to move safely. As a result, their homes may need modifications such as ramps, wider doorways, railings, different lighting, or accessible bathrooms so they can move safely within their homes and enter or exit their residence. For patients who perform dialysis at home, additional modifications may be required so the living space can accommodate home dialysis equipment and the medical supplies associated with treatment.

A defined timeline for reviewing these permits such as the forty-five days proposed by this concurrent resolution would help patients complete medically recommended home modifications in a manner that supports their care instead of detracting from it with long delays.

Thank you to the Kupuna Caucus for introducing this much needed concurrent resolution and its companion SCR8. Liberty Dialysis Hawaii stands strongly in SUPPORT.



HCR8/HR7 Counties Expedite Permitting for Aging & People with Disabilities

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & HOMELESSNESS

Rep. Lisa Marten, Chair

Rep. Ikaika Olds, Vice Chair

Wednesday, Apr 1, 2026: 10:00: Room 329 Videoconference

Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition Supports HCR8/HR7:

ALOHA CHAIR, VICE CHAIR, AND DISTINGUISHED COMMITTEE MEMBERS. My name is Alan Johnson. I am the ad hoc leader of the Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition (HSAC), a statewide organization for substance use disorder and co-occurring mental health disorder prevention and treatment agencies and recovery-oriented services such as stabilization crisis, harm reduction and supportive housing.

We strongly support this measure urging counties to act within forty-five days on permit applications for medically necessary home modifications.

Especially important now that substance abuse agencies are now entering the housing arena to provide professionally management housing for the most chronic.

For individuals with substance use disorders, recovery is a recognized disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Safe, stable, and appropriately modified housing is not optional—it is essential to health, safety, and sustained recovery.

Delays in permitting can mean prolonged risk, relapse, or even loss of housing for vulnerable individuals. SUD treatment providers and recovery residences serve people with disabilities and must be treated with the same urgency and protections afforded under the ADA.

This measure helps ensure timely, reasonable accommodations and supports continuity of care. We respectfully ask your support.

We appreciate the opportunity to respond and are available for questions.

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HINAMAUKA

HCR8/HR7 Counties Expedite Permitting for Aging & People with Disabilities

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & HOMELESSNESS

Rep. Lisa Marten, Chair

Rep. Ikaika Olds, Vice Chair

Wednesday, April 01, 2026: 10:00 : Room 329 Videoconference

Hina Mauka Strongly Supports HCR8/HR7

ALOHA CHAIR, VICE CHAIR, AND DISTINGUISHED COMMITTEE MEMBERS. My name is Brian Baker. I am the President and CEO for Hina Mauka, a mental health and substance use disorder treatment and prevention agency for thousands of adults and adolescents on Oahu and Kauai, including recovery-oriented services and housing transitional living programs.

We are writing in strong support of this measure requiring counties to act within forty-five days on applications related to medically necessary home modifications. However, we also highlight that this action is needed not just on medically necessary home modifications, but also on **all applications that relate to approvals for permits needed for the Aging and people with Disabilities**, which includes housing for **Substance Use Disorders**.

Timely access to appropriate housing is a critical component of care for individuals living with Substance Use Disorders (SUD). Increasingly, treatment providers are stepping forward to develop and operate professionally managed housing environments designed to serve individuals with the most complex and chronic needs. These settings are essential to stabilizing health, reducing relapse risk, and supporting long-term recovery.

Despite these efforts, providers routinely encounter significant barriers when attempting to establish or modify housing. These include burdensome permitting requirements, inconsistent local practices, and, in some cases, policies that raise serious concerns regarding fairness and legality. Stigma surrounding substance use disorders continues to influence decision-making in ways that delay or prevent the creation of safe and supportive housing options.

It is important to underscore that individuals in recovery are protected under the Americans with Disabilities Act. Access to appropriate housing—particularly housing that may require modification to meet health and safety needs—is not discretionary. It is a necessary accommodation that directly impacts an individual’s ability to maintain recovery and avoid adverse outcomes.

When permitting processes are prolonged, the consequences are not merely administrative—they are human. Delays can disrupt care, increase the likelihood of relapse, and leave individuals without stable housing at critical moments in their recovery journey.

By establishing clear timelines for county action, this measure promotes accountability, reduces unnecessary delays, and helps ensure that providers can deliver housing solutions in a timely and effective manner. It is a practical step toward aligning local processes with the urgency of need and the legal protections afforded to this population.

We respectfully urge your support.

Mahalo for allowing us to testify.

HR-7

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 11:22:22 AM

Testimony for HSH on 4/1/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lila Mower	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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HR-7

Submitted on: 3/30/2026 1:18:48 PM

Testimony for HSH on 4/1/2026 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sara Lenzer Medeiros	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Time frame seems unrealistic given backlogs and personnel shortages. However, seems like a good idea.