



## DISABILITY AND COMMUNICATION ACCESS BOARD

Ka 'Oihana Ho'oka'a'ike no ka Po'e Kīnānā

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April 16, 2026

### TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEES ON HUMAN SERVICES AND HOMELESSNESS AND ON HEALTH

Senate Concurrent Resolution 8 – Urging the Counties to Act on Any Building Permit Application for Modification of a Residence that is Prescribed by a Licensed Health Care Provider and Found by the County to be Essential to the Safety or Health of an Older Adult or Person with a Disability Within Forty-Five Days of Receipt of a Complete Application

The Disability and Communication Access Board (DCAB) supports Senate Concurrent Resolution 8 – Urging the Counties to Act on Any Building Permit Application for Modification of a Residence that is Prescribed by a Licensed Health Care Provider and Found by the County to be Essential to the Safety or Health of an Older Adult or Person with a Disability Within Forty-Five Days of Receipt of a Complete Application.

Many people prefer to age in place, and studies have shown this is beneficial to the individual. It also prevents unnecessary placement in an institutionalized nursing facility, of which Hawaii has a shortage of. For someone with a disability, this may require physical modifications to their unit or to common areas. However, if a permit is required and a county does not issue it in a timely manner, an individual may be forced to choose between moving or allowing unpermitted construction work.

DCAB would urge that a person with a disability be offered some type of remedy when a county does not act on an accessibility related permit request within forty-five days.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

KRISTINE PAGANO  
Acting Executive Director



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

**JOSH GREEN, MD**  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII  
KE KIA'ĀINA O KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII

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April 15, 2026

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

**LATE**

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH  
Representative Gregg Takayama, Chair  
Representative Sue L. Keohokapu-Loy, Vice Chair  
Honorable Members

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

RE: **SCR 8 -- RELATING TO BUILDING PERMIT APPLICATIONS**

HEARING: Thursday, April 16, 2026 @ 09:45 am; Conference Room 329

POSITION: SUPPORT with COMMENTS

Testimony:

SCR 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. SCR 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 this measure.

■ -- Jack Lewin, MD, Administrator, SHPDA



## **SCR8\_SSCR3460 Counties Expedite Permitting for Aging & People with Disabilities**

### COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & HOMELESSNESS

Rep. Lisa Marten, Chair

Rep. Ikaika Olds, Vice Chair

### COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Rep. Gregg Takayama, Chair

Rep. Sue L. Keohokapu-Loy, Vice Chair

Thursday, Apr. 16, 2026: 09:45 : Room 329 Videoconference

## **Hina Mauka Strongly Supports SCR8,SSCR3460**

*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.

**SCR-8**

Submitted on: 4/13/2026 9:12:06 PM

Testimony for HSH on 4/16/2026 9:45:00 AM

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

Comments:

Support



## **SCR8 Counties Expedite Permitting for Aging & People with Disabilities (House)**

### COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & HOMELESSNESS

Rep. Lisa Marten, Chair

Rep. Ikaika Olds, Vice Chair

### COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Rep. Gregg Takayama, Chair

Rep. Sue L. Keohokapu-Lee Loy, Vice Chair

Thursday, Apr 16, 2026 9:45: Room 329 Videoconference

### **Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition Supports SCR8:**

*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 disabled.**

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**Complex Patients Approach.** As treatment agencies evolve to address disabled patients through professionally managed housing for complex patients who have substance use disorders, co-occurring mental illness coupled with chronic physical health conditions, this can be important to have **professionally managed housing rather than self-managed housing.**

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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.

**SCR-8**

Submitted on: 4/14/2026 4:52:57 PM

Testimony for HSH on 4/16/2026 9:45:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lila Mower	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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