THE SENATE
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2026
STATE OF HAWAII

S.B. NO. 2217

JAN 21 2026

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE LAND USE COMMISSION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the time and cost required to construct new housing can be substantially increased by delays in obtaining required permits and approvals.

The legislature also finds that, according to a study conducted by the university of Hawaii economic research organization, the average length of approval delay in Hawaii is three times the national average. Similarly, research by the Grassroot Institute of Hawaii has found that it can take up to ten years to obtain necessary approvals to develop new housing in the State. These delays increase uncertainty and expenses, which disincentivize development and can considerably increase the cost to build new homes.

The legislature further finds that the average price of housing in the State has increased substantially in recent years. In September 2012, the median home price on Oahu was $637,000. Ten years later, in September 2022, the median home price had skyrocketed to $1,100,000.

The legislature notes that under existing state law, six out of the nine members of the land use commission must affirmatively vote to approve any boundary amendment, regardless of any vacancies or absences among commission members. Adjusting this law may help to expedite the approval process, which will help to accelerate housing development and address the State's excessive permit and approval times.

Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to specify that a simple majority of affirmative votes of the members of the land use commission present at a meeting and qualified to vote is required for any boundary amendment.

SECTION 2. Section 205-1, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended by amending subsection (a) to read as follows:

"(a) There shall be a state land use commission, hereinafter called the commission. The commission shall consist of nine members who shall hold no other public office and shall be appointed in the manner and serve for the term set forth in section 26-34. One member shall be appointed from each of the counties and the remainder shall be appointed at large; provided that one member shall have substantial experience or expertise in traditional Hawaiian land usage and knowledge of cultural

land practices. The commission shall elect its chairperson from one of its members. The members shall receive no compensation for their services on the commission, but shall be reimbursed for actual expenses incurred in the performance of their duties. [~~Six~~] A simple majority of affirmative votes of the members present and qualified to vote shall be necessary for any boundary amendment."

SECTION 3. This Act does not affect rights and duties that matured, penalties that were incurred, and proceedings that were begun before its effective date.

SECTION 4. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

INTRODUCED BY: _____

S.B. NO. 2217

Report Title:
LUC; Decision-Making Process; Boundary Amendment

Description:
Specifies that a simple majority of affirmative votes of the members of the Land Use Commission present at a meeting and qualified to vote is required for any boundary amendment.

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