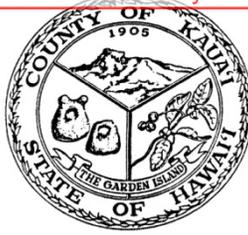


COUNTY COUNCIL

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OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK

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Lyndon M. Yoshioka, Deputy County Clerk

Telephone: (808) 241-4188
Facsimile: (808) 241-6349
Email: cokcouncil@kauai.gov

Council Services Division
4396 Rice Street, Suite 209
Lihu'e, Kaua'i, Hawaii 96766

February 5, 2026

**TESTIMONY OF ADDISON BULOSAN
COUNCILMEMBER, KAUAI COUNTY COUNCIL
ON
HB 1725, RELATING TO BUILDING CODES
House Committee on Housing
House Committee on Water & Land
Friday, February 6, 2026
8:45 a.m.
Conference Room 430
Via Videoconference**

Dear Chair Evslin, Chair Hashem, and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in SUPPORT of HB 1725, Relating to Building Codes. My testimony is submitted in my individual capacity as a member of the Kaua'i County Council.

I wholeheartedly support the intent of HB 1725, which will accelerate the delivery of housing and other necessary construction.

Thank you again for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 1725. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Council Services Staff at (808) 241-4188 or via email to cokcouncil@kauai.gov.

Sincerely,

ADDISON BULOSAN
Councilmember, Kaua'i County Council

RM:mn



holomua

COLLABORATIVE

OUR MISSION

To support and advance public policies that make Hawai'i affordable for all working families.

OUR VISION

Collaborative, sustainable, and evidence-based public policies that create a diverse and sustainable Hawai'i economy, an abundance of quality job opportunities, and a future where all working families living in Hawai'i can thrive.

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827 Fort Street Mall, 2nd Floor
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

+1 (808) 909-3843
info@holomuacollaborative.org

HolomuaCollaborative.org

Page 1 of 2

Committee: House Committee on Housing
House Committee on Water and Land
Bill Number: HB 1725, Relating to Building Codes
Hearing Date and Time: February 6, 2024 at 8:45am (Room 430)
Re: Testimony of Holomua Collaborative in support

Aloha Chair Evslin, Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Miyake, Vice Chair Morikawa, Members of the Committees:

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of HB 1725. This measure, in part, addresses a critical bottleneck in our housing pipeline by extending the state building code adoption cycle from two years to six years and providing necessary funding for the State Building Code Council (SBCC).

Hawai'i remains in a severe housing crisis. Skyrocketing home prices leave many local families struggling to secure safe, attainable places to live. The median single family home price in Hawai'i now exceeds \$1,000,000, while the median for a condominium is nearly \$650,000, creating an impossible barrier for most residents. As a result, many local families are being forced to leave in search of more affordable options elsewhere. Between July 2024 and July 2025, an average of 11 people left Hawai'i *each day*.¹ More Native Hawaiians now live outside Hawai'i than within it, representing a staggering loss of our culture, traditions, and the very essence of what makes Hawai'i home.

In October 2025, a survey² on the day-to-day financial experience of local workers suggested that this crisis continues to reach alarming levels. When nearly 3,200 local workers were asked if they might need to move to a less expensive state, only 25 percent answered a definitive “no”, which is a decrease from 31 percent in 2024. Meanwhile, 75 percent said “yes” or were “unsure”, representing an increase from 69 percent in 2024. Additionally, more than half of respondents cited housing costs as the primary driver of their high cost of living. A notable driver in the increased cost of housing is the frequent and unpredictable code changes, which results in moving targets for builders, and delays and increased costs that are ultimately passed down to local residents and homebuyers.

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division Estimates, released January 2026; and calculations by the Hawai'i State Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism, Hawai'i State Data Center.

https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/census/popestimate/2025/state-pop/2025_daily_est_state.pdf

² 2025 Hawai'i Affordability Survey - <https://holomuacollective.org/survey-25/#3>

A significant, yet fixable, driver of these housing costs is the frequent and unpredictable nature of code changes. Building codes are complex, highly technical documents. Under the current system, every time a new code is adopted, it takes at least one to two years for county permitting officials, plan reviewers, and design professionals to reach a common interpretation of the new requirements. This leads to a costly period of trial and error where design professionals must repeatedly resubmit plans to understand what reviewers require for approval.

By the time a shared understanding is reached, the current three-year cycle is nearly over, and the process begins again. This creates a perpetual "moving target" for builders, causing delays and carrying costs that are ultimately passed on to homebuyers.

HB 1725 proposes a more rational six-year adoption cycle. By aligning with every other official publication date of the model codes, we allow the industry and regulators a stable four-to-five-year window where the system functions smoothly, permits are processed quickly, and fewer mistakes are made. This stability will result in direct cost savings for home construction.

Furthermore, this extended cycle gives counties more time to develop thoughtful, local amendments. For instance, it allows time to adjust requirements like insulated flooring, which may be necessary in other climates but adds unnecessary cost in Hawai'i, while still maintaining rigorous safety standards.

Additionally, this measure provides essential funding for staff for the SBCC. Despite being responsible for vital safety and structural standards, the SBCC is an entirely volunteer group and has operated without staff since its inception in 2007. This lack of resources has led to missed statutory deadlines and increased uncertainty. Funding the SBCC is a modest investment that will yield significant returns in efficiency and predictability for our construction industry.

We must reform the broken systems that make building in Hawai'i unnecessarily expensive. By stabilizing our building codes and supporting the SBCC, we can help ensure that more local families can afford to stay in Hawai'i.

We respectfully urge your committees to pass HB 1725. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Matthew Prellberg
Policy and Communications Director

HB-1725

Submitted on: 2/4/2026 4:01:17 PM

Testimony for HSG on 2/6/2026 8:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tiffanie Gardner	Top Priority, Inc bc	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Submitted by:

TIFFANIE GARDNER

Top Priority, Inc. (TPI)

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee:

Top Priority, Inc. (TPI) strongly supports HB1725, which provides long-overdue clarity, consistency, and predictability in Hawai‘i’s building code framework while maintaining essential life-safety protections.

As a Hawai‘i-based development and construction company, TPI works daily within the realities of permitting delays, shifting code interpretations, and inconsistent county amendments. HB1725 addresses these challenges in a thoughtful and balanced manner.

Part I – Certainty for Permitted Projects

TPI strongly supports Part I of HB1725, which fixes the applicable building codes, standards, and county amendments for the life of a building permit, subject to limited life-safety exceptions and standard permit expiration rules.

Too often, projects that are properly designed and submitted in good faith are forced to absorb costly redesigns and delays due to midstream code changes. These disruptions increase construction costs, strain financing, and ultimately impact housing affordability.

By locking in the applicable codes as of the date a county accepts a complete permit application or issues an authorization to proceed, HB1725 provides:

- Predictability for project planning and financing
- Reduced delays and unnecessary redesigns
- Fair treatment for applicants who follow the rules in effect at the time of submission

This approach aligns Hawai‘i with best practices used in other jurisdictions while preserving public safety.

Part II – Statewide Consistency with Appropriate Local Flexibility

TPI supports Part II, which clarifies the applicability of the International Residential Code as adopted and amended by the State Building Code Council and brings county amendments under a transparent, uniform approval process.

While counties may adopt amendments that are more or less stringent under specific circumstances, requiring State Building Code Council review and approval ensures:

- Technical consistency across counties
- Avoidance of conflicting or duplicative local requirements
- Fair and uniform application of codes statewide

Additionally, shifting statewide code adoption from a two-year cycle to a six-year cycle provides the construction industry with stability, time for training and implementation, and the ability to better manage costs. Constant code changes disproportionately affect small businesses and local contractors who must repeatedly retool designs, retrain staff, and update processes.

Part III – Investment in Effective Code Administration

TPI supports the appropriation of funds for staff and consultant services to carry out statewide code adoption, economic and hazard analyses, and administrative support.

A well-resourced State Building Code Council is essential to:

- Ensure technically sound and locally appropriate code adoption
- Evaluate economic impacts on housing and construction costs
- Maintain public safety while avoiding unnecessary regulatory burden

This investment strengthens the system for the long term.

Conclusion

HB1725 represents a practical and balanced reform that improves certainty, consistency, and efficiency in Hawai‘i’s building code system—without compromising safety. For companies like Top Priority, this bill supports responsible development, helps control construction costs, and

ultimately benefits the people of Hawai'i through more predictable project delivery and improved housing outcomes.

For these reasons, Top Priority, Inc. respectfully urges the Legislature to pass HB1725.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB1725

RELATING TO BUILDING CODES

House Committee on Housing

Submitted by:

Kevin Murray, President and Owner
PHAD - Pacific Home and Appliance Distribution

Position: SUPPORT

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kevin Murray, President and Owner of PHAD - Pacific Home and Appliance Distribution. We are the authorized GE Appliances distributor for Hawaii and also supply Bosch, Thermador, Fisher & Paykel, DCS, and many other brands to residential construction projects throughout the state.

PHAD has assisted in supplying appliances on projects ranging from affordable housing to market-rate developments. We work with partners including Castle & Cooke, Gentry, Stanford Carr, Hawaii Home Lands, Hawaiian Dredging, Nordic PCL, and others to offer value-engineered appliance solutions that provide best-in-class home appliances for Hawaii families.

PHAD supports HB1725 because it will help deliver housing faster and more affordably to Hawaii's families.

Point-in-Time Code Applicability Provides Critical Predictability

When building codes change mid-project, it affects every component of a home, including appliances. Developers who have already specified appliance packages may find themselves needing to reselect equipment to meet new requirements, causing delays in ordering, delivery scheduling, and installation coordination.

By freezing the applicable code at permit application acceptance, HB1725 allows our developer partners to plan with confidence. This stability benefits the entire supply chain and ultimately helps keep housing costs down for Hawaii families.

Extending the International Residential Code to Small Multiplexes Encourages Housing Production

The provision allowing triplexes and fourplexes to be built under the International Residential Code rather than the commercial International Building Code is a practical reform. These small residential buildings are often the most attainable form of homeownership and rental housing. Making them more financially viable to build means more homes for Hawaii families and more opportunities for PHAD to support quality housing with reliable appliances.



Six-Year Code Cycles Reduce Industry Churn

Frequent code changes create challenges throughout the construction industry. A six-year adoption cycle allows builders, suppliers, permitting agencies, and design professionals to develop consistent expertise. This leads to faster reviews, fewer errors, and more efficient project delivery.

Conclusion

HB1725 represents a thoughtful approach to Hawaii's housing challenges. By providing code stability, streamlining requirements for small residential buildings, and reducing the frequency of disruptive code changes, this bill will help get more homes built faster and more affordably.

PHAD respectfully urges the Committee to pass HB1725.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am available to answer any questions.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin Murray". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

Kevin Murray

President and Owner

PHAD - Pacific Home and Appliance Distribution



February 4, 2026

RE: International Code Council opposes the Section 5 code adoption delay in HB1725

The International Code Council (ICC) is a U.S. based organization with members in Hawai'i and across the world including architects, engineers, contractors, manufacturers, and government officials. Our mission is to develop model codes and standards that help the building safety community, local and state governments, and the construction industry provide safe, sustainable, resilient, energy efficient, accessible, and affordable buildings.

We urge you to oppose the language in Section 5 of HB1725 that would delay the state's code adoption cycle from 3 years to 6 years and could lead to building codes that are 10 years out of date based on state and county adoption schedules. We applaud the bill's section funding much needed staff for the State Building Code Council; however, the code adoption delay would put the state and its residents in a deeply unfortunate position.

Implementing a delayed code adoption cycle would lead to Hawai'i having codes that do not reflect the safest, most cost-effective methods and materials already being implemented, including recent updates to address issues such as:

- Evolving requirements to protect from wind, windborne debris, rain, and flooding during natural disasters such as hurricanes, which are increasing in intensity.
- The fire risks inherent in the rising use of batteries/energy storage systems.
- Elevating structures and critical systems to avoid damage from flooding.
- The use of off-site construction options to help improve affordability and reduce waste.
- Advances in technology in building materials and practices that improve energy conservation, reduce waste, and lower construction costs.
- New methods of construction designed to provide design options to increase affordability without sacrificing life safety.

Even with an intervening opportunity for amendments, delaying code adoption also puts the state on a path to missing affordable housing options that have been a large focus of recent code update proposals, significantly reduced ability to meet the state's climate goals, higher flood and other insurance rates, and possibly being disqualified from federal grant funds, which often require a state to adopt one of the two most recent code editions to qualify for a full benefit.

The model code adoption process includes multiple opportunities for public comment and appeal. Review of change proposals – which include a statement on the potential cost impact –

are ultimately subject to a vote by experts on the current best practices in the building industry and who have **no financial interest in the outcome.**

Failure to adopt resilient codes will result in avoidable damage to structures and significant financial and environmental costs that are associated with building new replacement infrastructure and repairing existing infrastructure. Even buildings built to strong energy codes that are highly energy efficient or even net zero energy will not realize climate benefits if they are damaged or destroyed because they were not constructed to withstand hazard risk.

National Institute of Building Sciences research estimates that building to modern building codes saves \$11 for every \$1 invested through earthquake, flood, and wind mitigation benefits, with up to \$8-to-\$1 return in wildfire mitigation savings. **Yet, no peer-reviewed research has found that adopting modern building codes has a meaningful impact on construction costs.**

Skipping code cycles places the state out of sync with national best practices and would lead to a State Building Code Council forced to “catch up” with two full sets of changes even while it risks losing members with expertise and experience in code development.

ICC is committed to continuing to work with stakeholders to facilitate the best path forward, which we believe includes funding staff for the State Building Code Council but avoiding legislating a guarantee Hawai'i residents will have to endure years of buildings that do not meet codes designed to promote best practices in building safety.

Thank you.

Bryan Imai
Government Relations Manager for Hawai'i
International Code Council
bimai@iccsafe.org



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT WITH COMMENTS ON HB 1725

Relating to Building Codes

**Before the House Committees on Housing and Water & Land
Rep. Luke A. Evslin, Chair, Committee on Housing
Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Chair, Committee on Water & Land**

February 6, 2026

Submitted by:
Legislative Advocacy Committee
American Institute of Architects, Hawai'i State Council

Position: Support with Comments

The American Institute of Architects

AIA Hawaii State Council
828 Fort Street Mall, Suite 100
Honolulu, HI 96813

T (808) 628-7243
contact@aiahonolulu.org
aiahonolulu.org/AIAHawaiiStateCouncil

The American Institute of Architects, Hawai'i State Council (AIA Hawai'i) supports the intent of HB 1725 to improve predictability, reduce unnecessary redesign, and stabilize construction costs through clearer vesting rules and a more consistent statewide building code framework.

Point-in-Time Code Applicability

AIA Hawai'i strongly supports Part I of the bill, which fixes the applicable building code once a county accepts a complete building permit application or issues an authorization to proceed with construction. This addresses a persistent issue in Hawai'i where projects already under construction are forced to comply with newly adopted codes due to permitting delays outside the applicant's control. Establishing clear vesting at the outset will reduce rework, avoid unnecessary demolition, and help projects move forward more efficiently.

Statewide Code Adoption Cycle

AIA Hawai'i would like to note a possible typo in the bill language. Section 3 of Part II should be referring to the current three-year national model code publication cycle, rather than the bill's reference to a "two-year" cycle.

AIA Hawai'i has historically supported statewide adoption timelines aligned with national ICC code publication, which also supports eligibility for and competitiveness under federal programs such as FEMA's Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) funding. However, in recognition of staffing constraints, training capacity, and the need for greater predictability in permitting and construction, AIA Hawai'i concedes to the bill's proposed transition to a six-year statewide adoption cycle, provided that mid-cycle amendments remain limited to narrow and clearly defined circumstances such as federal preemption, error correction, or imminent life-safety concerns.

Proposed Technical Amendments

The following comments are offered as **specific, technical edits to the bill language**, reproduced verbatim for clarity and ease of consideration:

County Energy Conservation Amendments

The governing body of each county may adopt ~~[more stringent]~~ energy conservation requirements within the scope of the International Energy Conservation Code or ASHRAE Standard 90.1 (Energy Standard for Sites and Buildings Except Low-Rise Residential Buildings) without the findings required by subsection (a)(3) if the county determines, and states in the adopting ordinance, that the amendment is cost-effective, based on a finding from a qualified third-party that utility bill savings over the first ten years will exceed the incremental installed cost of the amendment for typical buildings in the county, those amendments shall be as mandatory requires. Should county choose to adopt more stringent energy code requirements that accelerate the counties pathway to meeting greenhouse gas emission reduction or renewable energy goals, such as stretch or reach codes, the counties may enforce the amendments on a voluntary basis. ~~[The adopted Energy Conservation Code may be enforced by the counties on a voluntary basis.]~~

Section 107-24(c) — SBCC Review of Model Codes

Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, beginning on the effective date of the next statewide adoption of the codes under section 107-25(3), the council shall adopt, amend, or update codes and standards identified in section 107.25 on a staggered basis as established by the council on a six-year cycle by adopting every other published edition of each code. The council ~~[shall]~~ may complete each statewide adoption within twenty-four months after publication of the edition being adopted.

Section 107-24(f) — Stakeholder Consultation

The council shall consult with general building contractor associations, ~~[and]~~ building trade associations, and licensed design professional associations to gather information and recommendations on construction practices and training relevant to building codes and standards.

Implementation Capacity

As a final comment, AIA Hawai'i supports the appropriation in Part III to fund staffing and consultant support for the State Building Code Council. The policy changes proposed in this bill cannot be effectively implemented without adequate administrative and technical capacity.

AIA Hawai'i supports HB 1725 with the comments noted above and appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony.



February 3, 2026

Chairs Luke Evslin and Mark Hashem
Vice Chairs Tyson Miyake and Dee Morikawa
Members of the House Committees on Housing and Water & Land
Thirty-Third Legislature, Regular Session of 2026

Hearing date: February 6, 2026 at 8:45 a.m.

RE: **HB1725 – RELATING TO BUILDING CODES**

Aloha Chairs Evslin, Hashem, Vice Chairs Miyake, Morikawa, and Members of the Committees, Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of D.R. Horton Hawaii in **SUPPORT** of HB1725 – Relating to Building Codes. D.R. Horton Hawaii is proud to be one of Hawaii's largest homebuilders, serving local families for more than 52 years. We specialize in providing affordable housing and first-time homebuyer opportunities across the state and remain committed to addressing Hawaii's critical housing needs.

D.R. Horton Hawaii supports HB 1725, a measure aimed at taking important steps toward creating a more predictable, coordinated, and effective system for both regulators and the construction industry.

Building codes are currently updated on a pace that creates continuous strain on the system. As soon as a new code is adopted by the State Building Code Council (SBCC), agencies, designers, engineers, and homebuilders must immediately begin implementing the next round of codes. This cycle of constant transition places a heavy burden on county agencies responsible for enforcement and creates uncertainty for projects already in the permitting or construction phases.

HB 1725's revised adoption timeline would introduce a more rational and manageable structure. Moving to a system that effectively allows alternating or staggered review cycles would create longer periods of code stability, enabling a more thorough and thoughtful review of each set of code, thereby ensuring better training for building officials and industry professionals, and a more efficient permitting process.



It is important to note that this concept is already reflected in existing law. HRS §107-24(c) calls for codes to be adopted on a “staggered basis.” Thus, I strongly urge this committee to **PASS HB1725** to simply make the process workable in practice.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Tracy Tonaki
President
D.R. Horton Hawaii



Hawai'i YIMBY
Honolulu, HI 96814
hawaiiyimby.org
info@hawaiiyimby.org

February 6, 2026

House Committee on Housing
House Committee on Water & Land
Hawai'i State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: SUPPORT for HB 1725 - RELATING TO BUILDING CODES

Aloha Chairs Evslin & Hashem, Vice Chairs Miyake & Morikawa, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Hawai'i YIMBY, we are writing in **support of HB 1725**.

Hawai'i is facing a severe housing shortage and affordability crisis, and unnecessary delays in the building process only make the problem worse. Uncertainty at any stage of permitting or construction adds time, increases costs, and threatens the affordability of new homes. HB 1725 improves consistency and predictability by clarifying when building codes apply, reducing the risk of costly mid-project changes while maintaining strong health and safety standards. The bill also supports staffing and funding for the State Building Code Council, which will help ensure building codes are adopted and updated in a timely and thoughtful manner. Together, these reforms reduce risk, control costs, and help deliver much-needed housing more quickly for Hawai'i's communities.

Hawai'i YIMBY (*Yes In My Backyard*) is a volunteer-led grassroots advocacy organization dedicated to supporting bold and effective solutions for Hawai'i's devastating housing crisis. Our members are deeply concerned about Hawai'i's chronic and worsening housing shortage, which has caused home prices to rise much faster than incomes and pushes thousands of kama'āina out to the mainland or into homelessness every single year.

We ask your support for this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



Hawai'i YIMBY
Honolulu, HI 96814
hawaiiyimby.org
info@hawaiiyimby.org

Sincerely,

Damien Waikoloa
Chapter Lead, Hawai'i YIMBY

Edgardo Díaz Vega
Chapter Lead, Hawai'i YIMBY

Huey Kwik
Chapter Lead, Hawai'i YIMBY





| *Building Homes, Enriching Communities, Changing Lives*

February 1st, 2026

Honorable House Representative Luke A. Evslin
Chair, House Committee on Housing
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 427
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: House Bill (HB) 1725 - SUPPORT

Dear Representative Luke A. Evslin:

The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) is pleased to support House Bill (HB) 1725, a bill relating to building code reform in the State of Hawaii. This bill represents a significant step forward in addressing critical issues that impact construction projects, housing affordability, and safety standards across the state.

This measure works to prevent the costly redesigns, rework, and delays caused by mid-project building and energy code changes that have historically burdened construction projects and contributed to Hawaii's housing crisis. For example, the cost of going from the 2009 to 2012 code cycle was up to \$3,330, and the cost of the 2018 to 2021 code cycle was up to \$15,000¹, and from 2021 to 2024, the estimate is up to \$10,000 per door.² Thus, many States do not change their codes with such frequency, which allows home builders the opportunity to manage costs and deliver high-quality new homes, without affecting home construction safety or integrity.

According to the most recent studies, the average cost of vertical construction alone in the United States accounts for about 64% of a new home's sales price, not considering finished lot, land price, and holding, planning, and design costs. With regulatory costs including a two-year code cycle, accounting for roughly \$94,000 per home, and in places like California and Hawaii, well over \$100,000+ in additional costs; homeownership is becoming further unattainable.

¹ [2021-2024-iecc-added-construction-costs.pdf](#)

² [2024-iecc-cost-analysis-hirl.pdf](#)



| *Building Homes, Enriching Communities, Changing Lives*

Home builders across the country want to build homes and enrich communities, and we believe this bill works to create pathways by allowing the local code officials and builders to focus on building safe communities together.

As building codes get updated at a rapid rate, it affects both local code enforcers and builders to learn the new codes, develop educational tools to roll it out to the industry that houses 28 different trades, who are the roofer, carpenter, electrician, plumber, framer, etc. Under this piece of legislation, trades will have ample time to catch up with building code updates, and the industry will not further lose construction trade professionals who take to build a home.

Importantly, HB 1725 will align Hawai'i with other states like California, Oregon, and Illinois when it comes to moving from a 2-year adoption building code cycle to a 6-year cycle or a pause of 6 years that will assist in addressing the housing crisis by promoting more home building, bringing business to the State of Hawai'i, and lessening the challenge and burden on local code officials who cannot keep up with the constant demand of learning new codes that get rolled in and its effect on staff shortages that are incredibly important to the approval of the development process.

NAHB believes that House Bill 1725 is a thoughtful and necessary measure to address the challenges facing Hawaii's construction industry and housing market. With these reasons, we respectfully request your support for this bill to help create a more predictable, efficient, and affordable building code system that benefits the people of Hawai'i.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Karl Eckhart".

Karl Eckhart,

Vice President, State and Local Government Affairs



**HAWAII STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND and COMMITTEE ON HOUSING
Conference Room 411
State Capitol
8:45 AM**

February 6, 2026

Subject: HB 1725 - RELATING TO BUILDING CODES

Chairs Evslin & Hashem, Vice Chairs Miyake & Morikawa, and members of the Committees:

My name is Roseann Freitas, CEO of the Building Industry Association of Hawaii (BIA-Hawaii). Chartered in 1955, the Building Industry Association of Hawaii is a professional trade organization affiliated with the National Association of Home Builders, representing the building industry and its associates. BIA-Hawaii takes a leadership role in unifying and promoting the interests of the industry to enhance the quality of life for the people of Hawaii. Our members build the communities we all call home.

BIA-Hawaii offers the following testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 1725, Relating to Building Codes. This measure takes important steps toward creating a more predictable, coordinated, and effective system for both regulators and the construction industry.

Under the current framework, building codes are updated on a pace that creates continuous strain on the system. As soon as a new code is adopted by the State Building Code Council (SBCC), agencies, designers, engineers, and builders must immediately begin analyzing the next round of codes. This cycle of constant transition places a heavy burden on county agencies responsible for enforcement, and creates uncertainty for projects already in the permitting or construction phases.

HB 1725's revised adoption timeline would introduce a more rational and manageable structure. Moving to a system that effectively allows alternating or staggered review cycles would create longer periods of code stability, enabling a more thorough and thoughtful review of each set of code, thereby ensuring better training for building officials and industry professionals, and a more efficient permitting process.

It is important to note that this concept is already reflected in existing law. HRS §107-24(c) calls for codes to be adopted on a "staggered basis." HB 1725 simply makes the process workable in practice.

BIA-Hawaii would also like to clarify a common misunderstanding regarding the relationship between building code adoption and federal disaster funding. Specifically, building code adoption is not a requirement for FEMA disaster relief funding. Code adoption is only a scoring factor under FEMA's Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) grant program, and FEMA guidance provides points if an applicant "has adopted one of the two latest editions of the model building code." HB 1725 would not place Hawaii at any disadvantage in pursuing BRIC grants.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide our comments on this matter.



COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE
DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION
HAWAII CHAPTER

February 6, 2026

Representative Luke Evslin, Chair
Representative Tyson Miyake, Vice Chair
Committee on Housing

Representative Mark Hashem, Chair
Representative Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair
Committee on Water & Land

RE: **HB 1725- Relating to State Building Code**
Hearing date: February 6, 2026 at 8:45 AM

Aloha Chair Evslin, Chair Hashem, and members of the committees,

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of NAIOP Hawaii in **SUPPORT** on HB 1725. NAIOP Hawaii is the local chapter of the nation's leading organization for office, industrial, retail, residential and mixed-use real estate. NAIOP Hawaii has over 200 members in the State including local developers, owners, investors, asset managers, lenders, and other professionals.

HB 1725 establishes a clear statewide rule that fixes the applicable building code when a complete permit application is accepted or when authorization to proceed with construction is granted. Further, the measure changes the building codes cycle from a two year to a 6 year cycle.

A central and critically important feature of HB 1725 is its reform of Hawaii's building code adoption cycle from every two years to every six years. The current two-year cycle creates churn in the regulatory environment, requiring designers, builders, and county agencies to repeatedly adapt to new code editions before the previous codes have been fully implemented. This constant change contributes to confusion, inconsistent interpretation, longer permitting timelines, and higher construction costs.

Moving to a six-year adoption cycle will promote stability and predictability in the building code system. It will allow plan reviewers, inspectors, architects, and engineers to develop greater familiarity and expertise with each adopted code, resulting in more consistent enforcement and more efficient permit review. Limiting mid-cycle amendments to narrow circumstances such as life-safety issues, federal requirements, and error correction appropriately balances safety with regulatory certainty.

In addition, HB 1725 improves vesting rules by fixing the applicable building code when a complete permit application is accepted or when authorization to proceed with construction is issued. This protects projects from mid-stream code changes that can

otherwise require costly redesigns and rework, further increasing housing costs and delaying completion.

Together, these reforms reduce regulatory volatility, improve permitting efficiency, and help control construction costs. At a time when Hawaii continues to face a severe housing shortage, stabilizing the building code system is an important step toward making housing development more feasible and predictable without compromising public safety. For these reasons, we respectfully urge your support of HB 1725.

Mahalo for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ken K. Hayashida". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Ken" and the last name "Hayashida" clearly legible.

Ken Hayashida, President
NAIOP Hawaii



Testimony of
Pacific Resource Partnership

Hawai'i State Legislature
Honorable Members of the House Committees on Housing (HSG), Water, Land, & Hawaiian Affairs
(WAL), and Finance (FIN)
Friday, Feb. 6, 2026

Subject: Strong support for HB1725 – Relating to Building Codes

Aloha chairs, vice chairs, and members of the committees:

Pacific Resource Partnership (PRP) is a nonprofit organization that represents the Hawai'i Regional Council of Carpenters, the largest construction union in the state with approximately 6,000 members, in addition to more than 250 diverse contractors ranging from mom-and-pop owned businesses to national companies.

As an organization dedicated to protecting Hawai'i's working families, businesses, and taxpayers through fair practices in the construction industry, PRP strongly supports HB1725. This measure promotes predictability and cost certainty in construction, directly aids in addressing Hawai'i's housing crisis, and maintains safety standards without imposing unnecessary burdens.

Hawai'i's construction sector is critical to our economy and to delivering the housing our communities desperately need. However, frequent code changes and mid-project revisions create significant uncertainty, delays, and added expenses for homebuilders, developers, workers, and ultimately homebuyers. Homebuilders need surety when finalizing plans and commencing projects. Having to adapt mid-stream to new codes – often due to permitting delays or updates during construction – imposes unnecessary costs through redesigns, material substitutions, additional engineering, and schedule disruptions. These costs are ultimately passed on, further straining affordability in our housing-short state.

HB1725 directly addresses these challenges in several key ways. Part I establishes point-in-time applicability: once a county accepts a complete building permit application or issues an authorization to proceed, the applicable building codes, standards, and county amendments are fixed for the life of the permit (including extensions, provided diligent pursuit), subject only to narrow exceptions for imminent



(Continued From Page 1)

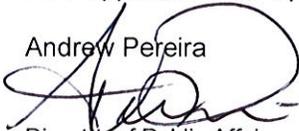
life-safety threats that are narrowly tailored and documented. This prevents disruptive mid-project changes and allows builders to plan with confidence.

Part II shifts the state building code adoption cycle to six years (adopting every other published edition of the International Code Council suite), with limited mid-cycle amendments restricted to specific circumstances such as federal requirements, error corrections, or urgent life-safety/resilience needs. It also clarifies the applicability of the International Residential Code (IRC) to certain smaller multiplex buildings (e.g., triplexes and fourplexes under specified conditions) and allows counties to adopt more or less stringent amendments with required findings and impact statements, promoting thoughtful, locally tailored rules. Many other states facing similar home-building crises have moved toward longer periods of code stability to reduce costs and accelerate production. California, which traditionally operates on a triennial (three-year) cycle, recently enacted AB 130 (2025), imposing a six-year moratorium on changes to residential building standards (from October 2025 to June 2031, with limited exceptions for emergencies or specific safety measures). This effectively extends stability beyond the usual cycle – skipping the 2028 residential update – and supports housing efforts with no impact on safety, as existing core protections remain in force while avoiding disruptive revisions and cost escalations.

By providing greater predictability through point-in-time code fixing and a six-year adoption cycle, HB1725 safeguards honest contractors and workers who play by the rules, reduces unnecessary financial burdens on projects, prevents cost overruns that hinder housing supply, and promotes trust in the system. This fosters fair competition, supports economic growth, and helps deliver much-needed affordable housing for our families and communities, all without compromising public safety.

PRP appreciates the opportunity to testify in strong support of HB1725.

Andrew Pereira



Director of Public Affairs
Pacific Resource Partnership
1100 Alakea Street, 4th Floor
Honolulu, HI 96813
Phone: (808) 528-5557
Email: apereira@prp-hawaii.com
Website: www.prp-hawaii.com



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Bill McQuade
ASHRAE Society President, 2025-2026

Phone: (240) 761-5453
Email: bmcquade@baltimoreaircoil.com

February 5, 2026

The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita
The Honorable Luke A. Evslin
The Honorable Mark Jun Hashem
House Committees on Finance, Housing, and Water and Land
Hawai'i State Capitol
415 S. Beretania St.
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: House Bill 1725 "Relating to Building Codes."

Dear Chairs Yamashita, Evslin, and Hashem, and members of the House Committees on Finance, Housing, and Water and Land:

I am writing on behalf of ASHRAE, the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air Conditioning Engineers. We are a professional and technical society of more than 54,000 members dedicated to energy efficiency, indoor air quality, resiliency, and sustainability in the built environment. Through our Society's research, standards writing, publishing, certification, and continuing education, ASHRAE shapes tomorrow's global built environment today. As one of the premier subject matter experts on the built environment, and on behalf of our 260 members in the state of Hawai'i, we wish to convey our opposition to "Part II" of Hawai'i House Bill 1725, which would change from a three-year to a six-year cycle for building codes updates.

While well intentioned, as we certainly sympathize with the stated goal of bringing down housing costs in Hawai'i, we believe that this proposal will not have the desired effect. The idea underpinning this proposal, that Hawai'i's adoption of modern building codes and energy standards is responsible for high housing costs, and that ceasing to adopt up-to-date building codes and energy standards will bring down housing costs, is incorrect. The failure to update the International Energy Conservation Code and ASHRAE's Standard 90.1 *Energy Standard for Buildings Except Low-Rise Residential Buildings*, which are published on a three-year cycle that syncs up with HI's code updates would cause:

- Energy efficiency gains to be left on the table along with the opportunity for operating cost reductions.
- Business owners, homeowners, and tenants to pay in sum nearly \$3 million in higher utility bills every year.
- Thousands of tons of greenhouse gas emissions to go unmitigated.
- Greater difficulty meeting HI's 2030 and 2045 climate targets.
- Failure to create jobs associated with energy code adoption.
- No significant reduction in housing purchase costs

Second, requiring a cost/benefit analysis that is only created in consultation with developers, contractors, and builders regarding code and standard updates is a departure from the current balanced and fair process. Privileging the voices of one coalition in this complex process could throw future energy standard and building code updates into jeopardy. An amendment requiring additional consultation with energy efficiency advocates and building science and technology organizations such as ASHRAE would help the process remain balanced but would still be an administrative burden.

We also wish to inform you that rigorous studies on the financial and environmental impact of energy code and standard adoption are already produced by the United States Department of Energy and the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. These reports are an unbiased, science-based analyses of the costs and benefits of updating Hawai‘i’s energy codes and standards. The two most relevant reports for your attention are:

- [Cost-Effectiveness of ANSI/ASHRAE/IES Standard 90.1-2019 for Hawai‘i](#): this study shows the costs and benefits of updating the state’s commercial building energy code. In summary, no increase in construction costs are expected.
- [Cost-Effectiveness of the 2021 IECC for Residential Buildings in Hawai‘i](#): this study shows the costs and benefits of updating the state’s residential building energy code. In summary, homeowners can expect to be cashflow positive inside the first year.

There are many causes of high housing costs, and it would be outside our area of professional expertise to speak authoritatively on them. However, we can point to many counter examples of states that adopt the newest energy standard on cycle and have substantially lower housing and construction costs than Hawai‘i, indicating that at most energy standards and codes are a marginal factor in Hawai‘i’s housing crisis. For example, Montana, Florida, and Oregon all update to the newest edition of ASHRAE’s 90.1 energy standard every three years. According to one large real-estate data company, the median price of a single-family home in Hawai‘i is \$975,000. This can be compared to \$528,000 in Montana, \$433,600 in Florida, and \$521,500 in Oregon¹. More generally, we know that there is a substantial return on investment when it comes to building codes: up to date model building codes save \$11 for every \$1 invested through disaster mitigation benefits.² Additionally, a study has shown that the lower utility bills delivered by using up-to-date energy codes reduce mortgage default rates by about a third. Finally, numerous case studies have shown that updating to modern and more stringent building safety codes and energy codes is not associated with an increase in housing and construction costs.³⁴⁵

¹ McMillin, David. 2024. “Median Home Prices in Every State.” Bankrate. April 8, 2025.

<https://www.bankrate.com/real-estate/median-home-price/#median-price-by-state>.

² “PROTECTING COMMUNITIES AND SAVING MONEY The Case for Adopting Building Codes.” FEMA, November 2020. Accessed January 23, 2025. https://www.fema.gov/sites/default/files/2020-11/fema_building-codessave_brochure.pdf.

³ National Institute of Standards and Technology. “Cost Analyses and Benefit Studies for Earthquake-Resistant Construction in Memphis, Tennessee.” NEHRP, December 2013. Accessed January 23, 2025.

[https://nehrrp.gov/pdf/NIST%20GCR%2014-917-](https://nehrrp.gov/pdf/NIST%20GCR%2014-917-26_CostAnalysesandBenefitStudiesforEarthquakeResistantConstructioninMemphisTennessee.pdf)

[26_CostAnalysesandBenefitStudiesforEarthquakeResistantConstructioninMemphisTennessee.pdf](https://nehrrp.gov/pdf/NIST%20GCR%2014-917-26_CostAnalysesandBenefitStudiesforEarthquakeResistantConstructioninMemphisTennessee.pdf).

⁴ Simmons, Kevin M., and Paul Kovacs. 2018. “Real Estate Market Response to Enhanced Building Codes in Moore, OK.” *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction* 27 (March): 85–93.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijdr.2017.09.040>.

⁵ Quarles, Stephen, Ph.D., and Kelly Pohl M.Sc. “Building a Wildfire-Resistant Home: Codes and Costs.” *Headwater Economics*, November 2018. <https://headwaterseconomics.org/wp-content/uploads/building-costs-codesreport.pdf>.



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In conclusion, ASHRAE opposes Part II of HB 1725 and urges the swift dismissal of this provision in your committees. We are at your disposal to answer any questions, and to address any comments or concerns you might have. We also wish to make ourselves available to you at any time if you find yourself in need of subject matter expertise on building sciences and the built environment. We can be reached at GovAffairs@ashrae.org. On behalf of our 54,000 members worldwide and our 260 members in Hawai'i, thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bill McQuade". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "B" and "M".

Bill McQuade
ASHRAE Society President, 2025-2026

Feb. 6, 2026, 8:45 a.m.
Hawaii State Capitol
Conference Room 430 and Videoconference

To: House Committee on Housing

Rep. Luke Evslin, Chair

Rep. Tyson Miyake, Vice Chair

House Committee on Water and Land

Rep. Mark Hashem, Chair

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair

From: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

Ted Kefalas, Director of Strategic Campaigns

RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB1725 — RELATING TO BUILDING CODES

Aloha chairs, vice chairs and other members of the committees,

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii **supports** [HB1725](#), which would amend how the state and counties adopt and implement the International Building Code.

This bill would make several changes to Hawaii's convoluted, dysfunctional building code adoption process.

First, it would specify that a building permit issued under one set of codes is valid even if a code change takes place before the permitted project is complete.

Second, it would require the State Building Code Council to adopt building codes every six years.

Third, it would eliminate the process by which the counties adopt their own amended versions of the state code. Instead, the code adopted by the SBCC would be the statewide code, with counties retaining some authority to make amendments to the code only as applicable in their jurisdictions.

Fourth, it would allow three- and four-unit homes to be built under the International Residential Code instead of the International Building Code, subject to certain conditions.

Last, it would appropriate funding for staff to assist the SBCC in administering its duties.

State law currently requires that the State Building Code Council adopt every iteration of the International Building Code and related codes within two years of their being released; the counties then have an additional two years to make amendments to the state code and adopt those versions.

It is concerning, however, that the state and counties often struggle to meet these deadlines. For example, the State Building Code Council adopted the 2018 Interim Building Code¹ in April 2021, and Honolulu didn't fully adopt its own amended code based on that version until mid-2024.² In the meantime, the IBC released updated codes as scheduled in 2021 and 2024.

Because of this staggered adoption process, county building officials, builders and architects must constantly learn different building codes. For builders, this means navigating as many as four different codes, which takes time and training that increase administrative costs.

This process also stresses already understaffed county planning and permitting departments, and research has shown that permitting delays can affect home prices.³

Furthermore, specifying that three- and four-unit homes can be built under the International Residential Code instead of the International Building Code under certain conditions would lower construction costs for these dwellings.⁴

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Ted Kefalas
Director of Strategic Campaigns
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

¹ ["State Building Code Adoption,"](#) State Building Code Council, April 20, 2021, p. 1.

² Ashley Mizuo, ["As stakeholders navigate building code updates, counties bear the burden,"](#) Hawaii Public Radio, Aug. 27, 2024.

³ Paul Emrath, ["How Government Regulation Affects the Price of a New Home,"](#) National Association of Homebuilders, Economics and Housing Policy Group, 2011, p. 5; and Adam Millsap, Samuel Staley and Vittorio Nastasi, ["Assessing the Effects of Local Impact Fees and Land-use Regulations on Workforce Housing in Florida,"](#) James Madison Institute, Dec. 11, 2018, p. 19.

⁴ John Zeenah, ["Beyond Zoning: Hidden Code Barriers to Middle-Scale Housing,"](#) Center for Building in North America, September 2025.



Housing Hawai'i's Future
PO Box 3043
Honolulu, HI 96802-3043

February 6, 2026

TO: Chair Evslin and Members of the House Committee on Housing
Chair Hashem and Members of the House Committee on Water & Land
RE: HB 1725, Relating to the Building Code

Dear Chairs Evslin, Hashem, and Committee Members,

Housing Hawai'i's Future is a nonprofit dedicated to creating opportunities for Hawai'i's next generations by ending the workforce housing shortage.

We strongly support House Bill 1725. We need to make it easier for folks to follow the Building Code. Frequent code changes and historically long permitting processes only add confusion among builders and government officials, adding delays and increasing housing costs for residents. Moving the building code cycle from 3 years to 6 years means we can spend less time debating (already) good rules and spend more time actually building.

This is a Building Code reform measure that functions as an omnibus. It fixes the life of building permits, makes it easier for county governments to adopt and amend their own building codes and appropriates resources to the State Building Code Council to hire someone to staff the SBCC and coordinate among stakeholders. If we want more housing, the rules need to work for builders.

By fixing the applicable building codes and standards for the life of a building permit, HB1725 provides much-needed certainty to developers and builders. This approach reduces the risk of mid-project code changes, which can cause delays, increase costs, and deter investment in new housing.

The bill also clarifies the applicability of the International Residential Code and establishes a more deliberate six-year code adoption cycle. These changes balance the need for up-to-date safety standards with the practical realities of project planning and execution. Allowing counties to propose amendments to the state building code, subject to State Building Code Council oversight, ensures local flexibility while maintaining statewide consistency.

Let's make it easier (and safer) to build homes. **Please advance House Bill 1725.**

Thank you,

A stylized, circular signature in black ink, appearing to be the name "Lee Wang".

Lee Wang
Executive Director
Housing Hawai'i's Future
lee@hawaiisfuture.org

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Perry Arrasmith".

Perry Arrasmith
Director of Policy
Housing Hawai'i's Future
perry@hawaiisfuture.org

February 5, 2026

Rep. Luke A. Evslin, Chair, Chair (Housing)
Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Chair, Chair (Water & Land)
and Members of the Housing and Water & Land Committees

Subject: Testimony: HB1725 Relating to Building Codes
Hearing: February 6, 2026, at 8:45 AM, Conference Room 430

Dear Chairs Evslin and Hashem,

SCD testifies in SUPPORT for HB1725. This bill is an important and practical step toward reducing regulatory uncertainty that directly drives up the cost of housing in Hawai'i.

A primary barrier to affordable housing production is not just construction cost, but unpredictability in the permitting and regulatory process. Frequent changes to building codes during design or construction force costly redesigns, delays, and rework - costs that ultimately are passed on to renters and homebuyers. By fixing the applicable building code at the time a complete permit application is accepted, this bill provides essential cost certainty and schedule reliability, particularly for affordable and workforce housing projects that operate on thin margins.

The bill's clarification of the applicability of the International Residential Code to small-scale residential development also supports the production of "missing middle" housing, such as duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes. These housing types are critical to affordability but are often disproportionately burdened by regulatory complexity and inconsistent code interpretation.

HB1725 appropriately balances statewide consistency with limited county flexibility by allowing targeted local amendments only where they are demonstrably necessary and cost-effective. This approach helps prevent unnecessary local code variations that increase construction costs without improving safety or resilience.

Finally, extending the statewide building code adoption cycle reduces ongoing regulatory churn while preserving the ability to address genuine life-safety or federal compliance issues. Stability in the code environment is essential for developers, lenders, and nonprofit housing providers to plan and deliver housing at scale.

For these reasons, HB1725 meaningfully advances Hawai'i's affordable housing goals by reducing regulatory risk, lowering unnecessary costs, and improving the predictability of housing delivery. We respectfully support its passage.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stanford S. Carr', written in a cursive style.

Stanford S. Carr

THE GENTRY COMPANIES



February 5, 2026

Chair Luke Evslin and Mark Hashem
Vice Chair Tyson Miyake and Dee Morikawa
Members of the House Committee on Housing and Water and Land

Subject: **Testimony in Support of HB 1725 – Relating to Building Codes**
Hearing: Friday, February 6, 2026 at 8:45am

Aloha Chair Evslin and Hashem, Vice Chair Miyake and Morikawa and Members of the Committee,

Gentry Homes is a Hawai‘i-based homebuilder that builds exclusively in Hawai‘i. For decades, we have focused on delivering quality homes for local families through long-standing partnerships with local architects, engineers, contractors, and trade professionals. These enduring relationships reflect deep knowledge and expertise in Hawai‘i’s unique building environment, including local codes, climate conditions, materials, and regulatory requirements. As a company committed to long-term investment in the communities we serve, Gentry Homes has a strong interest in promoting a stronger, more effective system for regulators and the building industry.

Gentry Homes strongly supports HB 1725, Relating to Building Codes. Codes are the backbone for design and increasing the efficacy and clarity of this process can only benefit us all. Currently, building codes are updated in a cumbersome manner that strains the existing system. Once a new code is adopted by the State Building Code Council (SBCC), agencies, designers, engineers, and builders must immediately begin analyzing the next round of codes. This creates a never-ending cycle of updating, adopting, and enforcing code that is constantly changing creating delays and uncertainty in an already lengthy permitting and construction process.

HB 1725 seeks to improve this timeline to a more manageable structure that allows alternating or staggered review cycles. This would create longer periods of code stability and more time to process and properly apply updated code. HB 1725 reflects an existing concept in HRS §107-24(c), which calls for codes to be adopted on a “staggered basis.” HB 1725 would make this process workable in real life.

Mahalo for your consideration of our testimony and for your continued efforts to maintain a balanced, effective framework that supports quality housing for all.

Respectfully submitted,

GENTRY HOMES, LTD.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sunny Rosario'.

Sunny Rosario
Manager of Governmental Affairs and Community Relations



TITLE GUARANTY
HAWAII

February 6, 2026

Testimony in support of HB 1725, Relating to Building Codes

Aloha Chair Evslin, Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Miyake, Vice Chair Morikawa, and Members of the Committees,

We write in support of HB 1725, Relating to Building Codes, which will improve the timeliness of code adoption and updates.

Title Guaranty of Hawai'i is the oldest and largest title company in the state. We have been owned and operated by a kama'āina family since 1896, and we are proud to employ over 250 residents across our branches statewide. As an organization that has worked for over a century to connect local families with housing, we see firsthand how regulatory uncertainty and inefficiency add time, cost, and complexity to housing projects, ultimately borne by residents.

HB 1725 takes a pragmatic step toward improving that system.

First, extending the building code renewal timeline provides much-needed stability and predictability. Frequent code update cycles can create confusion and inefficiencies for developers, lenders, design professionals, and counties. A long renewal window allows stakeholders to plan, train staff, and implement updates more thoughtfully, without compromising safety.

Second, appropriating funding for the State Building Code Council is critical to effective implementation. The Council's work is highly technical and directly affects housing delivery statewide. Dedicated resources will strengthen coordination, support timely reviews, and ensure consistent adoption across counties, allowing the revised timeline to function as intended.

Together, these provisions support a more efficient and predictable building code system while maintaining strong safety standards. By reducing unnecessary delays and strengthening the State Building Code Council's capacity to carry out its responsibilities, HB 1725 helps control development costs, support housing production, and promote a more stable housing market for local families.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike B. Pietsch'.

Mike B. Pietsch
President and Chief Operating Officer
Title Guaranty of Hawai'i





**Statement of
Meli James
Brittany Heyd
Cofounders
Mana Up**

HB 1725, Relating to Building Codes

Aloha,

As a small business owner, we write in support of HB 1725, which pertains to Building Codes. The primary aim of this bill is to ensure that any adoption, amendment, or update of a building code or standard by the State Building Code Council occurs within two years of each official publication date of a code or standard.

Mana Up is a statewide initiative that supports Hawai'i-based entrepreneurs with the resources and tools they need to grow locally and scale globally. The founders and small business owners we work with are deeply invested in Hawai'i. They create local jobs, reinvest in their communities, and contribute to a diversified and resilient local economy. For these entrepreneurs to stay and thrive in Hawai'i, however, they need stable, attainable housing, particularly in the early stages of building their businesses.

Under the current system, building code update cycles add unnecessary complexity and uncertainty to housing development. When codes are updated frequently, it often takes one to two years for permitting officials, plan reviewers, and design professionals to align on interpretation and implementation. These delays increase costs and slow housing production, further straining affordability for local residents and the small business workforce.

Extending the building code renewal timeline allows for a more predictable and efficient process. With additional time, permitting officials, plan reviewers, and design professionals can align on interpretation and implementation, reducing revisions, delays, and unnecessary costs. Coupled with dedicated funding for the State Building Code Council, these provisions strengthen the Council's capacity to carry out its highly technical responsibilities, support consistent statewide adoption, and maintain safety standards, ultimately helping to control construction costs and deliver more attainable housing for local residents.

HB 1725 is a practical solution that helps make housing more affordable for our community, and Mana Up is happy to support it.

Sincerely,

Meli James
Brittany Heyd
Cofounders, Mana Up

680 Iwilei Rd
(808) 354-1238
Suite 420
aloha@manauphawaii.com
Honolulu, HI 96817
manauphawaii.com



**Testimony to the House Committee on Housing
Representative Luke A. Evslin, Chair
Representative Tyson K. Miyake, Vice Chair**

**Testimony to the House Committee on Water & Land
Representative Mark J. Hashem, Chair
Representative Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair**



**Friday, February 6, at 8:45AM
Conference Room 430 & Videoconference**

RE: HB1725 Relating to Building Codes

Aloha e Chair Evslin, Vice Chair Miyake, Chair Hashem, vice Chair Morikawa, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Sherry Menor, President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber"). The Chamber supports House Bill 1725 (HB1725), which establishes that the building code in effect at the time a completed permit application is accepted will remain applicable for the duration of the permit.

HB1725 aligns with our 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii: An Economic Action Plan, specifically under the policy pillar for Economic Action. By freezing the applicable building code upon authorization of a permit application, this bill promotes regulatory certainty for developers, contractors, and small businesses. By eliminating the concern for unforeseen regulatory adjustment, the need for demolition, redesign, and reconstruction is mitigated. Such relief of regulatory burden reduces risk for developers and improves the predictability of project costs and timelines. Increasing stability, predictability, and mitigating the risk of unforeseen costs encourages development and infrastructure investment, reduces permitting approval backlog, and reduces approval times for permitting applications. By reducing permitting backlogs and approval time, friction around the construction critical housing supply and business infrastructure is reduced. With these benefits in mind, HB1725 offers a compelling opportunity to lower cost of living, improve the state's regulatory environment, and encourage business investment.

For these reasons, we respectfully ask to pass House Bill 1725. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii is the state's leading business advocacy organization, dedicated to improving Hawaii's economy and securing Hawaii's future for growth and opportunity. Our mission is to foster a vibrant economic climate. As such, we support initiatives and policies that align with the 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii that create opportunities to strengthen overall competitiveness, improve the quantity and skills of available workforce, diversify the economy, and build greater local wealth.



Representative Luke Evslin
Chair, House Committee on Housing

Representative Mark Hashem
Chair, House Committee on Water and Land

Hawaii House of Representatives
415 South Beretania St.
Honolulu, HI 96813

LATE

RE: Opposition to HB 1725 “Relating to Building Codes”

Dear Chair Evslin, Chair Hashem, and Colleagues

I am submitting this letter on behalf of the National Electrical Manufacturers Association (NEMA) regarding HB 1725 “Relating to Building Codes” which changes the code adoption cycle in Hawaii to a six year adoption cycle, preventing regular adoption of modern building codes. NEMA strongly supports adoption of the latest national model building codes and urges the committee to oppose this legislation to keep Hawaii residents safe and help mitigate runaway energy bills. HB 1725 would set Hawaii back by preventing timely building code updates, and cost consumers and businesses alike. It would also cause code updates to be more significant when adopted, rather than the current incremental changes provided by a triennial cycle.

NEMA is the leading trade organization representing America’s electroindustry. Our more than 300 manufacturing companies include producers of reliable, connected, and secure products which are used throughout critical infrastructure sectors and other key markets, such as building infrastructure; building systems; lighting systems; industrial products and systems; utility products and systems; and transportation systems. NEMA members manufacture many of the products necessary to provide electricity to Hawaii consumers and businesses, equipment that powers electric vehicles, and products that make buildings and homes more energy efficient¹. In Hawaii, the electroindustry creates more than \$19.5 million in GDP contributions².

Importance of Timely Adoption of Model Codes

NEMA strongly supports consistent adoption of safety and energy codes on a triennial cycle. National model building codes provide the blueprint for constructing the places we live and work. They guide the minimum safety and performance standards which allow occupants to live and operate in a safe and optimally-performing environment. Model building codes also allow for the latest advancements in safety, efficiency, and resiliency in

building. The codes are developed through an open stakeholder process regularly to reflect subject matter expert perspectives and incorporate advances in safety and technology in homes and buildings.

They also drive innovation and improve quality of life. The national model building codes, produced through an open and transparent stakeholder process and led by the International Code Council (ICC) and National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), are revised every three years to account for advances in technological innovations, building practices, and best practices in fire & life safety. Therefore, timely adoption in accordance with the national model revision schedule is vitally important.

Energy Efficiency Reduces Costs, Increases Energy Security

Energy efficiency reduces Hawaiian energy bills. Modern energy codes include flexibility for builders and many paths for compliance, reducing the cost of utility bills and maintenance. The difference in costs of energy efficient construction are quickly outweighed by the reduced operational costs to homeowners.

Modern energy codes also provide benefits beyond energy savings. Homes built to updated codes also improve passive survivability. Passive survivability allows homeowners to stay safely and comfortably in their homes during prolonged power outages. Adopting updated energy codes could help residents during power outages from an extreme weather event.

Energy demand in the United States will significantly increase over the coming years. Energy efficiency is the lowest cost option for meeting this rising demand and ensuring energy security for the country, a top priority for the United States. Hawaii can help to achieve energy security by investing in long-term energy stability through promoting energy efficiency.

Continuing to improve energy efficiency on a triennial cycle for Hawaii homeowners greatly improves affordability, reduces their utility bills, and provides grid flexibility allowing the state to compete in critical areas such as data centers.

Conclusion

NEMA supports safe, efficient, and affordable homeownership. We strongly oppose this legislation as it will prevent timely updates to the state building codes, risking an increase in long-term operational costs for homeowners and businesses and preventing adoption of key safety updates to codes as they are released. This bill will also hurt Hawaii manufacturers as it prevents needed code updates to enable new technologies.

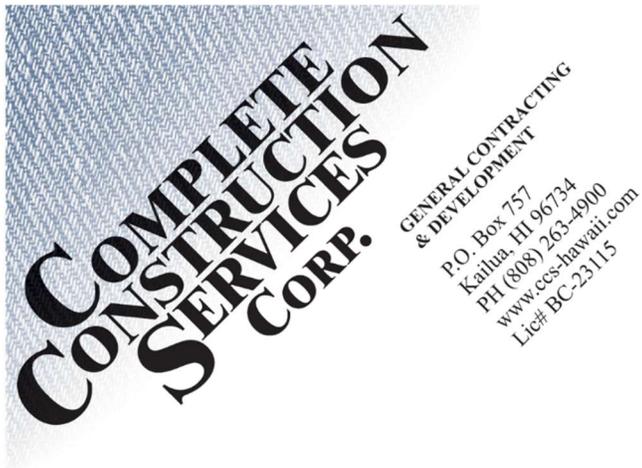
We thank you and your colleagues for your consideration of our concerns and request that you vote to oppose this legislation.

We are happy to speak further with the committee regarding any questions, concerns, or comments. We look forward to working with the legislature further on building code issues.

Best regards,
Christopher Bresee
Director, State Government Affairs
National Electrical Manufacturers Association

¹ Additional information about NEMA may be found at <https://www.nema.org/>.

² [Hawaii Electroindustry Economic Report](#)



**HAWAII STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND and COMMITTEE ON HOUSING
Conference Room 411
State Capitol
8:45 AM**

February 6, 2026

Subject: HB 1725 - RELATING TO BUILDING CODES

Chairs Evslin & Hashem, Vice Chairs Miyake & Morikawa, and members of the Committees:

I am testifying in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 1725 Relating to Building Codes. I have been a licensed General Contractor since 1996 and I currently work on developing affordable housing under the City Bill 7 program. In addition I serve on the City and County of Honolulu Building Board of Appeals, as the Chair of BIA Hawaii's Codes Committee and as Vice President of the Board of Directors for Hawaii State Habitat for Humanity. Affordable housing isn't just my profession; it is my passion.

The building code adoption process as it exists today is broken from top to bottom. It is overseen by NGO's that are far more interested in maintaining their multi-million dollar business model of selling code books then policing the manufacturers pushing products via code changes. It is sold to well intentioned State and Local Governments via red herrings such as FEMA funding, inflated life safety concerns and eminent environmental collapse. It is poorly implemented because the actual practitioners of both building and code compliance have the goal posts constantly moving.

HB 1725 fulfills the original promise of HRS 107-24 by formally clarifying the original requirement that codes be adopted on a "staggered basis". It sends a powerful message to the NGO's that write the code that we will put our housing needs ahead of your profits. We will respect the needs and opinions of the plan checkers, building inspectors, design professionals and builders that are the end users of this process. We will create a process that benefits the many, not a process that benefits the few.

Sincerely,
Geena Thielen
President/RME

HB-1725

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 8:43:59 AM

Testimony for HSG on 2/6/2026 8:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
R. McKibbin Mist	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

R. McKibbin Mist

Honolulu Resident

February 5, 2026

Subject: Testimony in Support of HB 1725 RELATING TO THE STATE BUILDING CODES.

Report Title: State Building Code Council; Department of Accounting and General Services; Membership; Building Industry Association of Hawai'i; General Contractors Association of Hawai'i

TO: COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND

Representative Luke Evslin, Chair

Representative Mark Hashem, Chair

Representative Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair

Representative Tyson Miyake, Vice Chair

Aloha Chairs Evslin & Hashem and Vice Chairs Miyake & Morikawa, and members of the Committee on Water and Land,

I am writing in strong support of HB1725 relating to building codes.

Hawaii's Housing Crisis continues to get worse. Our communities are ranked among the most unaffordable in the country, as evidenced by UHERO's latest report – Beyond the price of paradise. Our average home age is over 70 years old, and running a small contracting or development business continues to get more difficult. Houses are not being built or replaced fast enough, in my opinion, because the business to do so is unpredictable and costs continue to increase. Our codes are significantly more restrictive than 70 years ago, and any house built to the current code would be significantly stronger than one built to code 70 years ago. HB1725 is one step to easing the complex process.

Thank you for considering this measure and please support HB1725.

Mahalo,

McKibbin Mist

HB-1725

Submitted on: 2/5/2026 9:21:41 AM

Testimony for HSG on 2/6/2026 8:45:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daniel A Curran	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in support of HB1725. With the length of time that it takes to go through the full permitting process as well as design costs we need some certainty while doing a design that any planned changes in the codes will not effect projects already in the permitting pipeline. Time is money and the more that projects are delayed by permitting or redesign or other factors the less chance that we can complete projects for the communities.

Thank you in advance.

Aloha, Dan