

**STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF PLANNING
& SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR

MARY ALICE EVANS
DIRECTOR

235 South Beretania Street, 6th Floor, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96804

Telephone: (808) 587-2846
Fax: (808) 587-2824
Web: <https://planning.hawaii.gov/>

Statement of
MARY ALICE EVANS, Director

before the
**SENATE COMMITTEES ON ENERGY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
AND HOUSING AND WATER, LAND, CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

Thursday, March 19, 2026

3:01 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 224

in consideration of
HB 1738, HD 2
RELATING TO LAND USE DECISION-MAKING.

Chairs Wakai, Chang, and Lee, Vice Chairs Chang, Hashimoto, and Inouye, and Members of the Senate Committees on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs, Housing, and Water, Land, Culture and the Arts.

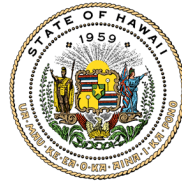
The Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) **supports** HB 1738, HD 2, which amends HRS § 205-3.1 to allow the county land use decision-making authority to approve district boundary amendments, without consideration by the land use commission, for land areas greater than fifteen acres but no more than twenty-five acres solely for affordable housing under certain conditions.

OPSD strongly supports the provision of additional affordable housing and expanding the counties' ability to approve district boundary amendments to encourage affordable housing development in areas already identified as residential in a county general plan or community development plan.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & BIOSECURITY
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI A KIA'I MEAOLA
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9560 FAX: (808) 973-9613

SHARON HURD
Chairperson
Board of Agriculture & Biosecurity

DEAN M. MATSUKAWA
Deputy to the Chairperson

WRITTEN ONLY

TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

**BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEES ON WATER, LAND, CULTURE AND THE
ARTS; ENERGY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS; AND HOUSING**

THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 2026

3:01 PM

CONFERENCE ROOM 224

**HOUSE BILL NO.1738, HOUSE DRAFT 2
RELATING TO LAND USE DECISION-MAKING**

Chairs Lee, Wakai, and Chang Vice Chairs Inouye, Chang, and Hashimoto and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 1738, House Draft 2, that provides the authority for the counties to amend district boundaries of greater than 15 but no more than 25 acres for purposes of residential housing, agricultural workforce housing, long-term rental, or workforce fee simple ownership. The Department of Agriculture and Biosecurity (Department) offers comment.

The Department does not dispute the need for housing. We note with favor that HD2 allows consideration of affordable residential and other types of housing on agricultural lands that are not designated as Important Agricultural Land (IAL) (Page 3, lines 8-9) and be limited to lands with Land Study Bureau (LSB) ratings of "D," "E," and "U" (Page 3, lines 10-13). This acknowledges that IAL lands and agricultural lands with LSB ratings of "A," "B," and "C," as having superior soil quality and topographical features that can support intensive agricultural production and help to achieve Hawaii's food self-sufficiency goals.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.



LAND USE COMMISSION

Komikina Ho'ohana 'Āina

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM
Ka 'Oihana Ho'omōhala Pā'oihana, 'Imi Wai wai a Ho'omāka'ika'i

JOSH GREEN, MD
GOVERNOR

DANIEL E. ORODENKER
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

235 S. Beretania Street, RM 406, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96804
Email Address: dbedt.luc.web@hawaii.gov

Telephone: (808) 587-3822

Website: luc.hawaii.gov

Statement of
Daniel E. Orodenker
Executive Officer
State Land Use Commission

Before the
Senate Committees on
Water, Land, Culture and the Arts
and
Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs
and
Housing

Thursday March 19, 2026
3:01 PM
State Capitol, Room 224 and Video Conference

In consideration of
HB1738 HD2

RELATING TO LAND USE DECISION-MAKING

Chairs Lee, Wakai, and Chang; Vice Chairs Inouye, Chang, and Hashimoto; and members of the Senate Committees on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts; Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs; and, Housing:

The proposed measure provides the authority for counties to amend State land use district boundaries up to 25 acres for purposes of residential housing, agricultural workforce housing, long-term rental, or workforce fee simple ownership.

The Land Use Commission ("LUC") met on February 11, 2026, to discuss legislative proposals. At that time the LUC did not take a position on this measure. Commissioners expressed support for expanding housing options but noted the bill lacks any explicit affordability requirement. To support that concern, LUC staff recommends retaining the inclusion of the word "affordable" before the term "residential housing" to the new section (d) contained in the measure.

In addition, the LUC discussed the need for safeguards and compliance measures, particularly regarding Important Agricultural Lands (“IAL”) and constitutional considerations. LUC staff is here to answer any technical concerns or process issues.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter

Council Chair
Alice L. Lee

Vice-Chair
Yuki Lei K. Sugimura

Councilmembers
Kauanoë Batangan
Tom Cook
Gabe Johnson
Tamara Paltin
Keani N.W. Rawlins-Fernandez
Shane M. Sinenci
Nohelani U'u-Hodgins



Director of Council Services
David M. Raatz, Jr., Esq.

Deputy Director of Council Services
Richelle K. Kawasaki, Esq.

COUNTY COUNCIL
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 S. HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.MauiCounty.us

March 18, 2026

TO: The Honorable Glenn Wakai, Chair
Senate Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs

The Honorable Stanley Chang, Chair
Senate Committee on Housing

The Honorable Chris Lee, Chair
Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts

FROM: Alice L. Lee
Council Chair 

SUBJECT: **HEARING OF MARCH 19, 2026; TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1738, HD2, RELATING TO LAND USE DECISION-MAKING**

I support this measure to authorize counties to amend district boundaries involving land areas of greater than 15 but no more than 25 acres for certain types of housing projects.

The Maui County Council has not had the opportunity to take a formal position on this measure. Therefore, I am providing this testimony in my capacity as an individual member of the Maui County Council.

I support this measure for the following reasons:

1. Allowing counties to amend district boundaries for certain housing projects would streamline the process.
2. Streamlining the process for these residential, agricultural workforce, long-term rental, housing projects and workforce fee simple ownership projects will likely result in faster processing times and decreased housing costs.
3. Removing the need for Land Use Commission review of these boundary amendments will relieve some of the burden on that agency, likely resulting in faster processing times and reduced expenses for other projects as well.

Thank you for your consideration.



OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

‘Ōlelo Hō‘ike ‘Aha Kau Kānāwai

TESTIMONY IN COMMENT OF HOUSE BILL 1738 HD2

RELATING TO LAND USE DECISION MAKING

Ke Kōmike ‘Aha Kenekoa o ka Wai, ‘Āina, a me ka Mo‘omeheu a me nā Hana No‘eau
(Senate Committee on Water, Land, and Culture and the Arts) Ke Kōmike ‘Aha Kenekoa o

ke Ikehu, a me ka Pilina O Nā Aupuni

(Senate Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs)

Ke Kōmike ‘Aha Kenekoa o ke Kuleana Hale Noho

(Senate Committee on Housing)

Ke Kapitala ‘o Hawai‘i

(Hawai‘i State Capitol)

Malakai 19, 2026

3:01pm

Lumi 224

Aloha e Chairs Lee, Wakai, Chang, Vice Chair Inouye, Chang, and Hashimoto, and Members of the Committees:

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **COMMENTS ON HB1738 HD2.**

OHA appreciates the intent of this measure to facilitate the production of housing, including affordable and workforce housing, by authorizing counties to process certain district boundary amendments for projects between fifteen and twenty-five acres. However, OHA notes that the Land Use Commission (LUC) has a proven track record of processing affordable housing projects on the expedited 45 day timeline currently mandated by state law. Therefore, the proposed bill is not necessary to expedite affordable housing projects under the LUC’s jurisdiction as the primary state agency entrusted with enforcing land use classifications.

The LUC plays a critical role in ensuring that land use changes reflect not only county-level priorities, but also broader statewide interests, including the protection of agricultural lands, traditional and customary rights, and public trust resources, as mandated by other State Constitution. Unlike other government entities, the LUC is uniquely suited to enforce these rights through its quasi-judicial process for hearing boundary amendment petitions which allows Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners and

others with an interest in the property to participate in hearings. See HRS § 205-4. Hearing procedures ensure full and complete disclosure of relevant facts, data, and cultural ‘ike in a transparent decision making forum. Expanding county authority over larger parcels while well-intentioned may incrementally reduce the consistency and rigor of statewide review ensured by the LUC’s unique quasi-judicial process.

Moreover, OHA recognizes that increasing housing supply does not automatically result in housing affordability. While this measure is limited to projects intended for residential and workforce housing purposes, the statutory categories remain broad. Without clear, enforceable affordability requirements, such as income targeting, long-term affordability restrictions, and anti-speculation protections, there is a risk that projects approved under the proposed county authority may not serve the households most in need.

OHA encourages that prior to making further amendments to the LUC’s existing regulatory powers, the legislature support the examination of these and related issues through a working group, as proposed in HB1604/SB2045 to address agricultural workforce housing. As the Simplifying Permitting for Enhanced Economic Development (SPEED) Task Force recently emphasized, expediting housing development cannot be achieved simply by circumventing regulations.¹

For these reasons, OHA respectfully comments on HB1738 HD2.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

¹ See Final Report of the Permitted Interaction Groups for Chapter 6E/Historic Preservation, Individual Wastewater Systems, and Building Permits, SPEED Task Force, p. 6-7 (Dec. 2025). The SPEED Task Force was established by Act 133 (2025) to identify challenges and measures needed to expedite development permit processes.



**SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS
SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING**

March 19, 2026

3:01 PM

Conference Room 224

In OPPOSITION to HB1738 HD2: RELATING TO LAND-USE DECISIONMAKING

Aloha Chair Lee, Chair Wakai, Chair Chang, Vice Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Hashimoto, and Members of the Committees,

On behalf of our over 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **OPPOSES HB1738 HD2**, which would remove important protections for our natural and cultural resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices, food security, and other public interests in large-scale land use changes, with negligible benefit to affordable housing construction timelines.

The Land Use Commission (LUC) has long administered a critical, comprehensive process to identify and mitigate impacts to natural and cultural resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, present and potential future agricultural production, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, agricultural, and urban lands (otherwise known as “district boundary amendments,” or DBAs). These interests are not necessarily considered, much less accounted for in county land use planning and decisionmaking, nor do the counties examine these interests using the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC’s unique district boundary amendment process. **The LUC’s “contested case” process for district boundary amendments is especially vital: this “court-like” process ensures that data and other information from experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are formally accepted, cross examined, and explicitly incorporated via protective conditions in its district boundary amendment approvals.** Through its decades of work, the LUC has now garnered substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public’s interests in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected via its contested case process in a reasonable and efficient manner.

By preventing the LUC from participating in district boundary amendment changes involving up to 25 acres of land, this measure would turn a blind eye to a broad range of public interests potentially affected by large scale land use proposals, and that the LUC would otherwise be able to protect pursuant to its statutory mission.

The Sierra Club appreciates the apparent intent of this measure to promote the production of affordable housing. **However, the Sierra Club notes that the LUC is not the apparent barrier to housing production it is often purported to be.** The LUC is already required to approve or deny completed district boundary amendment applications within a year of receipt; for Chapter 201H “affordable housing” project, this deadline is shortened to 45 days. **According to LUC staff, throughout the 2010s, all major 201H affordable housing projects were approved by the LUC within the 45 day timeline.**



Notably, by having county planning departments solely shoulder the responsibility of balancing the various cultural, environmental, food security, housing, job production, and other interests and rights of the public in large-scale and complex development proposals involving up to 25 acres of land, **this measure may only inhibit their capacity to process other permits and applications (such as for accessory dwelling units, new or retrofitted infrastructure, increased density for existing housing structures, variances, smaller land use changes, etc.) that may be critical to addressing our multi-faceted housing crisis.**

If affordable housing development is a concern, Sierra Club encourages the Committee to explore the potential expansion of the LUC's enforcement authority. Since 1980, more than 25% of all the housing authorized by the LUC has not yet been built, much of which was proposed to be affordable and workforce housing. On O'ahu alone, tens of thousands of units approved by the LUC have not been constructed; this includes Ho'opili (DR Horton), Koa Ridge (Castle & Cooke), Gentry Waiawa (now owned by Kamehameha Schools), and Royal Kunia Phase II. Providing the LUC with reasonably enhanced enforcement authority will help to encourage developer-follow-through on commitments made during the district boundary amendment process, including with regards to the production of affordable housing units. Possible statutory language to accomplish this could read as follows:

"§205- Penalty. (a) Any petitioner for an amendment to a district boundary that:

(1) Violates; or

(2) Neglects, fails to conform to, or comply with this chapter or any lawful order of the land use commission may be subject to a civil penalty not to exceed \$50,000 per day that the violation, neglect, or failure occurs, or reversion pursuant to section 205-4(g), but not both. The civil penalty shall be assessed by the land use commission after a hearing in accordance with chapter 91.

(b) Upon written application filed within fifteen days after service of an order imposing a civil penalty pursuant



SIERRA CLUB

OF HAWAI'I

to this section, the land use commission may remit or mitigate the penalty upon terms that it deems proper.

(c) If any civil penalty imposed pursuant to this section is not paid within a time period as the land use commission may direct, the attorney general shall institute a civil action for recovery of the civil penalty in circuit court."

For the reasons described above, the Sierra Club respectfully urges the Committee to **HOLD** this measure. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

March 19, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, CULTURE AND THE ARTS
SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

TESTIMONY ON HB 1738, HD2
RELATING TO LAND USE DECISION MAKING

Conference Room 224 & Videoconference
3:01 PM

Aloha Chairs Lee, Wakai, and Chang, Vice-Chairs Inouye and Hashimoto, and Members of the Committees:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawai'i's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate, and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau respectfully opposes HB 1738, HD2, which authorizes counties to approve district boundary amendments for certain housing projects on agricultural lands between fifteen and twenty-five acres without Land Use Commission (LUC) review.

We recognize and appreciate the amendments made by the Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs Committee. In particular, narrowing eligibility to lands with lower soil productivity classifications (D, E, and U) and limiting projects to affordable and workforce housing are meaningful improvements.

HFB also acknowledges the intent to streamline housing approvals and address Hawai'i's housing challenges. We support agricultural workforce housing and solutions that help keep farmers and ranchers on the land.

However, our core concerns remain.

First, this measure continues to allow for the permanent conversion of agricultural lands out of the Agricultural District. Once these lands are reclassified, they are effectively lost to agriculture. Even lands with lower soil classifications can and do support viable agricultural operations in Hawai'i, including diversified agriculture, orchards, grazing, and

controlled-environment agriculture. Soil classification alone should not determine long-term agricultural value.

Second, the bill removes an important layer of statewide oversight by allowing counties to approve certain reclassifications without LUC review. While counties play a critical role in land use planning, the LUC has historically provided a broader, statewide perspective to help balance competing priorities, including the protection of agricultural lands. Reducing that role, even for smaller acreages, sets a precedent for incremental erosion of the Agricultural District.

Although the increase from 15 to 25 acres may seem incremental, in Hawai'i that additional 10 acres can represent a fully viable farming operation. This measure effectively allows entire agricultural parcels to be converted without LUC review, and over time, repeated use of this authority could lead to the steady loss of valuable agricultural lands.

Third, similar to concerns raised in other measures this session, converting agricultural lands for residential use, even in limited cases, can create new urban-agricultural boundaries. This often leads to increased conflicts between residential neighbors and nearby farming operations. While Hawai'i's Right to Farm law provides important protections, those protections are most effective when agriculture remains the primary and expected use of the surrounding area.

Finally, while the bill is limited to projects adjacent to urban districts and identified for residential use in county plans, those designations alone should not override the long-term importance of preserving agricultural lands for food production and agricultural viability.

HFB continues to support housing strategies that prioritize infill, redevelopment, and lands already designated for urban use, rather than the permanent conversion of agricultural lands.

For these reasons, HFB respectfully urges the Legislature to proceed with caution and to maintain strong safeguards to protect Hawai'i's limited agricultural land base.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

March 19, 2026

The Honorable Glenn Wakai, Chair

Senate Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs

The Honorable Stanley Chang, Chair

Senate Committee on Housing

The Honorable Chris Lee, Chair

Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts
State Capitol, Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

RE: House Bill 1738, HD2, Relating to Land-Use Decision Making

HEARING: Thursday, March 19, 2026, at 3:01 p.m.

Aloha Chair Wakai, Chair Chang, Chair Lee, and Members of the Joint Committees:

My name is Lyndsey Garcia, Director of Advocacy, testifying on behalf of the Hawai'i Association of REALTORS® ("HAR"), the voice of real estate in Hawaii and its over 10,000 members. HAR **supports** House Bill 1738, HD2, which authorizes counties to amend district boundaries involving land areas of greater than fifteen but no more than twenty-five acres for purposes of residential housing, agricultural workforce housing, long-term rental housing, or workforce fee simple ownership. Effective 7/1/3000.

The Land Use Commission ("LUC") is responsible for classifying land into urban, rural, agricultural, and conservation districts. The LUC also reviews and decides on land use district boundary amendment petitions involving the reclassification of more than fifteen acres in the agricultural, rural, or urban districts, provided the land is not within the conservation district or designated as important agricultural lands. Parcels smaller than 15 acres may be reclassified by the counties.

At the county level, the process includes multiple opportunities for public input, including presentations to neighborhood boards and public testimony before the county Planning Commission and City Council. Hawaii continues to face a serious housing shortage, including a critical need for both residential and workforce housing. HAR believes that increasing the acreage threshold from 15 to 25 acres for county approval to amend district boundaries for residential and workforce housing projects will still allow for meaningful public participation and oversight while supporting the production of much needed housing in our state.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 10:56:57 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John & Rita Shockley	Testifying for Free Access Coalition	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha!

The Free Access Coalition OPPOSES HB1738.

For the sake of all residents in Hawaii the Land Use Commission cannot be stripped of its power to regulate land use.

We understand the need for expedited housing but we can't do this at the expense of the LUC.

Mahalo for your time.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 11:53:44 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nakoʻolani Warrington	Testifying for Kupuna for the Moopuna	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

STRONG OPPOSITION to HB 1738 HD2

We, Kūpuna for the Mo‘opuna, a hui of Hawaiian Homes Commission Act kūpuna beneficiary farmers from Pana‘ewa, Hawai‘i, **testify in STRONG OPPOSITION to HB 1738 HD2.**

HB 1738 HD2 once again scapegoats the Land Use Commission for housing construction delays, against all data and evidence to the contrary! **Please do not roll back the critical protections the LUC provides for our food security, public trust resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, low-income housing needs, and other public interests that may be impacted by large-scale land use changes – all to save just 45 days on affordable housing construction timelines that often take up the better part of a decade due to other, non-LUC related factors.**

It is just wrong to continue to try to diminish the authority of the Land Use Commission doing their duty on behalf of the People. Unlike existing county land use planning and decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial, “court-like” nature of this LUC “district boundary amendment” process ensures that data and information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders can be formally considered, vetted, and explicitly incorporated in its DBA approvals.

Throughout its decades of work, the LUC has also demonstrated its ability to consistently balance the public’s interests while overseeing such large-scale land use changes, without creating undue delays. **Notably, throughout the 2010s and to the present day, the LUC has consistently met the one-year approval deadline for completed DBA petitions, as well as the 45-day approval deadline for DBAs needed to accommodate HRS § 201H-38 “affordable housing” projects.**

We, the People, need the critical balanced oversight of the Land Use Commission to protect our Hawai‘i now and for the next generations to come.

A Big Fat NO to HB 1738 HD2.



335 Hahani Street #342132 * Kailua, HI 96734 * Phone/Fax (808) 262-0682 E-Mail: htf3000@gmail.com

March 19, 2026

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair
Senator Stanley Chang, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

Senator Stanley Chang, Chair
Senator Troy N. Hashimoto, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee

COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, AND CLULTURE AND THE ARTS

Senator Chris Lee, Chair
Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee

HB 1738 HD2
RELATING TO LAND USE DECISION-MAKING

Hawaii's Thousand Friends, a statewide non-profit water and land use planning organization dedicated to protecting the environment, human health, and cultural and natural resources opposes HB 1738, HD2, which authorizes the counties to amend district boundaries greater than 15 acres but no more than 25 acres for housing,

HB 1738 HD2 not only sets up the potential to remove thousands of acres of land from the agricultural district across the state with unknown consequences but undermines the purpose of the Hawai'i Land Use Law.

The Land Use Law, overseen by the State Land Use Commission, is intended to protect agricultural land from urban encroachment, limit land speculation in urban areas, prevent scattered subdivisions and prevent the premature conversion of agricultural land to residential use.

The Land Use Commissions review of proposals to take land out of the agricultural district allows for the comprehensive review of natural and cultural resources, prevents scattered and premature development, protects important state interests and encourages those uses to which lands are best suited.

In the quest to make more land available for housing we must not forget that we live on islands surrounded by vulnerable natural and cultural resources. Where all proposals must be considered and deliberated in a comprehensive way to ensure that the State's obligation to ... *conserve and protect agricultural lands, promote diversified agricultural and increase agricultural self-sufficiency and assure the availability of agriculturally suitable lands* is upheld. (Hawaii Constitution Article XI Section 2)

It is a misconception that more land designated urban will solve the housing problem. Reclassification of agricultural or preservation land to urban is not a roadblock to developing housing that is affordable.

Currently there are approximately 40,000 to 65,000 housing units on urban designated land promised to be built in various projects around the state that remain **unbuilt**.

In 1993 the LUC redistricted 500+ acres to the urban district for the Oahu Royal Kunia II project which includes 800 single-family units, 1,200 multi-family residences, an agricultural park, industrial area, public roads, and a public-school site. None of which have been built.

In 1993 the Land Use Commission approved urban development at Puukolii, mauka of the Kaanapali Resort, for construction of 1,300 housing units, with 60% of them being affordable. While roadway improvements have been constructed not one unit of housing has been built.

We urge you to hold HB 1736 HD2, which circumvents the States obligation to protect our islands public trusts resources.

March 19, 2026, 3:01 p.m.
Hawaii State Capitol
Conference Room 224 and Videoconference

To: Senate Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs

Sen. Glenn Wakai, Chair
Sen. Stanley Chang, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Housing
Sen. Stanley Chang, Chair
Sen. Troy N. Hashimoto, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts
Sen. Chris Lee, Chair
Sen. Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair

From: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii
Ted Kefalas, Director of Strategic Campaigns

TESTIMONY ON HB1738 HD2 — RELATING TO LAND USE DECISION-MAKING

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs and other Committee Members,

The Grassroot Institute **supports the intent** of [HB1738 HD2](#), but **offers an amendment** that would make it more effective in achieving its goals.

The current version of the bill would give the counties authority to amend district boundaries for land areas up to 25 acres for the purpose of affordable residential housing, agricultural workforce housing, long-term rentals or workforce fee simple ownership.

Limiting the scope of this bill to affordable housing projects severely restricts its applicability and usefulness. While affordable projects already have access to many mechanisms intended to streamline development, those without that designation remain subject to the regulatory delays and permissions that have been shown to drive up the cost of housing in our state.

In order to increase the state’s housing supply and speed up approvals more generally, we suggest that the Committee restore the language found in both former drafts of this bill, which would allow the counties to approve DBAs up to 25 acres for “the purpose of residential housing, agricultural workforce housing, long-term rental, or workforce fee simple ownership.”

Making this change would restore the bill’s intended purpose of encouraging housing growth and streamlining the approval process for new construction.

As Grassroot explained in its 2020 report [“Reform the Hawaii LUC to encourage more housing,”](#) the state Land Use Commission’s authority over district boundary amendments greater than 15 acres often puts a roadblock in the way of new housing projects.¹

The LUC review process for DBAs can be lengthy and complicated. Applicants must navigate multiple rounds of filings as well as possible appeals, which can significantly delay even modest housing developments. These delays and the general uncertainty that accompanies the process add to the cost of construction, which ultimately drives up home prices.

Moreover, LUC review of DBAs often duplicates work done by county councils, zoning boards and planning departments. When a proposed project already complies with county plans and ordinances, redundant state-level review undermines local authority without significantly advancing the public interest.

Expanding the counties’ authority to approve DBAs for new housing would help simplify the approval process while reducing the burden on the LUC.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Ted Kefalas
Director of strategic campaigns
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

¹ Jackson Makanikeoe Grubbe, [“Reform the Hawaii LUC to encourage more housing,”](#) Grassroot Institute of Hawaii, September 2020.



March 18, 2026

Hawai'i State Capitol
415 S Beretania St
Honolulu, HI 96813

Aloha Chair Lee, Chair Wakai, Chair Chang, Vice Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Hashimoto, and members of the Committees,

My name is Jonnetta Peters, Executive Director of Conservation Council for Hawai'i (CCH), a non-profit environmental and conservation organization who serves to protect and save native species and their habitats. CCH is also the Hawai'i affiliate of the National Wildlife Federation. **CCH STRONGLY OPPOSE HB1738 HD2.**

We appreciate this measure's intent to facilitate affordable housing, its provisions once again scapegoat the Land Use Commission (LUC) for housing construction delays, against all data and evidence to the contrary. **Please do not roll back the critical protections the LUC provides for our food security, public trust resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, low-income housing needs, and other public interests that may be impacted by large-scale land use changes – all to save just 45 days on affordable housing construction timelines that often take up the better part of a decade due to other, non-LUC related factors.**

The LUC has long administered a critical, comprehensive process to identify and mitigate impacts to natural and cultural resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the large-scale reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use planning and decision making, the quasi-judicial, "court-like" nature of this LUC "district boundary amendment" (DBA) process ensures that data and information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders can be formally considered, vetted, and explicitly incorporated in its DBA approvals.

Throughout its decades of work, the LUC has also demonstrated its ability to consistently balance the public's interests while overseeing such large-scale land use changes, without creating undue delays. **Notably, throughout the 2010s and to the present day, the LUC has consistently met the one-year approval deadline for completed DBA petitions, as well as the 45-day approval deadline for DBAs needed to accommodate HRS § 201H-38 "affordable housing" projects.**

By limiting the LUC's jurisdiction to DBAs involving more than 25 acres, this bill will needlessly limit a critical land use oversight mechanism that consistently and efficiently safeguards the public trust, Native Hawaiian rights, and other public interests in large land use changes - for marginal to no benefit to housing development. Please do not support this giveaway to developer profit margins at the expense of our local communities.

Given that the LUC has already approved tens of thousands of housing units that remain undeveloped, I encourage the Committees to instead explore providing the LUC with enforcement tools, such as civil penalties, that could incentivize developer follow-through on their housing construction commitments.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.



Jonnetta Peters
Executive Director

Telephone/Fax: 224.338-6511 | email: info@conservehi.org

web: www.conservehawaii.org | P.O. Box 2923, Honolulu, HI 96802

President: Bret Nainoa Mossman | Vice President: Les Welsh | Secretary: Colleen Heyer

Treasurer: Mashuri Waite, PhD |

**Directors: Erica Amundson, Puanani Anderson-Fung, Maka'ala Ka'auomoana, Steven Lee Montgomery, PhD,
Emily Sarasa |**

Executive Director: Jonnetta "Jonee" Peters Operations and Events Manager: Leah Kocher

National Wildlife Federation Region 12 Director: Rachel Sprague

National Wildlife Federation Pacific Region Associate Director: Emily Martin

Kō Hawai'i leo no nā holoholona lōhiu – Hawai'i's voice for wildlife | State Affiliate of the National Wildlife Federation



MAUI

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

VOICE OF BUSINESS

**HEARING BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY & INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS,
COMMITTEE ON HOUSING, AND THE COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND, CULTURE & THE ARTS
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, SENATE CONFERENCE ROOM 224
THURSDAY, MARCH 19, 2026 AT 3:01 P.M.**

To The Honorable Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair
The Honorable Senator Stanley Chang, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Energy & Intergovernmental Affairs

To The Honorable Senator Stanley Chang, Chair
The Honorable Senator Troy N. Hashimoto, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Housing

To The Honorable Senator Chris Lee, Chair
The Honorable Senator Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Water, Land, Culture & The Arts

SUPPORT HB1738 HD2 RELATING TO LAND USE DECISION-MAKING

The Maui Chamber of Commerce supports HB1738, which authorizes counties to amend district boundaries for parcels up to 25 acres to facilitate residential housing, agricultural workforce housing, long-term rental, or workforce fee simple ownership. With housing being one of our top priorities, we recognize that efficient land use decision-making is essential to addressing Hawai'i's ongoing housing crisis, especially for workforce and affordable housing needs.

Allowing counties greater authority to reclassify smaller parcels for housing purposes represents a meaningful step toward reducing regulatory barriers that often delay or discourage much-needed housing development. By empowering the counties to respond more nimbly to community needs, this measure aligns with best practices that recommend devolving certain land use decisions to the level of government closest to the impacted communities. This approach can expedite the delivery of housing, help stabilize rents, and support local economic resilience.

We also note that the bill's focus on residential, affordable, workforce, and agricultural workforce housing is well targeted, as these categories are among the most underserved in the current market. Streamlining the process for projects of limited acreage helps ensure that infill, modular, and innovative housing solutions are not unduly burdened by lengthy state-level reviews.

To maximize the bill's positive impact, we respectfully recommend that counties be provided with clear guidance and technical assistance to implement these new authorities effectively and equitably. Mahalo for the opportunity to share our support of HB1738 HD2.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.

Officers

Kaipo Kekona
State President

Christian Zuckerman
Vice-President

Maureen Datta
Secretary

Reba Lopez
Treasurer

Chapter Presidents

Kelii Gannet
Kohala, Hawai'i

East Hawai'i

Puna, Hawai'i

Ka'ū, Hawai'i

Maureen Datta
Kona, Hawai'i

Gina Lind
Hāna, Maui

Mason Scharer
Haleakalā, Maui

Kaiea Medeiros
Mauna Kahālāwai,
Maui

Kaipo Kekona
Lahaina, Maui

Kilia Avelino-Purdy
Moloka'i

Negus Manna
Lāna'i

India Clark
North Shore, O'ahu

Christian Zuckerman
Wai'anae, O'ahu

Rachel LaDrig
Waimānalo, O'ahu

Vincent Kimura
Honolulu, O'ahu

Natalie Urminska
Kaua'i



LATE

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Committee Members,

The Hawai'i Farmers Union is a 501(c)(5) agricultural advocacy nonprofit representing a network of over 2,500 family farmers and their supporters across the Hawaiian Islands. **HFU supports the intent of HB1738** but urges amendments to ensure the bill does not inadvertently upzone productive agricultural land.

HB1738 establishes four cumulative conditions for county-level boundary amendments on 15–25 acre parcels without Land Use Commission review: urban adjacency, exclusion of conservation and Important Agricultural Lands, a Land Study Bureau (LSB) productivity rating of D, E, or U, and identification for residential use in a recent county general plan. HFU acknowledges this layered approach but is concerned that the third condition, the LSB rating, is an unreliable gatekeeper.

The LSB system was developed in the 1960s and reflects plantation-era cropping patterns, not modern agricultural potential. In example, the Mililani Agricultural Park and an adjacent parcel share identical soil types. Both were rated A when growing irrigated sugarcane. When the last LSB survey was done in 1972, the ag park retained its A rating while the neighboring parcel, then growing unirrigated pineapple, was downgraded to D. The soils did not change; the crop did. The D-rated parcel is now a solar farm, and similar lands would be eligible for reclassification from agricultural to residential use under this bill.

Both HB1012 and SB1331 in 2025 sought to modernize the LSB system but did not advance. Building new reclassification authority on a system the Legislature has identified as needing reform invites outcomes like this one.

HB1738 HD2 authorizes reclassification for affordable residential housing, agricultural workforce housing, long-term rental housing, and workforce fee simple ownership. Three of these four categories require no connection to agriculture. If the goal is housing our agricultural workforce, the bill should be tailored to that purpose.

Proposed Amendments

1. **Replacing or supplementing the LSB rating in subsection (d)(3)** with current USDA-NRCS soil survey data (SSURGO) or a site-specific agronomic assessment confirming the parcel is not reasonably suited for agricultural production under current conditions.
2. **Requiring an agricultural productivity finding** by the county authority, supported by current data and/or OPSD/DAB consultation, before approving any boundary amendment under subsection (d).

Updating our land-use decision-making to reflect 2026 agricultural realities is the only way to ensure economic viability for our producers and support a robust agricultural sector.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Hunter Heavilin
Advocacy Director
Hawai'i Farmers Union

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 10:56:56 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Danielle Spitz	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lee, Chair Wakai, Chair Chang, Vice Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Hashimoto, and members of the Committees:

I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB1738 HD2.

While I fully appreciate this measure’s intent to facilitate affordable housing, its provisions once again scapegoat the Land Use Commission (LUC) for housing construction delays, against all data and evidence to the contrary. **Please do not roll back the critical protections the LUC provides for our food security, public trust resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, low-income housing needs, and other public interests that may be impacted by large-scale land use changes – all to save just 45 days on affordable housing construction timelines that often take up the better part of a decade due to other, non-LUC related factors.**

The LUC has long administered a critical, comprehensive process to identify and mitigate impacts to natural and cultural resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the large-scale reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use planning and decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial, “court-like” nature of this LUC “district boundary amendment” (DBA) process ensures that data and information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders can be formally considered, vetted, and explicitly incorporated in its DBA approvals.

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By limiting the LUC’s jurisdiction to DBAs involving more than 25 acres, this bill will needlessly limit a critical land use oversight mechanism that consistently and efficiently safeguards the public trust, Native Hawaiian rights, and other public interests in large land use changes - for marginal to no benefit to housing development. Please do not support this giveaway to developer profit margins at the expense of our local communities.

Given that the LUC has already approved tens of thousands of housing units that remain undeveloped, I encourage the Committees to instead explore providing the LUC with enforcement tools, such as civil penalties, that could incentivize developer follow-through on their housing construction commitments.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Danielle A Spitz

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 11:42:51 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noelle Lindenmann	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lee, Chair Wakai, Chair Chang, Vice Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Hashimoto, and members of the Committees,

I am submitting testimony in strong opposition to HB1738 HD2.

While I fully appreciate this measure’s intent to facilitate affordable housing, its provisions once again scapegoat the Land Use Commission (LUC) for housing construction delays, against all data and evidence to the contrary. Please do not roll back the critical protections the LUC provides for our food security, public trust resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, low-income housing needs, and other public interests that may be impacted by large-scale land use changes – all to save just 45 days on affordable housing construction timelines that often take up the better part of a decade due to other, non-LUC related factors.

The LUC has long administered a critical, comprehensive process to identify and mitigate impacts to natural and cultural resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the large-scale reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use planning and decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial, “court-like” nature of this LUC “district boundary amendment” (DBA) process ensures that data and information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders can be formally considered, vetted, and explicitly incorporated in its DBA approvals.

Throughout its decades of work, the LUC has also demonstrated its ability to consistently balance the public’s interests while overseeing such large-scale land use changes, without creating undue delays. Notably, throughout the 2010s and to the present day, the LUC has consistently met the one-year approval deadline for completed DBA petitions, as well as the 45-day approval deadline for DBAs needed to accommodate HRS § 201H-38 “affordable housing” projects.

By limiting the LUC’s jurisdiction to DBAs involving more than 25 acres, this bill will needlessly limit a critical land use oversight mechanism that consistently and efficiently safeguards the public trust, Native Hawaiian rights, and other public interests in large land use changes - for marginal to no benefit to housing development. Please do not support this giveaway to developer profit margins at the expense of our local communities.

Given that the LUC has already approved tens of thousands of housing units that remain undeveloped, I encourage the Committees to instead explore providing the LUC with enforcement tools, such as civil penalties, that could incentivize developer follow-through on their housing construction commitments.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to share testimony.

Sincerely,
Noelle Lindenmann, Kailua-Kona

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 11:43:45 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kealii Pang, Ph.D.	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lee, Chair Wakai, Chair Chang, Vice Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Hashimoto, and Members of the Committees,

My name is Keali‘i Pang, Ph.D. I am a resident of Kaimukī, a lifetime member of the Hawaiian Civic Club, and have served as an environmentalist in Hawai‘i for the last 35 years. I am also a retired federal biologist and currently serve as a State Commissioner. I am writing in **STRONG OPPOSITION** to HB1738 HD2.

My opposition is rooted in decades of professional observation of Hawai‘i's unique ecosystems and our state's complex regulatory landscape. This measure once again scapegoats the Land Use Commission (LUC) for housing construction delays — against all data and evidence to the contrary — in order to allow developers to sidestep the critical protections the LUC provides for our food security, public trust resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, and climate resilience.

As a retired federal biologist, I have seen firsthand how local-level oversight can be overwhelmed by the technical complexities of large-scale land use changes. The LUC's quasi-judicial process is not a bottleneck — it is a necessary filter that ensures data from technical experts and cultural practitioners is formally vetted and meaningfully incorporated into decisions that can have lasting, if not irreversible, consequences for our wai and our ‘āina.

By limiting the LUC's jurisdiction to district boundary amendments involving more than 25 acres, HB1738 HD2 removes the most rigorous layer of protection for parcels that remain large enough to significantly impact our natural and cultural resources. Throughout my 35 years of environmental work in these islands, I have seen "streamlining" become a euphemism for bypassing the very checks and balances that protect Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, low-income housing needs, and the broader public interest.

The LUC has consistently met its statutory deadlines — including the 45-day approval window for affordable housing projects under HRS § 201H-38 — throughout the 2010s and to the present day. There is no data-driven justification for eroding its oversight of 15- to 25-acre parcels. Housing construction timelines that often span the better part of a decade are driven by financing, infrastructure, and developer follow-through — not the LUC. Given that the Commission has already approved tens of thousands of housing units that remain unbuilt, I

encourage the Committees to instead explore providing the LUC with civil penalties and other enforcement tools to hold developers accountable for their commitments.

This bill is a giveaway to developer profit margins at the expense of the public trust. As a current State Commissioner and a devoted member of the Hawaiian Civic Club, I urge you to uphold the integrity of the Land Use Commission and **HOLD** HB1738 HD2.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Me ka 'oia'i'o,

Keali'i Pang, Ph.D.

Kaimukī, O'ahu

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 12:47:29 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shay Chan Hodges	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB1738 HD2.

While I fully appreciate this measure’s intent to facilitate affordable housing, its provisions once again scapegoat the Land Use Commission (LUC) for housing construction delays, against all data and evidence to the contrary. **Please do not roll back the critical protections the LUC provides for our food security, public trust resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, low-income housing needs, and other public interests that may be impacted by large-scale land use changes – all to save just 45 days on affordable housing construction timelines that often take up the better part of a decade due to other, non-LUC related factors.**

The LUC has long administered a critical, comprehensive process to identify and mitigate impacts to natural and cultural resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the large-scale reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use planning and decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial, “court-like” nature of this LUC “district boundary amendment” (DBA) process ensures that data and information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders can be formally considered, vetted, and explicitly incorporated in its DBA approvals.

Throughout its decades of work, the LUC has also demonstrated its ability to consistently balance the public’s interests while overseeing such large-scale land use changes, without creating undue delays. **Notably, throughout the 2010s and to the present day, the LUC has consistently met the one-year approval deadline for completed DBA petitions, as well as the 45-day approval deadline for DBAs needed to accommodate HRS § 201H-38 “affordable housing” projects.**

By limiting the LUC’s jurisdiction to DBAs involving more than 25 acres, this bill will needlessly limit a critical land use oversight mechanism that consistently and efficiently safeguards the public trust, Native Hawaiian rights, and other public interests in large land use changes - for marginal to no benefit to housing development. Please do not support this giveaway to developer profit margins at the expense of our local communities.

Given that the LUC has already approved tens of thousands of housing units that remain undeveloped, I encourage the Committees to instead explore providing the LUC with

enforcement tools, such as civil penalties, that could incentivize developer follow-through on their housing construction commitments.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 1:10:20 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Von Kaanaana	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I urge the committee to strongly OPPOSE HB1783 SD2.

This bill threatens the LUC's longstanding protection of our food and water security, cultural and environmental integrity, affordable housing, and climate resilience - for housing construction delays, despite all data and other evidence to the contrary.

The housing committee has a greater outright obligation to holding empty multi-homeowners using our housing economy to their benefit without providing to the tax-paying residents of the state of Hawai'i BEFORE even considering re-zoning an area without significant input from the Land-Use Commission.

I would like for the committee to consider the bigger picture. Hawai'i is NOT infinite in land mass. The capitalistic model requires that nuance of that really all this boils down to. If you over develop Hawai'i its value goes down long term. Protect your investment and keep it pristine by intelligently expanding with safe guards. Otherwise its a trash heap waiting to happen.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 1:38:35 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Glenn Choy	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose this bill. Thank you.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 1:48:24 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anne Lorenzo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lee, Chair Wakai, Chair Chang, Vice Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Hashimoto, and members of the Committees,

My name is Anne M. Lorenzo and I **STRONGLY OPPOSE** HB1738 HD2.

While I fully appreciate this measure’s intent to facilitate affordable housing, its provisions once again scapegoat the Land Use Commission (LUC) for housing construction delays, against all data and evidence to the contrary. **Please do not roll back the critical protections the LUC provides for our food security, public trust resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, low-income housing needs, and other public interests that may be impacted by large-scale land use changes – all to save just 45 days on affordable housing construction timelines that often take up the better part of a decade due to other, non-LUC related factors.**

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By limiting the LUC’s jurisdiction to DBAs involving more than 25 acres, this bill will needlessly limit a critical land use oversight mechanism that consistently and efficiently safeguards the public trust, Native Hawaiian rights, and other public interests in large land use changes - for marginal to no benefit to housing development. Please do not support this giveaway to developer profit margins at the expense of our local communities.

Given that the LUC has already approved tens of thousands of housing units that remain undeveloped, I encourage the Committees to instead explore providing the LUC with enforcement tools, such as civil penalties, that could incentivize developer follow-through on their housing construction commitments.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Anne M. Lorenzo

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 3:02:40 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sherry Pollack	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose this measure that would limit a critical land use oversight mechanism that consistently and efficiently safeguards the public trust, Native Hawaiian rights, and the public interest in large land use changes - for little to no benefit to housing development. Please do not pass this shameful giveaway to developer profit margins at the expense of our local communities.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 3:15:47 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
DIANE CHOY FUJIMURA	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

/Cmd+My name is Diane Choy Fujimura and I **STRONGLY OPPOSE** HB1738 HD2.

While I fully appreciate this measure’s intent to facilitate affordable housing, its provisions once again scapegoat the Land Use Commission (LUC) for housing construction delays, against all data and evidence to the contrary. **Please do not roll back the critical protections the LUC provides for our food security, public trust resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, low-income housing needs, and other public interests that may be impacted by large-scale land use changes – all to save just 45 days on affordable housing construction timelines that often take up the better part of a decade due to other, non-LUC related factors.**

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enforcement tools, such as civil penalties, that could incentivize developer follow-through on their housing construction commitments.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Diane Choy Fujimura

V

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 3:16:29 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John Wassell	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lee, Chair Wakai, Chair Chang, Vice Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Hashimoto, and members of the Committees,

My name is John Wassell and I **STRONGLY OPPOSE** HB1738 HD2.

While I fully appreciate this measure’s intent to facilitate affordable housing, its provisions once again scapegoat the Land Use Commission (LUC) for housing construction delays, against all data and evidence to the contrary. **Please do not roll back the critical protections the LUC provides for our food security, public trust resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, low-income housing needs, and other public interests that may be impacted by large-scale land use changes – all to save just 45 days on affordable housing construction timelines that often take up the better part of a decade due to other, non-LUC related factors.**

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Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
John Wassell

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 3:29:51 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Earl Kim	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lee, Chair Wakai, Chair Chang, Vice Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Hashimoto, and members of the Committees,

My name is Earl J. Kim and I **STRONGLY OPPOSE** HB1738 HD2.

While I fully appreciate this measure’s intent to facilitate affordable housing, its provisions once again scapegoat the Land Use Commission (LUC) for housing construction delays, against all data and evidence to the contrary. **Please do not roll back the critical protections the LUC provides for our food security, public trust resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, low-income housing needs, and other public interests that may be impacted by large-scale land use changes – all to save just 45 days on affordable housing construction timelines that often take up the better part of a decade due to other, non-LUC related factors.**

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Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Earl J. Kim

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 3:46:05 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patricia Blair	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly oppose this dumb bill

COUNTY COUNCIL

Mel Rapozo, Chair
KipuKai Kualii, Vice Chair
Addison Bulosan
Bernard P. Carvalho, Jr.
Felicia Cowden
Fern Holland
Arryl Kaneshiro



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY CLERK

Jade K. Fountain-Tanigawa, County Clerk
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

March 17, 2026

**TESTIMONY OF KIPUKAI KUALII
COUNCIL VICE CHAIR, KAUAI COUNTY COUNCIL**

ON

HB 1738, HD 2, RELATING TO LAND USE DECISION-MAKING

Senate Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs

Senate Committee on Housing

Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts

Thursday, March 19, 2026

3:01 p.m.

Conference Room 224

Via Videoconference

Dear Chair Wakai, Chair Chang, Chair Lee, and Members of the Committees:

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in SUPPORT of HB 1738, HD 2, Relating to Land Use Decision-Making. My testimony is submitted in my individual capacity as a member of the Kaua'i County Council.

I enthusiastically support HB 1738, HD 2, which provides the authority for counties to amend State land use boundaries up to twenty-five (25) acres for the purposes of residential housing, agricultural workforce housing, long-term rental, or workforce fee simple ownership. Due to Hawai'i's serious need to produce housing urgently for residents, it is appropriate to increase the acreage threshold from fifteen (15) to twenty-five (25) acres for county approval to amend district boundaries. Doing so will continue to encourage robust and meaningful opportunities for public input, participation, and oversight while expediting the process for housing developments across the islands.

Mahalo for your commitment and thank you again for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 1738, HD 2. 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,

KIPUKAI KUALII

Council Vice Chair, Kaua'i County Council

RM:sf

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 4:12:10 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michele Nihipali	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lee, Chair Wakai, Chair Chang, Vice Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Hashimoto, and members of the Committees,

My name is Michele Nihipali and I **STRONGLY OPPOSE** HB1738 HD2.

While I fully appreciate this measure’s intent to facilitate affordable housing, its provisions once again scapegoat the Land Use Commission (LUC) for housing construction delays, against all data and evidence to the contrary. **Please do not roll back the critical protections the LUC provides for our food security, public trust resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, low-income housing needs, and other public interests that may be impacted by large-scale land use changes – all to save just 45 days on affordable housing construction timelines that often take up the better part of a decade due to other, non-LUC related factors.**

The LUC has long administered a critical, comprehensive process to identify and mitigate impacts to natural and cultural resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the large-scale reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use planning and decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial, “court-like” nature of this LUC “district boundary amendment” (DBA) process ensures that data and information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders can be formally considered, vetted, and explicitly incorporated in its DBA approvals.

Throughout its decades of work, the LUC has also demonstrated its ability to consistently balance the public’s interests while overseeing such large-scale land use changes, without creating undue delays. **Notably, throughout the 2010s and to the present day, the LUC has consistently met the one-year approval deadline for completed DBA petitions, as well as the 45-day approval deadline for DBAs needed to accommodate HRS § 201H-38 “affordable housing” projects.**

By limiting the LUC’s jurisdiction to DBAs involving more than 25 acres, this bill will needlessly limit a critical land use oversight mechanism that consistently and efficiently safeguards the public trust, Native Hawaiian rights, and other public interests in large land use changes - for marginal to no benefit to housing development. Please do not support this giveaway to developer profit margins at the expense of our local communities.

Given that the LUC has already approved tens of thousands of housing units that remain undeveloped, I encourage the Committees to instead explore providing the LUC with enforcement tools, such as civil penalties, that could incentivize developer follow-through on their housing construction commitments.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Michele Nihipali

54-074 A Kam Hwy.

Hauula, HI 96717

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 6:40:30 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Casey Takayama	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lee, Chair Wakai, Chair Chang, Vice Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Hashimoto, and members of the Committees,

My name is Casey Takayama and I **STRONGLY OPPOSE** HB1738 HD2.

While I fully appreciate this measure’s intent to facilitate affordable housing, its provisions once again scapegoat the Land Use Commission (LUC) for housing construction delays, against all data and evidence to the contrary. **Please do not roll back the critical protections the LUC provides for our food security, public trust resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, low-income housing needs, and other public interests that may be impacted by large-scale land use changes – all to save just 45 days on affordable housing construction timelines that often take up the better part of a decade due to other, non-LUC related factors.**

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Given that the LUC has already approved tens of thousands of housing units that remain undeveloped, I encourage the Committees to instead explore providing the LUC with enforcement tools, such as civil penalties, that could incentivize developer follow-through on their housing construction commitments.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Casey Takayama

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 7:15:02 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cheryl Rzonca	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB1738

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/17/2026 11:28:11 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cory Harden	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha legislators,

Please maintain LUC oversight to protect native Hawaiian rights, food security, and public interests. Counties don't have the resources LUC has to conduct in-depth review of reclassifications. Instead of supporting this bill, please find out why tens of thousands of housing units that were approved by LUC have not been never built.

mahalo,
Cory Harden, Hilo

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 8:13:18 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bo Breda	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lee, Chair Wakai, Chair Chang, Vice Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Hashimoto, and members of the Committees,

My name is Bo Breda and I **STRONGLY OPPOSE** HB1738 HD2.

While I fully appreciate this measure’s intent to facilitate affordable housing, its provisions once again scapegoat the Land Use Commission (LUC) for housing construction delays, against all data and evidence to the contrary. **Please do not roll back the critical protections the LUC provides for our food security, public trust resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, low-income housing needs, and other public interests that may be impacted by large-scale land use changes – all to save just 45 days on affordable housing construction timelines that often take up the better part of a decade due to other, non-LUC related factors.**

The LUC has long administered a critical, comprehensive process to identify and mitigate impacts to natural and cultural resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the large-scale reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use planning and decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial, “court-like” nature of this LUC “district boundary amendment” (DBA) process ensures that data and information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders can be formally considered, vetted, and explicitly incorporated in its DBA approvals.

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By limiting the LUC’s jurisdiction to DBAs involving more than 25 acres, this bill will needlessly limit a critical land use oversight mechanism that consistently and efficiently safeguards the public trust, Native Hawaiian rights, and other public interests in large land use changes - for marginal to no benefit to housing development. Please do not support this giveaway to developer profit margins at the expense of our local communities.

Given that the LUC has already approved tens of thousands of housing units that remain undeveloped, I encourage the Committees to instead explore providing the LUC with enforcement tools, such as civil penalties, that could incentivize developer follow-through on their housing construction commitments.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Bo Breda

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 8:17:15 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Peter Wilson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lee, Chair Wakai, Chair Chang, Vice Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Hashimoto, and members of the Committees,

My name is Peter Wilson and I **STRONGLY OPPOSE** HB1738 HD2.

While I fully appreciate this measure’s intent to facilitate affordable housing, its provisions once again scapegoat the Land Use Commission (LUC) for housing construction delays, against all data and evidence to the contrary. **Please do not roll back the critical protections the LUC provides for our food security, public trust resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, low-income housing needs, and other public interests that may be impacted by large-scale land use changes – all to save just 45 days on affordable housing construction timelines that often take up the better part of a decade due to other, non-LUC related factors.**

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By limiting the LUC’s jurisdiction to DBAs involving more than 25 acres, this bill will needlessly limit a critical land use oversight mechanism that consistently and efficiently safeguards the public trust, Native Hawaiian rights, and other public interests in large land use changes - for marginal to no benefit to housing development. Please do not support this giveaway to developer profit margins at the expense of our local communities.

Given that the LUC has already approved tens of thousands of housing units that remain undeveloped, I encourage the Committees to instead explore providing the LUC with enforcement tools, such as civil penalties, that could incentivize developer follow-through on their housing construction commitments.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Peter Wilson

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 8:38:50 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lance Nash	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill would reduce uncertainty for builders and communities alike. Predictable timelines are essential if we want more housing to actually get built.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 8:39:20 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Raymond McConnell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I urge you to support HB1738 to expedite the housing process. The current approval process delays construction, causing unnecessary waiting periods. We need to prioritize building more homes quickly to meet increasing demand.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 8:40:49 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Randy Stevens	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii needs more homes, not more red tape. Reforming the LUC threshold is a clear way to reduce unnecessary barriers. This process often duplicates environmental and infrastructure reviews already completed by counties. Please pass house bill 1738 to streamline the LUC in the future.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 8:41:16 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joe Schneckenburger	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I would like to submit testimony in support of hb1738. Housing projects that follow county plans shouldn't be stalled at the LUC. This reform is long overdue. Mahalo.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 8:41:48 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rosemary Alles	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha. Counties already know where housing makes sense. That's one of the main reasons why I support HB1738. Please do what you can to make sure this bill passes the legislature. Mahalo!

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 8:42:44 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Scott Moon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha. You have the power to ease the financial strain on your constituents. We need to start cutting more red tape if we hope to be able to house local residents. That's why I support reforming the LUC and giving counties more authority because they are closest to the communities affected by these projects. Local decision-making leads to better outcomes.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 8:43:11 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

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

Comments:

The current 15-acre threshold does not reflect modern housing needs or land use realities. Updating it to 25 acres for limited, housing-focused purposes makes sense.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 8:46:51 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ellen Desruisseaux	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support reforming the LUC because housing projects that fit within the community plans should not be stalled for years at the state level. Counties are better positioned to evaluate these projects efficiently.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 8:47:29 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Denise Boisvert	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I STRONGLY OPPOSE this bill.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 8:49:27 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kim Jorgensen	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I STRONGLY OPPOSE THIS BILL.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:04:58 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Faith Burns	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please vote in support of HB1738. Please, show you care for the people in Hawaii that need housing, we have lots of land that can be built upon for urban zoning and zoning for houses! Mahalo!!

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:05:53 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
James Reid	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

H.B. 1738 empowers counties to act on modestly sized housing projects without undermining environmental or agricultural protections. That balance is exactly what Hawaii needs.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:06:16 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jennifer M Kamiko	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

H.B. 1738 / S.B. 2007 empowers counties to act on modestly sized housing projects without undermining environmental or agricultural protections. That balance is exactly what Hawaii needs.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:06:33 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Russell Kuwaye	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

County planning departments already review infrastructure, environmental impacts, and community consistency. Requiring a second review by the LUC for slightly larger parcels adds little value. Pass HB1738.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:07:33 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elise Lee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha. Counties already know where housing makes sense. That's one of the main reasons why I support HB1738. Please do what you can to make sure this bill passes the legislature. Mahalo!

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:08:18 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
JERRY JACOBSON	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The current 15-acre threshold does not reflect modern housing needs or land use realities. Updating it to 25 acres for limited, housing-focused purposes makes sense.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:08:53 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Paula Bruno	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The LUC was not intended to function as a second county planning commission. HB1738 restores a more appropriate division of responsibility. By limiting eligibility to non-conservation land and excluding conservation land and Important Agricultural Lands, this bill preserves Hawaii's most critical resources but makes it easier for builders to add homes.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:09:22 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tanya Power	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HB1738 respects the work counties have already done through general plans and community development plans. Projects consistent with those documents should not be derailed at the state level.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:09:52 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tawna Chun	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii needs more homes, not more red tape. Reforming the LUC threshold is a clear way to reduce unnecessary barriers. This process often duplicates environmental and infrastructure reviews already completed by counties. Please pass house bill 1738 to streamline the LUC in the future.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:16:36 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Audrey Lee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha. Counties already know where housing makes sense. That's one of the main reasons why I support HB1738. Please do what you can to make sure this bill passes the legislature. Mahalo!

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:17:44 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anthony Conner	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha. HB1738 just makes sense. If a housing project is next to urban land and already planned for housing, it shouldn't take years to approve. Please support this measure and pass it through the committee.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:18:11 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leila Lee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill is not about sprawl. It is about allowing edge development that is already included in county plans. The criteria in hb1738 will make sure that only appropriate, housing-related projects qualify.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:18:34 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mark James	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HB1738 is a modest but meaningful reform that will help unlock housing projects currently stuck in limbo. Allowing counties to act on these projects reduces delay without sacrificing environmental or other agricultural protections. I have been in mortgage lending in Hawai'i since 1975.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:19:04 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eric Stoddard	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha. I support HB 1738 because it gives counties more common sense authority. If a project already fits county plans, it shouldn't get stuck at the state level. This helps housing without touching conservation or important ag lands. Please pass the bill.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:19:44 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patrick Brannigan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha - HB1738 helps reduce delays without harming conservation or ag lands. That's important to me as a local resident. I urge you to support this bill.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:20:12 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Matthew Murphy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The current process discourages exactly the type of housing projects Hawaii needs more of. HB1738 provides a careful expansion of county authority without weakening land use protections. I support it.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:20:30 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Priscilla Andrade	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha - HB1738 is a small but important fix. These bills don't open the door to sprawl, just smarter housing decisions. We need less red tape and more homes. Mahalo for considering my testimony.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:20:47 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Paul Morse	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB1738 because it addresses a clear bottleneck in Hawaii's land use system. The 15-acre threshold is arbitrary and outdated, and it delays housing projects that already comply with county plans. Allowing counties to approve up to 25 acres under strict criteria is a reasonable and targeted reform.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:21:09 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leslie Lewis	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii needs more homes, not more red tape. Reforming the LUC threshold is a clear way to reduce unnecessary barriers. This process often duplicates environmental and infrastructure reviews already completed by counties. Please pass house bill 1738 to streamline the LUC in the future.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:25:18 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gregory Friel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha. We need to start cutting more red tape if we hope to be able to house local residents. That's why I support reforming the LUC and giving counties more authority because they are closest to the communities affected by these projects. Local decision-making leads to better outcomes.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:26:46 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Abhishek Duggal	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Allowing counties to approve certain boundary amendments up to 25 acres will help address the housing shortage without opening the door to unchecked development. Please vote in favor of hb1738.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:27:09 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mark Edwards	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am submitting my testimony in strong support of HB1738. This is a targeted, reasonable and focused proposal that will hopefully help address our housing crisis. Hawaii needs more common-sense solutions like this.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:28:18 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
William Caron	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the committee,

I am writing in **strong opposition to HB1738**, which would significantly limit the Land Use Commission's oversight of large-scale urbanization proposals. While framed as a solution to housing delays, this bill scapegoats the Commission for problems it did not create—and in doing so, needlessly compromises our future food and water security, cultural integrity, climate resilience, and the very long-term interests this body is charged with protecting.

The Land Use Commission exists for a reason. It serves as a critical check on proposals to convert agricultural and rural lands to urban use. Its review process ensures that decisions with generational consequences—like rezoning 25 acres or more for development—are not made in a vacuum, but with public input, expert analysis, and a full accounting of long-term impacts. Weakening that oversight does not speed up housing production; it simply removes accountability.

This bill threatens our food and water security. When large tracts of agricultural land are converted to urban use without meaningful review, we lose the capacity to feed ourselves. We become more dependent on imported food, more vulnerable to global supply chain disruptions, and more removed from the legacy of local farming that once defined these islands. At the same time, urbanization places new demands on already strained water systems—demands that may outstrip supply, especially as climate change intensifies drought.

It undermines cultural integrity and climate resilience. Land use decisions are cultural decisions. They shape not only what our communities look like, but whose stories, practices, and connections to place endure. Bypassing the Commission's review process erodes the opportunity for cultural stewardship to inform development. It also sidelines critical conversations about climate adaptation—where to build, where not to build, and how to ensure that new development does not place families in harm's way.

Finally, this bill does nothing to address the real barriers to affordable housing. The shortage of affordable homes in Hawai'i is not caused by the Land Use Commission. It is caused by chronic underinvestment in public housing, restrictive financing, rising construction costs, and a lack of political will to prioritize working families over luxury development. HB1738 offers a false solution that distracts from the hard work of actually building homes people can afford—while making it easier to build projects they cannot.

Hawai'i's future depends on decisions made today about how we use our limited land. Those decisions deserve scrutiny, transparency, and a long view. HB1738 would strip away that scrutiny in the name of speed, leaving our communities to bear the consequences for generations.

I urge you to oppose this bill. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:39:45 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Karl Nakamura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

House Bill 1738 reflects the reality that land use planning has evolved significantly since the 15-acre rule started. Counties are best positioned to evaluate projects that fit within their long-term plans and community visions.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:40:52 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicholas Zehr	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The current process discourages exactly the type of housing projects Hawaii needs more of. HB1738 provides a careful expansion of county authority without weakening land use protections. I support it.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:41:34 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mark Monoscalco	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii needs more homes, not more red tape. Reforming the LUC threshold is a clear way to reduce unnecessary barriers. This process often duplicates environmental and infrastructure reviews already completed by counties. Please pass house bill 1738 and senate bill 2007 to streamline the LUC in the future.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:42:04 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Monica Jennings	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I urge lawmakers to support House Bill 1738. This bill is a common-sense reform that will speed up housing approvals while maintaining strong planning standards.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:42:26 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pandurangasayi Nuti	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The LUC should focus on truly statewide land use issues, not routine housing projects already vetted locally. I strongly support this bill as a practical step toward faster, more predictable housing approvals.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:44:39 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nolan Chang	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HB1738 respects the work counties have already done through general plans and community development plans. Projects consistent with those documents should not be derailed at the state level.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:45:31 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alfred Hagen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please vote in support of HB1738. The state land use commission just adds time to the process and we don't have time to wait for more homes. Mahalo for your consideration.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:45:50 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
GREG BROSSIER	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I would like to express my support for HB1738. The 15-acre cutoff feels random and unfair. Updating it with clear rules is the right move. Please pass this bill.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:46:10 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Douglas Askman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a local resident, I support HB1738. The extra state review adds cost and time without real benefit. This bill helps get housing built faster. Please pass it.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:46:36 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rayna Marsh	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

House Bill 1738 reflects the reality that land use planning has evolved significantly since the 15-acre rule started. Counties are best positioned to evaluate projects that fit within their long-term plans and community visions.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:04:06 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gloria Mansfield	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am submitting my testimony in strong support of HB1738. The 15-acre rule is outdated and causes too many delays. Counties know their communities best. Let them do their job so housing can move forward. Mahalo.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:04:25 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Wilbert Costa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I urge lawmakers to support House Bill 1738. This bill is a common-sense reform that will speed up housing approvals while maintaining strong planning standards.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:08:37 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Judith Meyer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

There is no clear reason why a 16-acre project should be treated fundamentally differently from a 14-acre project. HB1738 corrects this arbitrary distinction while keeping important protections in place.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:09:22 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Duane D Santiago	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

House Bill 1738 reflects the reality that land use planning has evolved significantly since the 15-acre rule started. Counties are best positioned to evaluate projects that fit within their long-term plans and community visions.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:10:47 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Charles Lee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HB1738 is a modest but meaningful reform that will help unlock housing projects currently stuck in limbo. Allowing counties to act on these projects reduces delay without sacrificing environmental or agricultural protections.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:11:21 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Vernon Okada	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I would like to submit testimony in support of hb1738. Housing projects that follow county plans shouldn't be stalled at the LUC. This reform is long overdue. Mahalo.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:13:34 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tracie Lutzenhiser	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha. We need to start cutting more red tape if we hope to be able to house local residents. That's why I support reforming the LUC and giving counties more authority because they are closest to the communities affected by these projects. Local decision-making leads to better outcomes. I feel that this is desperately needed. There are far too many local people that cannot afford a home. Allowing counties to control this issue just makes sense. The county knows more about how the people living here and the hardships they face.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:14:40 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aaron Evans	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha - HB1738 helps reduce delays without harming conservation or ag lands. That's important to me as a local resident. I urge you to support this bill.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:15:01 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kevin Kern	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB1738 because it addresses a clear bottleneck in Hawaii's land use system. The 15-acre threshold is arbitrary and outdated, and it delays housing projects that already comply with county plans. Allowing counties to approve up to 25 acres under strict criteria is a reasonable and targeted reform.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:16:06 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Paul Scott	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill would reduce uncertainty for builders and communities alike. Predictable timelines are essential if we want more housing to actually get built.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:17:10 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kathy Kamauu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HB1738 is a modest but meaningful reform that will help unlock housing projects currently stuck in limbo. Allowing counties to act on these projects reduces delay without sacrificing environmental or agricultural protections.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:17:39 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Wendell Hosea	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Land Use Commission review often repeats work done by county agencies and elected councils. That redundancy discourages housing production at a time when Hawaii desperately needs more homes. This bill is a practical fix.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:17:58 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Melissa Rabideau	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii's counties already conduct extensive land use review, yet projects over 15 acres are forced to start over at the state level. This duplication adds years of delay and significant costs. HB1738 respects local planning while maintaining important safeguards.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:23:38 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Hastings	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HB1738 is a modest but meaningful reform that will help unlock housing projects currently stuck in limbo. Allowing counties to act on these projects reduces delay without sacrificing environmental or agricultural protections.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:25:10 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Richard Hawkins	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The LUC was not intended to function as a second county planning commission. HB1738 restores a more appropriate division of responsibility. By limiting eligibility to non-conservation land and excluding conservation land and Important Agricultural Lands, this bill preserves Hawaii's most critical resources but makes it easier for builders to add homes.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:25:57 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Johnny Miro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I urge the Legislature to pass HB1738 to eliminate unnecessary delays caused by LUC review. Streamlining this process will lower costs and encourage responsible homebuilding.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:26:30 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
John-Michael Kamakahi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am submitting my testimony in strong support of HB1738. The 15-acre rule is outdated and causes too many delays. Counties know their communities best. Let them do their job so housing can move forward. Mahalo.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:36:55 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Wayne Feike	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha. I support HB 1738 because it gives counties more common sense authority. If a project already fits county plans, it shouldn't get stuck at the state level. This helps housing without touching conservation or important ag lands. Please pass the bill.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:52:41 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michelle Melendez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha - HB1738 is a small but important fix. These bills don't open the door to sprawl, just smarter housing decisions. We need less red tape and more homes. Mahalo for considering my testimony.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:53:04 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Albert Morgan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha - HB1738 helps reduce delays without harming conservation or ag lands. That's important to me as a local resident. I urge you to support this bill.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:56:12 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Antoine Khalil	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB1738 as someone who sees how long housing approvals take. These delays hurt families and workers. This reform helps projects move without cutting corners.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:56:40 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Harold Snyder	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The LUC should focus on truly statewide land use issues, not routine housing projects already vetted locally. I strongly support this bill as a practical step toward faster, more predictable housing approvals.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:56:42 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Raelene Tenno	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I have concerns regarding HB1738

Although I support the intent for residential, it needs to be explicitly for affordable, long term owner occupancy requirements and truly affordable and loops closed that allow for initial purchase then re-sold shortly after at a gain.

The gain tends to drive up the market value for other resales.

There needs to be in place explicit criteria, if housing is built near AG land and the land is being used for AG purposes, any new residential homes need to exist together period.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:57:06 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tracy Manhan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The current process discourages exactly the type of housing projects Hawaii needs more of. HB1738 provides a careful expansion of county authority without weakening land use protections. I support it.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:58:26 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jerry Lynch	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support reforming the LUC because housing projects that fit within the community plans should not be stalled for years at the state level. Counties are better positioned to evaluate these projects efficiently.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:58:56 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Luke McKenney	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

H.B. 1738 empowers counties to act on modestly sized housing projects without undermining environmental or agricultural protections. It will lower the cost of building new housing which is needed to lower housing costs.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 11:03:21 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Willa Marten	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha! As you know, Hawaii has a ton of red tape when it comes to building homes. That's why I think we need to streamline the process and reform the LUC. Please pass HB1738.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 11:04:39 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ben Tamamoto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I urge lawmakers to support House Bill 1738. This bill is a common-sense reform that will speed up housing approvals while maintaining strong planning standards.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 11:05:22 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Wendt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha. We need to start cutting more red tape if we hope to be able to house local residents. That's why I support reforming the LUC and giving counties more authority because they are closest to the communities affected by these projects. Local decision-making leads to better outcomes.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 11:05:51 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Desiree Watson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB1738 as someone who sees how long housing approvals take. These delays hurt families and workers. This reform helps projects move without cutting corners.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 11:09:46 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alex Gonzalez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Land Use Commission review often repeats work done by county agencies and elected councils. That redundancy discourages housing production at a time when Hawaii desperately needs more homes. This bill is a practical fix.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 11:10:36 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alice Rogers	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha - I support HB1738 because it respects county planning and community input. They will help move housing forward without weakening protections. That's a win for everyone. All islands need to update and reform all their projects - Honolulu is so far behind and AI is right on us. Mahalo.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 11:10:57 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ken Takeya	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The current 15-acre threshold does not reflect modern housing needs or land use realities. Updating it to 25 acres for limited, housing-focused purposes makes sense.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 11:15:00 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patti Yasuhara	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

House Bill 1738 reflects the reality that land use planning has evolved significantly since the 15-acre rule started. Counties are best positioned to evaluate projects that fit within their long-term plans and community visions.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 11:15:20 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michele Sorensen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

This bill would reduce uncertainty for builders and communities alike. Predictable timelines are essential if we want more housing to actually get built.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 11:15:46 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara Nosaka	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Counties have demonstrated their ability to manage growth responsibly. HB1738 / SB2007 builds on that track record. There would be strict criteria for projects to be eligible so it doesn't turn into the Wild West.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 11:16:51 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eric Freeh	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Counties already have robust public input processes. The state-level review required today often delays projects without improving outcomes. HB1738 addresses that inefficiency directly.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 11:17:12 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joy Dillon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I totally support HB1738 because the current process is too slow and confusing. Projects that already went through county review shouldn't have to jump through extra hoops at the state level. Please vote yes.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 11:18:08 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Martha Morishige	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am submitting my testimony in strong support of HB1738. This is a targeted, reasonable and focused proposal that will hopefully help address our housing crisis. Hawaii needs more common-sense solutions like this.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 11:18:29 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tammy Allen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The current 15-acre threshold does not reflect modern housing needs or land use realities. Updating it to 25 acres for limited, housing-focused purposes makes sense.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 12:14:02 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Keri Zacher	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lee, Chair Wakai, Chair Chang, Vice Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Hashimoto, and members of the Committees,

My name is Keri Zacher and I **STRONGLY OPPOSE** HB1738 HD2.

While I fully appreciate this measure’s intent to facilitate affordable housing, its provisions once again scapegoat the Land Use Commission (LUC) for housing construction delays, against all data and evidence to the contrary. **Please do not roll back the critical protections the LUC provides for our food security, public trust resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, low-income housing needs, and other public interests that may be impacted by large-scale land use changes – all to save just 45 days on affordable housing construction timelines that often take up the better part of a decade due to other, non-LUC related factors.**

The LUC has long administered a critical, comprehensive process to identify and mitigate impacts to natural and cultural resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the large-scale reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use planning and decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial, “court-like” nature of this LUC “district boundary amendment” (DBA) process ensures that data and information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders can be formally considered, vetted, and explicitly incorporated in its DBA approvals.

Throughout its decades of work, the LUC has also demonstrated its ability to consistently balance the public’s interests while overseeing such large-scale land use changes, without creating undue delays. **Notably, throughout the 2010s and to the present day, the LUC has consistently met the one-year approval deadline for completed DBA petitions, as well as the 45-day approval deadline for DBAs needed to accommodate HRS § 201H-38 “affordable housing” projects.**

By limiting the LUC’s jurisdiction to DBAs involving more than 25 acres, this bill will needlessly limit a critical land use oversight mechanism that consistently and efficiently safeguards the public trust, Native Hawaiian rights, and other public interests in large land use changes - for marginal to no benefit to housing development. Please do not support this giveaway to developer profit margins at the expense of our local communities.

Given that the LUC has already approved tens of thousands of housing units that remain undeveloped, I encourage the Committees to instead explore providing the LUC with enforcement tools, such as civil penalties, that could incentivize developer follow-through on their housing construction commitments.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely, Keri Zacher

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 12:29:47 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nanea Lo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello Chair Lee, Chair Wakai, Chair Chang, Vice Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Hashimoto, and members of the Committees,

My name is Nanea Lo and I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB1738 HD2.

While I fully appreciate this measure’s intent to facilitate affordable housing, its provisions once again scapegoat the Land Use Commission (LUC) for housing construction delays, against all data and evidence to the contrary. Please do not roll back the critical protections the LUC provides for our food security, public trust resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, low-income housing needs, and other public interests that may be impacted by large-scale land use changes – all to save just 45 days on affordable housing construction timelines that often take up the better part of a decade due to other, non-LUC related factors.

The LUC has long administered a critical, comprehensive process to identify and mitigate impacts to natural and cultural resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the large-scale reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use planning and decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial, “court-like” nature of this LUC “district boundary amendment” (DBA) process ensures that data and information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders can be formally considered, vetted, and explicitly incorporated in its DBA approvals.

Throughout its decades of work, the LUC has also demonstrated its ability to consistently balance the public’s interests while overseeing such large-scale land use changes, without creating undue delays. Notably, throughout the 2010s and to the present day, the LUC has consistently met the one-year approval deadline for completed DBA petitions, as well as the 45-day approval deadline for DBAs needed to accommodate HRS § 201H-38 “affordable housing” projects.

By limiting the LUC’s jurisdiction to DBAs involving more than 25 acres, this bill will needlessly limit a critical land use oversight mechanism that consistently and efficiently safeguards the public trust, Native Hawaiian rights, and other public interests in large land use changes - for marginal to no benefit to housing development. Please do not support this giveaway to developer profit margins at the expense of our local communities.

Given that the LUC has already approved tens of thousands of housing units that remain undeveloped, I encourage the Committees to instead explore providing the LUC with enforcement tools, such as civil penalties, that could incentivize developer follow-through on their housing construction commitments.

Me ke aloha ‘āina,

Nanea Lo, 96826

Sierra Club of Hawai‘i Member

Hawai‘i Workers Center Board Member

Clean Elections Hawai‘i Member

Honolulu Tenants Union Member

350 Hawai‘i Member

Carbon Cashback Hawai‘i Member

Hawai‘i Tax Fairness Coalition Member

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 2:00:46 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jessica Kuzmier	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, I am writing in opposition to HB1738 HD2. I believe it curtails too much of the Land Use Commission's authority and agency. The LUC provides a process to manage impacts to natural and cultural resources and needs more enforcement tools to be empowered to carry out their activities, not the other way around. Mahalo for your consideration.

LATE

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 4:07:23 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Annalisa Bos	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha. Counties already know where housing makes sense. That's one of the main reasons why I support HB1738. Please do what you can to make sure this bill passes the legislature. Mahalo!

LATE

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 4:08:16 PM
Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
David Owen Myers	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I would like to submit testimony in support of HB1738. Updating the threshold to 25 acres under strict rules is a reasonable compromise between state oversight and local control. Please do what you can to get this bill to become law!

LATE

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 4:09:26 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robin Stueber	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB1738 because it focuses on edge development, not sprawl. I strongly believe this bill keeps strong protections while fixing a broken process. That balance is important for Hawaii. Mahalo.

LATE

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 4:10:45 PM
Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Donald Wermerskirchen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Land Use Commission review often repeats work done by county agencies and elected councils. That redundancy discourages housing production at a time when Hawaii desperately needs more homes. This bill is a practical fix.

LATE

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 4:12:04 PM
Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Riccardo Leone	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii's counties already conduct extensive land use review, yet projects over 15 acres are forced to start over at the state level. This duplication adds years of delay and significant costs. HB1738 respects local planning while maintaining important safeguards.

LATE

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 4:12:47 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Doris Ann Santiago	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

HB1738 respects the work counties have already done through general plans and community development plans. Projects consistent with those documents should not be derailed at the state level.

LATE

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 4:13:54 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ruth Arakaki	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The LUC was not intended to function as a second county planning commission. HB1738 restores a more appropriate division of responsibility. By limiting eligibility to non-conservation land and excluding conservation land and Important Agricultural Lands, this bill preserves Hawaii's most critical resources but makes it easier for builders to add homes.

LATE

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 4:15:06 PM
Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Terri Yoshinaga	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please vote in support of HB1738. The state land use commission just adds time to the process and we don't have time to wait for more homes. Mahalo for your consideration.

LATE

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 4:16:06 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Wendy Cook	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha. HB1738 just makes sense. If a housing project is next to urban land and already planned for housing, it shouldn't take years to approve. Please support this measure and pass it through the committee.

LATE

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 4:17:00 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cheryl Rzonca	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii needs more homes, not more red tape. Reforming the LUC threshold is a clear way to reduce unnecessary barriers. This process often duplicates environmental and infrastructure reviews already completed by counties. Please pass house bill 1738 to streamline the LUC in the future.

LATE

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 4:17:44 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Stout	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am submitting my testimony in strong support of HB1738. This is a targeted, reasonable and focused proposal that will hopefully help address our housing crisis. Hawaii needs more common-sense solutions like this.

LATE

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 4:19:00 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marion Ceruti	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please vote to pass HB1738. This will help make sure that development happens thoughtfully and in line with existing urban areas. This is an important bill. If we are serious about cutting red tape and making it easier for local people to stay in Hawai'i, please kokua, vote YES on HB1738

LATE

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 4:19:54 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deniz Tek	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We need more housing. The current system discourages builders from proposing reasonable housing projects because they don't want to go through the LUC. This bill corrects that problem. Please pass it. Thank you.

LATE

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 4:20:52 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
cassandra Abdul	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am submitting my testimony in strong support of HB1738. The 15-acre rule is outdated and causes too many delays. Counties know their communities best. Let them do their job so housing can move forward. Mahalo.

LATE

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 4:21:51 PM
Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Judi Chang	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii's counties already conduct extensive land use review, yet projects over 15 acres are forced to start over at the state level. This duplication adds years of delay and significant costs. HB1738 respects local planning while maintaining important safeguards.

LATE

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 4:22:53 PM
Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cathy Cachola	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha! As you know, Hawaii has a ton of red tape when it comes to building homes. That's why I think we need to streamline the process and reform the LUC. Please pass HB1738.

LATE

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 4:25:04 PM
Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Curt DeWeese	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hawaii needs more homes, not more red tape. Reforming the LUC threshold is a clear way to reduce unnecessary barriers. This process often duplicates environmental and infrastructure reviews already completed by counties. Please pass house bill 1738 to streamline the LUC in the future.

LATE

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 4:26:08 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brent Watson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I totally support HB1738 because the current process is too slow and confusing. Projects that already went through county review shouldn't have to jump through extra hoops at the state level. Please vote yes. Please end "Little Caesar-itis" and remember that you are servants of the people - not their masters.

LATE

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 4:27:31 PM
Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joseph Mastrantonio	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha. HB1738 just makes sense. If a housing project is next to urban land and already planned for housing, it shouldn't take years to approve. Please support this measure and pass it through the committee.

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 4:28:36 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

LATE

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert Sumpf	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The current 15-acre threshold does not reflect modern housing needs or land use realities. Updating it to 25 acres for limited, housing-focused purposes makes sense.

LATE

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 9:10:31 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Katherine Fryer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose HB1738 HD2.

While I appreciate this measure’s intent to facilitate affordable housing, its provisions scapegoat the Land Use Commission (LUC) for housing construction delays against all data and evidence to the contrary. Please do not roll back the critical protections the LUC provides for public interests that may be impacted by large-scale land use changes, all to save just 45 days on affordable housing construction timelines that often take up the better part of a decade due to other, non-LUC related factors.

The LUC follows a comprehensive process to identify and mitigate impacts to natural and cultural resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the large-scale reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use planning and decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial, “court-like” nature of this LUC “district boundary amendment” (DBA) process ensures that data and information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders can be formally considered, vetted, and incorporated in its DBA approvals.

Throughout its decades of work, the LUC has also demonstrated its ability to consistently balance the public’s interests while overseeing such large-scale land use changes, without creating undue delays. Notably, throughout the 2010s and to the present day, the LUC has consistently met the one-year approval deadline for completed DBA petitions, as well as the 45-day approval deadline for DBAs needed to accommodate HRS § 201H-38 “affordable housing” projects.

By limiting the LUC’s jurisdiction to DBAs involving more than 25 acres, this bill will needlessly limit a critical land use oversight mechanism that consistently and efficiently safeguards the public trust. Please do not support this giveaway to developer profit margins at the expense of our local communities.

Given that the LUC has already approved tens of thousands of housing units that remain undeveloped, I encourage the Committees to instead explore providing the LUC with enforcement tools, such as civil penalties, that could incentivize developer follow-through on their housing construction commitments.

LATE

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 7:47:00 PM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lorna Holmes	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I write in opposition to hb1738 because it is not specificall aimed at affordable housing, and risks losing more agricultural land to development.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Dr. Lorna Holmes, Mo'ili'ili 96826

LATE

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/18/2026 10:13:48 PM
Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Diane Ware	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lee, Chair Wakai, Chair Chang, Vice Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Hashimoto, and members of the Committees,

My name is Diane Ware and I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB1738 HD2.

While I fully appreciate this measure’s intent to facilitate affordable housing, its provisions once again scapegoat the Land Use Commission (LUC) for housing construction delays, against all data and evidence to the contrary. Please do not roll back the critical protections the LUC provides for our food security, public trust resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, low-income housing needs, and other public interests that may be impacted by large-scale land use changes – all to save just 45 days on affordable housing construction timelines that often take up the better part of a decade due to other, non-LUC related factors.

The LUC has long administered a critical, comprehensive process to identify and mitigate impacts to natural and cultural resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the large-scale reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use planning and decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial, “court-like” nature of this LUC “district boundary amendment” (DBA) process ensures that data and information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders can be formally considered, vetted, and explicitly incorporated in its DBA approvals.

Throughout its decades of work, the LUC has also demonstrated its ability to consistently balance the public’s interests while overseeing such large-scale land use changes, without creating undue delays. Notably, throughout the 2010s and to the present day, the LUC has consistently met the one-year approval deadline for completed DBA petitions, as well as the 45-day approval deadline for DBAs needed to accommodate HRS § 201H-38 “affordable housing” projects.

By limiting the LUC’s jurisdiction to DBAs involving more than 25 acres, this bill will needlessly limit a critical land use oversight mechanism that consistently and efficiently safeguards the public trust, Native Hawaiian rights, and other public interests in large land use changes - for marginal to no benefit to housing development. Please do not support this giveaway to developer profit margins at the expense of our local communities.

Given that the LUC has already approved tens of thousands of housing units that remain undeveloped, I encourage the Committees to instead explore providing the LUC with enforcement tools, such as civil penalties, that could incentivize developer follow-through on their housing construction commitments.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify

Diane Ware Volcano HI

Sincerely,

LATE

HB-1738-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/19/2026 11:17:26 AM

Testimony for WLA on 3/19/2026 3:01:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaleiheana-a-Pohaku Stormcrow	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Lee, Chair Wakai, Chair Chang, Vice Chair Inouye, Vice Chair Hashimoto, and members of the Committees,

My name is Kaleiheana Stormcrow and I **STRONGLY OPPOSE** HB1738 HD2.

While I fully appreciate this measure’s intent to facilitate affordable housing, its provisions once again scapegoat the Land Use Commission (LUC) for housing construction delays, against all data and evidence to the contrary. **Please do not roll back the critical protections the LUC provides for our food security, public trust resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, low-income housing needs, and other public interests that may be impacted by large-scale land use changes – all to save just 45 days on affordable housing construction timelines that often take up the better part of a decade due to other, non-LUC related factors.**

The LUC has long administered a critical, comprehensive process to identify and mitigate impacts to natural and cultural resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the large-scale reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use planning and decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial, “court-like” nature of this LUC “district boundary amendment” (DBA) process ensures that data and information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders can be formally considered, vetted, and explicitly incorporated in its DBA approvals.

Throughout its decades of work, the LUC has also demonstrated its ability to consistently balance the public’s interests while overseeing such large-scale land use changes, without creating undue delays. **Notably, throughout the 2010s and to the present day, the LUC has consistently met the one-year approval deadline for completed DBA petitions, as well as the 45-day approval deadline for DBAs needed to accommodate HRS § 201H-38 “affordable housing” projects.**

By limiting the LUC’s jurisdiction to DBAs involving more than 25 acres, this bill will needlessly limit a critical land use oversight mechanism that consistently and efficiently safeguards the public trust, Native Hawaiian rights, and other public interests in large land use changes - for marginal to no benefit to housing development. Please do not support this giveaway to developer profit margins at the expense of our local communities.

Given that the LUC has already approved tens of thousands of housing units that remain undeveloped, I encourage the Committees to instead explore providing the LUC with enforcement tools, such as civil penalties, that could incentivize developer follow-through on their housing construction commitments.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Kaleiheana Stormcrow