



**TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2026**

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

H.B. NO. 1844, H.D. 1, RELATING TO THE LAND USE COMMISSION.

BEFORE THE:

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

DATE: Tuesday, February 24, 2026 **TIME:** 2:00 p.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 325

TESTIFIER(S): Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or
Alyssa-Marie Y.H. Kau, Deputy Attorney General

Chair Tarnas and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General (Department) provides the following comments on this bill.

This bill requires the Land Use Commission (Commission), upon request of a county and subject to certain conditions, to reclassify lands designated for urban growth under a county general plan or development plan into the urban land use district.

I. Important Agricultural Lands

The operative sections of the bill do not expressly exclude Important Agricultural Lands (IAL) from the mandatory reclassification process. Article XI, section 3, of the Hawai'i Constitution prohibits the reclassification of IALs absent compliance with legislatively established standards and criteria and approval by a two-thirds vote of the body responsible for the reclassification. Section 205-50, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), likewise establishes statutory criteria governing IAL reclassification.

Because the bill operates "[n]otwithstanding sections 205-3.1 and 205-4" (page 1, line 15) and directs that the Commission "shall" reclassify qualifying lands (page 1, line 16), clarification is advisable to ensure consistency with article XI, section 3, of the Hawai'i Constitution and section 205-50, HRS. Although a prior committee report on the bill indicates an intent to exclude IALs (See, H. Stand Comm. Rep. No. 456-26, Regular Session of 2026), the current draft of the bill does not expressly do so.

To reduce ambiguity, the Department recommends adding a new subsection (f) to the new section in part I of chapter 205, HRS, beginning on page 3, line 10, to read:

(f) This section shall not apply to lands designated as important agricultural lands pursuant to section 205-44.

(The current subsection (f) (page 3, lines 10-11) should be redesignated as subsection (g).)

II. Procedural Due Process and Public Participation

The bill also raises procedural due process concerns. Amendments to state land use district boundaries implicate constitutionally protected property interests and may require notice and a meaningful opportunity to be heard under the Due Process Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution and article I, section 5, of the Hawai'i Constitution. Sections 205-3.1 and 205-4, HRS, currently provide procedural safeguards, including public notice, public hearings, findings of fact, and the Commission's exercise of independent judgment. By overriding those provisions and mandating reclassification upon a county's request, the bill may eliminate or substantially alter the adjudicatory process that provides affected landowners and interested parties a meaningful opportunity to participate before a reclassification becomes effective.

To mitigate potential constitutional risk, the Department recommends amending subsection (a) of the new section of chapter 205, HRS, on page 1, line 14, through page 2, line 11, to read as follows: (original underscoring removed, and Ramseyered against the wording in the bill)

(a) ~~[Notwithstanding sections 205-3.1 and 205-4, upon]~~ Upon the request of a county~~;~~ and subject to this section, the commission shall process the request in accordance with chapter 91 and shall reclassify lands not in the urban district~~;~~ but ~~[that are]~~ designated for urban growth under a county general plan or county development plan pursuant to section 226-58, ~~[as being in the urban district; provided that the requisite analyses are completed and all applicable requirements under this part are met before a request is submitted to the commission.]~~ if the commission determines that the requirements of this part have been satisfied. Any data gathered or studies completed by any department or agency of a county as part of ~~[a boundary amendment]~~ the request ~~[by any department or agency of a county]~~ may be submitted as supplemental materials to the ~~[request to the]~~ commission~~;~~ and ~~[any such supplemental materials submitted]~~ shall be considered by the commission in determining whether to approve, deny, or modify the request.

A clean version of our recommended subsection (a) is as follows:

(a) Upon the request of a county and subject to this section, the commission shall process the request in accordance with chapter 91 and shall reclassify lands not in the urban district but designated for urban growth under a county general plan or county development plan pursuant to section 226-58, if the commission determines that the requirements of this part have been satisfied. Any data gathered or studies completed by any department or agency of a county as part of the request may be submitted as supplemental materials to the commission and shall be considered by the commission in determining whether to approve, deny, or modify the request.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



LAND USE COMMISSION

Komikina Ho'ohana 'Āina

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

Ka 'Oihana Ho'omōhala Pā'oihana, 'Imi Waiwai a Ho'omāka'ika'i

JOSH GREEN, MD
GOVERNOR

DANIEL E. ORODENKER
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

235 S. Beretania Street, RM 406, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

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Email Address: dbedt.luc.web@hawaii.gov

Telephone: (808) 587-3822

Website: luc.hawaii.gov

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

Before the
House Committee on
Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

Tuesday February 24, 2026
2:00 PM
State Capitol, Room 325 and Video Conference

In consideration of
HB1844 HD1

RELATING TO THE LAND USE COMMISSION

Chair Tarnas; Vice Chair Poepoe; and members of the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs:

The proposed measure, in section 205-(a), would *require* the Land Use Commission (“LUC”) to reclassify lands into the State Urban District upon a request by a county, when those lands are designated for urban growth under a county general or development plan. Also, it requires that “...the requisite analyses are completed and all applicable requirements under this part are met...” before submission to the LUC. The LUC is directed to consider any supplemental data gathered or studies completed by the counties when determining whether to approve, deny, or modify a county’s request. Proposed section 205-(b) only requires a county to submit a request to amend the urban district boundary and include a description of the property and a metes and bounds map of the affected property.

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 discussed due process concerns, implications from the Town case, constitutional issues, duplication of county processes, contested case rights, potential litigation, infrastructure responsibility, and affordable housing impacts.

LUC staff have the following concerns that the proposed measure may not meet legal requirements for due process or provide the necessary information required to render legally defensible re-classification of private property. We are concerned that decisions under this measure may lead to legal action by affected parties causing significant delays in housing development.

LUC staff believes that constitutional due process requires that applications require a contested case hearing be provided for every impacted landowner. The general plan process does not afford this type of due process protection. Re-classifying state lands without providing due process likely violates both state and federal constitutional protections.

Although the measure mentions the need that “requisite analyses” be completed before a request is submitted to the LUC, it does not provide any description of what these analyses should be. The lack of required technical studies and potential level of land use changes would not allow the counties or LUC to identify possible impacts or formulate appropriate mitigation measures. This is violative of the public trust doctrine and recent decisions on cultural resource protection which require a “Ka Pa’akai analysis be performed for every government decision.

Current HRS section 205-4(h) requires the LUC to make any amendments to land use district boundaries only upon finding a clear preponderance of the evidence that such a change is not in violation of the Hawai’i State Plan, the LUC decision-making criteria which incorporates statutory and constitutional protections and representations made by a petitioner. The Supreme Court has made it clear that any government body rendering a decision concerning land use must undertake a public trust analysis and a “Ka Pa’akai” analysis. The county General plan process does not afford this decision-making process for re-districting of land for each impacted private landowner.

In addition to due process for the landowner itself, the public’s interest in water, the environment, traditional and customary practices, cultural resources and public access rights must be taken into account in any decision-making on district boundary changes.

LUC staff is here to answer any technical concerns or process issues. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

February 24, 2026

2:00 P`M

Conference Room 325

In **OPPOSITION** to **HB1844 HD1**: RELATING TO THE LAND USE COMMISSION

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of our more than 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **strongly OPPOSES** HB1844 HD1, which would force the Land Use Commission (“LUC”) to urbanize agricultural, rural, or even conservation lands without sufficiently examining the myriad impacts that land use changes can have on our food security, public trust resources, cultural practices, climate resilience, affordable housing opportunities, and economic development.

The LUC is tasked with assessing and protecting a variety of critical public interests in its review and approval of large-scale land use changes, including in our natural and cultural public trust resources, sea level rise, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, agriculture and food security, affordable housing, and local job creation, among others. To carry out this responsibility, the LUC employs an evidentiary process, called a contested case hearing, that allows stakeholders to provide and cross-examine evidence including but not limited to expert and cultural practitioner testimony, data and technical reports, and other sources of information. The LUC uses this court-like process to issue written findings of fact, conclusions of law, and decisions and orders that can balance and protect the various public interests at hand, providing a level of transparency, objectivity, accountability, and thoroughness that is not found in county general plan and land use decisionmaking processes.¹

By precluding the LUC from applying its long-established process to potentially vast land use changes, this measure would all but invite unintended and avoidable impacts for a range of important public interests, for decades or even generations at a time.

¹ For example, county general plans and county land use decisionmaking, while allowing for public testimony, do not provide for the taking or examination of expert testimony – including that of Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practitioners – the cross examination of witnesses, and the building of an evidentiary record that is then explicitly considered in the balancing of public needs and interests described above. The current county practice of taking public testimony and then rendering a decision provides little transparency on how those decisions are made, what countervailing concerns were considered or addressed, what weight was given to any particular testifier or piece of information provided, etc. To the extent that this measure views county decisionmaking as a replication of the current LUC district boundary amendment process, it is mistaken.



While the Sierra Club acknowledges the requirement that “requisite analyses” be done before the submission of a petition for urbanization, it is unclear what these analyses would entail, and there is no apparent process for these analyses to be considered or used in this bill. **In any case, such “requisite analyses” are no substitute for the LUC’s contested case hearing process, and its value in ensuring careful consideration of multiple and potentially competing perspectives and sources of evidence.**

The Sierra Club appreciates the measure’s intent to fast-track affordable housing development, the Sierra Club reiterates that **the LUC is not the impediment to housing construction 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” projects such as those described in this measure, 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.**

Moreover, 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, 23,000 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. To address this backlog, the Legislature may wish to consider providing the LUC with reasonably enhanced enforcement authority, which 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



SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAII

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 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 but strongly urges the Committee to **HOLD** this measure. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 3:34:41 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ted Bohlen	Hawaii Reef and Ocean Coalition and Climate Protectors Hawaii	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Land Use Commission should not be required to urbanize lands at the request of the counties without opportunity for community stakeholders to have their rights and testimonies explicitly considered.



Environmental Caucus of The Democratic Party of Hawai'i

Sunday, February 22, 2026

To: House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs
Rep. David A. Tarnas, Chair
Rep. Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

Re: HB 1844, H1 1 relating to Land Use Commission
Hearing: Tuesday, February 24, 2026, 2:00 pm, Conference Room 325 & videoconference
Position: **STRONG OPPOSITION**

Aloha, Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs!

The 6,680 members of the Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i believe that the current process in which the State's Land Use Commission (LUC) acts as a quasi-judicial entity, with a strong institutional memory and strong record of environmental protection should not be disturbed unless proposed changes are shown to be truly meritorious.

HB 1844 HD 1 does not meet these requirements, and it should be rejected. This bill would, if enacted, require the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the comprehensive, objective, and transparent process that the LUC currently follows. Thus, this bill would basically invite long-term and potentially irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests, including those that are not closely examined or in some cases even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, we believe that this bill should not be passed. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important issue.

Alan B. Burdick, co-chair Burdick808@gmail.com 808-927-1500

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 7:19:14 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

STRONG OPPOSITION to HB 1844 HD1

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 1844 HD1**

This bill fast tracks irresponsible land use changes without any opportunity for farmers, cultural practitioners, climate scientists, and other experts and stakeholders to have their voices heard. Do not diminish the role of the Land Use Commission and its quasi judicial, critical, comprehensive process to identify and mitigate impacts on responsible land use.

IMMEDIATELY NO to HB 1844 HD1.

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 1:03:44 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janice K T Shiira	Shimanchu Mamuyaa	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

.



House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) Opposes: HB 1844 HD1

Tuesday, February 24th, 2026 2:00 p.m. Conference Room 325

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe and Members of the Committee,

HAPA opposes HB1844 HD1 which seeks to enable the Land Use Commission (LUC) to fast track the reclassification of lands to an urban district for development, by side-stepping the current evidence-based process currently required by the LUC. The process by which the LUC would modify and update land use classifications would be predicated upon the county submitting to the commission a request to amend the urban district boundary for those lands designated for urban growth under a county general plan or county development plan. The commission would then have 90 within the receipt of the request to update the boundary lines and notify the county of implementation of the requested change.

Currently, the Commission must hold a hearing on the island on which the subject property is situated within not less than 60 days and not more than 180 days. The Commission must decide within defined timelines not exceeding a year and the Commission may approve, approve with conditions or deny the petition. On petitions to redistrict Conservation lands, the requirements of the "Chapter 343 – Environmental Impact Statements" must be met before the petition to reclassify Conservation land can be officially accepted as a proper filing and acted upon by the Commission. By forgoing the process of the LUC's "quasi-judicial proceedings", the aforementioned steps are not applied and due diligence in the process of issuing decisions with long-term ramifications may not be adequately assessed.

In essence, HB1844 HD1 would prevent the Land Use Commission from applying this careful, objective, and transparent process to the urbanization of lands at the request of the counties. This all but invites impacts to food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests that may not have been adequately examined or even considered in the county general plan process.

Please oppose HB1844 HD1 to ensure due diligence in the process of confirming land use re-classifications. Mahalo for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Frederick', written in a cursive style.

Anne Frederick, Executive Director

Feb. 24, 2026, 2 p.m.
Hawaii State Capitol
Conference Room 325 and Videoconference

To: House Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs
Rep. David A. Tarnas, Chair
Rep. Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair

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

RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB1844 HD1 — RELATING TO THE LAND USE COMMISSION

Aloha chair, vice chair and other committee members,

The Grassroot Institute **supports** [HB1844 HD1](#), which would require the state Land Use Commission to redistrict lands to the urban district if those lands are designated for urban growth under certain county plans. It would specify that this mechanism would only trigger if the county applied to the LUC for the redistricting.

This bill correctly identifies and addresses one of the major causes for the slow growth of housing in this state: the delays caused by multiple layers of bureaucratic approvals.

The Economic Research Organization at the University of Hawai'i has found that Hawaii's average permit approval delay is more than three times the national average. The UHERO report notes that "Extreme delays in permitting will generate significant costs and uncertainty for developers, creating a disincentive for new projects."¹

The LUC is a major contributor to permitting delays. Established over 60 years ago, the LUC was intended to protect and manage Hawaii's four land-use designations — urban, rural, agricultural and conservation. Today, less than five percent of land in Hawaii is designated for urban use under the LUC's maps.²

¹ Rachel Inafuku, Justin Tyndall and Carl Bonham, "[Measuring the Burden of Housing Regulation in Hawaii](#)," Economic Research Organization at the University of Hawai'i, April 14, 2022, p.7.

² Jonathan Helton, "[How to facilitate more homebuilding in Hawaii](#)," Grassroot Institute of Hawaii, December 2023, p. 5.

In 2020, the Grassroot Institute of Hawaii produced a report, “Reform the Hawaii LUC to encourage more housing,” that focused heavily on ways to reduce the scope of the LUC, which would free it up to focus on statewide environmental issues and district boundary amendments of conservation lands, as well as operate more efficiently in general.³

This bill would also maintain protections for Hawaii’s rural and agricultural areas by specifying that this process would only apply to lands that counties have already identified for future urban development.

For anyone who wants to see more homes built for Hawaii residents, enacting this bill would be an important and very welcome step forward. We urge the committee to pass this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Ted Kefalas
Director of Strategic Campaigns
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

³ Jackson Grubbe, [“Reform the Hawaii LUC to encourage more housing.”](#) Grassroot Institute of Hawaii, September 2020.



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February 24, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

TESTIMONY ON HB 1844, HD1
RELATING TO THE LAND USE COMMISSION

Conference Room 325 & Videoconference
2:00 PM

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice-Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee:

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 provides comments on HB 1844, HD1, which requires the Land Use Commission, at the request of a county, to reclassify lands designated for urban growth under a county general plan or county development plan into the urban district.

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau recognizes the seriousness of Hawai'i's housing shortage and supports thoughtful efforts to increase the supply of affordable housing. At the same time, we must ensure that solutions to the housing crisis do not come at the expense of agriculture and the long-term protection of productive agricultural lands.

While we recognize that HB 1844, HD1 clarifies that Important Agricultural Lands (IAL) are excluded from this process, many actively farmed and productive agricultural lands across the State have not been formally designated as IAL. As a result, significant agricultural acreage could still be reclassified based solely on its inclusion in a county's long-range urban growth area.

County general and development plans are important planning tools, but they are policy documents that often identify areas for potential future use decades in advance. In many cases, lands within these identified growth areas are currently in active agricultural production. Agriculture today includes diversified crops, orchard systems, greenhouse operations, pasture-based livestock, and value-added enterprises that may not fit traditional definitions of "prime" lands but nonetheless contribute meaningfully to local food production and economic activity.

Once agricultural land is reclassified into the urban district, it is effectively lost to agriculture. Increased land values, development pressure, infrastructure expansions, and land-use conflicts often follow, making continued farming difficult or infeasible. Agricultural land, once converted, is rarely recovered.

The LUC plays an important statewide role in balancing housing needs with agricultural protection, water resources, and long-term land use planning. HB 1844, HD1 would convert the Commission's role from a deliberative statewide land use safeguard into a largely ministerial function when a county requests reclassification. Even with procedural requirements and supplemental materials, the bill retains mandatory language that limits the Commission's discretion in evaluating broader statewide impacts.

We support increasing housing supply. However, housing solutions must be pursued in a way that protects bona fide agriculture, avoids unnecessary loss of productive lands, and preserves Hawai'i's capacity to grow food locally for future generations.

For these reasons, the Hawai'i Farm Bureau respectfully urges the Committee to carefully consider the long-term implications of HB 1844, HD1, for agricultural lands and statewide land-use policy.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.



Queen's Court
800 Bethel Street, Suite 501
Honolulu HI 96813

Phone 808.587.7770
Fax 808.587.7769
www.avalonhi.com

RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1844 – RELATING TO THE LAND USE COMMISSION

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and members of the Committee. Avalon Development Company supports HB 1844, which would require the State Land Use Commission to reclassify lands to the urban district when those lands have already been designated for urban growth under an adopted county general plan or county development plan, and only upon request by the county. This measure respects the extensive planning, analysis, and public engagement that occurs at the county level and helps ensure consistency between county land use plans and the State Land Use District maps.

HB 1844 appropriately clarifies the Land Use Commission's role in these limited circumstances by making the reclassification process ministerial rather than discretionary. When a county has already completed its planning process and determined that specific lands are appropriate for future urban use, requiring an additional discretionary reclassification step at the state level creates duplication, uncertainty, and delay without adding corresponding public benefit. This bill maintains all existing county planning requirements while improving coordination between state and county systems.

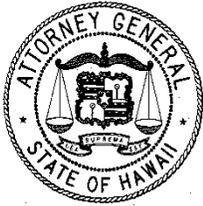
By reducing regulatory overlap and increasing predictability, HB 1844 supports more efficient implementation of long-adopted county plans and helps remove unnecessary barriers to housing and infrastructure development. Avalon Development Company respectfully urges the Committee to support HB 1844 as a measured and practical reform that aligns state land use classifications with county planning decisions.

Respectfully submitted,

McKinley Eads

Project Manager | Registered Lobbyist

On behalf of Avalon Development Company



**TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2026**

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

H.B. NO. 1844, RELATING TO THE LAND USE COMMISSION.

BEFORE THE:

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER & LAND

DATE: Tuesday, February 10, 2026 **TIME:** 9:00 a.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 411

TESTIFIER(S): Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or
Alyssa-Marie Y.H. Kau, Deputy Attorney General

Chair Hashem and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments.

The bill requires the Land Use Commission (LUC), upon request of a county, to reclassify lands that are designated for urban growth under county general or county development plans as being within the state urban district.

First, the bill does not provide a mechanism for public participation or notice to affected property owners before lands are reclassified. Under the proposed process, a county would submit a request to amend the urban district boundary that includes a description and metes and bounds map of the affected property, and the LUC would update its district boundary maps to reflect the reclassification within ninety days. This approach does not appear to provide due process to interested parties, including affected property owners. We recommend that the bill be amended to require a public hearing process and notice to affected property owners, either before the county submits a request or upon receipt of a county request by the LUC.

Second, article XI, section 3, of the State Constitution provides that "[l]ands identified by the State as important agricultural lands . . . shall not be reclassified by the State or rezoned by its political subdivisions without meeting the standards and criteria established by the legislature and approved by a two-thirds vote of the body responsible for the reclassification or rezoning action." In addition, section 205-50, HRS, provides specific criteria that must be met to reclassify important agricultural lands. To avoid

potential constitutional or statutory conflicts, we recommend amending the bill to clarify that lands designated as important agricultural lands are excluded from the district boundary amendment process authorized by this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/7/2026 4:25:18 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha!

Much like HB1845, the Free Access Coalition OPPOSES HB1844.

The Free Access Coalition OPPOSES HB1844

The aina and it's use are precious resources that should not be easily passed from natural or agricultural state to urban or commercial use.

Mahalo for your time.

John & Rita Shockley. Coordinators: Free Access Coalition.

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 12:15:07 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan B Roberts Emery	Green Party of Hawai'i	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the House Committee,

My name is Susan RobertsEmery, as co chair of the Green Party of Hawai'i we are in STRONG Opposition on HB1844 which seeks to fast track the reclassification of lands to an urban district for development, by side stepping the current evidence-based process currently required by the Land Use Commissions (LUC). Transparency matters. The process by which the LUC would modify and update land use classifications would be predicated upon the county submitting to the commission a request to amend the urban district boundary regardless of potential impacts to food security, sensitive ecosystems or native and public trust rights.

By forgoing the process of the LUC's "quasi-judicial proceedings" and removing the due diligence in the process of issuing decisions long-term ramifications may not be adequately assessed. Transparency Matters! There would be no opportunity to consider the testimonies and evidence provided by potentially afflicted communities including farmers, cultural practitioners, and community experts, and no opportunity to issue environmental assessments to ensure the state's agreement with proposed county plans.

Transparency Matters. Green Party of Hawai'i asks that you oppose HB1844 to ensure due diligence in the process of confirming land use re-classifications.

Thank you

Susan RobertsEmery

Green Party of Hawai'i

Paauiilo



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER & LAND

February 10, 2026

9:00 AM

Conference Room 411

In **OPPOSITION** to **HB1844**: RELATING TO THE LAND USE COMMISSION

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

On behalf of our more than 20,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **strongly OPPOSES** HB1844, which would force the Land Use Commission (“LUC”) to urbanize agricultural, rural, or even conservation lands without sufficiently examining the myriad impacts that land use changes can have on our food security, public trust resources, cultural practices, climate resilience, affordable housing opportunities, and economic development.

The LUC is tasked with assessing and protecting a variety of critical public interests in its review and approval of large-scale land use changes, including in our natural and cultural public trust resources, sea level rise, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, agriculture and food security, affordable housing, and local job creation, among others. To carry out this responsibility, the LUC employs an evidentiary process, called a contested case hearing, that allows stakeholders to provide and cross-examine evidence including but not limited to expert and cultural practitioner testimony, data and technical reports, and other sources of information. The LUC uses this court-like process to issue written findings of fact, conclusions of law, and decisions and orders that can balance and protect the various public interests at hand, providing a level of transparency, objectivity, accountability, and thoroughness that is not found in county general plan and land use decisionmaking processes.¹

By precluding the LUC from applying its long-established process to potentially vast land use changes, this measure would all but invite unintended and avoidable impacts for a range of important public interests, for decades or even generations at a time.

¹ For example, county general plans and county land use decisionmaking, while allowing for public testimony, do not provide for the taking or examination of expert testimony – including that of Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practitioners – the cross examination of witnesses, and the building of an evidentiary record that is then explicitly considered in the balancing of public needs and interests described above. The current county practice of taking public testimony and then rendering a decision provides little transparency on how those decisions are made, what countervailing concerns were considered or addressed, what weight was given to any particular testifier or piece of information provided, etc. To the extent that this measure views county decisionmaking as a substitute for the current LUC district boundary amendment process, it is mistaken.



While the Sierra Club acknowledges the requirement that “requisite analyses” be done before the submission of a petition for urbanization, it is unclear what these analyses would entail, and there is no apparent process for these analyses to be considered or used in this bill. **In any case, such “requisite analyses” are no substitute for the LUC’s contested case hearing process, and its value in ensuring careful consideration of multiple and potentially competing perspectives and sources of evidence.**

While the Sierra Club appreciates the measure’s intent to fast-track affordable housing development, the Sierra Club reiterates that **the LUC is not the impediment to housing construction 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” projects such as those described in this measure, 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.**

Moreover, 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, 23,000 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. To address this backlog, the Legislature may wish to consider providing the LUC with reasonably enhanced enforcement authority, which 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 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 but strongly urges the Committee to **HOLD** this measure. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 4:54:53 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
laurel brier	Kauai climate action coalition	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Yes, we need housing, but fast tracking the reclassification of lands could result in long-term negative ramifications. It is important to hear from the community which can bring to light cultural and environmental issues that may not be obvious. Community support Requires community input and why we oppose HB1844

Feb. 10, 2026, 9 a.m.
Hawaii State Capitol
Conference Room 411 and Videoconference

To: House Committee on Water & Land

Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Chair
Rep. Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair

From: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

Ted Kefalas, Director of Strategic Campaigns

RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB1844 — RELATING TO THE LAND USE COMMISSION

Aloha chairs, vice chairs and other committee members,

The Grassroot Institute **supports** [HB1844](#), which would require the state Land Use Commission to redistrict lands to the urban district if those lands are designated for urban growth under certain county plans. It would specify that this mechanism would only trigger if the county applied to the LUC for the redistricting.

This bill correctly identifies and addresses one of the major causes for the slow growth of housing in this state: the delays caused by multiple layers of bureaucratic approvals.

The Economic Research Organization at the University of Hawai'i has found that Hawaii's average permit approval delay is more than three times the national average. The UHERO report notes that "Extreme delays in permitting will generate significant costs and uncertainty for developers, creating a disincentive for new projects."¹

The LUC is a major contributor to permitting delays. Established over 60 years ago, the LUC was intended to protect and manage Hawaii's four land-use designations — urban, rural, agricultural and conservation. Today, less than five percent of land in Hawaii is designated for urban use under the LUC's maps.²

¹ Rachel Inafuku, Justin Tyndall and Carl Bonham, "[Measuring the Burden of Housing Regulation in Hawaii](#)," Economic Research Organization at the University of Hawai'i, April 14, 2022, p.7.

² Jonathan Helton, "[How to facilitate more homebuilding in Hawaii](#)," Grassroot Institute of Hawaii, December 2023, p. 5.

In 2020, the Grassroot Institute of Hawaii produced a report, “Reform the Hawaii LUC to encourage more housing,” that focused heavily on ways to reduce the scope of the LUC, which would free it up to focus on statewide environmental issues and district boundary amendments of conservation lands, as well as operate more efficiently in general.³

This bill would also maintain protections for Hawaii’s rural and agricultural areas by specifying that this process would only apply to lands that counties have already identified for future urban development.

For anyone who wants to see more homes built for Hawaii residents, enacting this bill would be an important and very welcome step forward. We urge the committee to pass this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Ted Kefalas
Director of Strategic Campaigns
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

³ Jackson Grubbe, [“Reform the Hawaii LUC to encourage more housing.”](#) Grassroot Institute of Hawaii, September 2020.



P.O. Box 8637, Honolulu, HI 96830 808.468.1686 www.mgfhawaii.org

TESTIMONY OF THE MOANALUA GARDENS FOUNDATION
To the House Committee on Education
February 10, 2026

In Opposition of

HB 1844 - RELATING TO RELATING TO THE LAND USE COMMISSION

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa, and members of the Committee:

The Moanalua Gardens Foundation submits testimony in **strong opposition of HB 1844**. 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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district.

Unlike existing county land use decision making, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public's interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected. **One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai'i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public's interests.**

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the careful, comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests that may not have been adequately examined or even considered in the county general plan process.

Founded in 1970, The Moanalua Gardens Foundation was established to preserve and perpetuate the history, native culture, and environment of Hawai'i through education and stewardship.

The Moanalua Gardens Foundation urges the committee **HOLD HB 1844 and not pass the measure**. Mahalo for your attention and consideration.

Me he aloha,

Ian Keahi Custino
Executive Director
Moanalua Gardens Foundation
ian@mgfhawaii.org



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

February 10, 2026

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER & LAND

TESTIMONY ON HB 1844
RELATING TO THE LAND USE COMMISSION

Conference Room 411 & Videoconference
9:00 AM

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice-Chair Morikawa, and Members of the Committee:

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 provides comments on HB 1844, which requires the Land Use Commission to reclassify lands that are designated for urban growth under a county general plan or county development plan as being in the urban district at the request of the county.

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau recognizes the seriousness of Hawai'i's housing shortage and supports efforts to increase the supply of affordable housing. At the same time, we must ensure that solutions to the housing crisis do not come at the expense of agriculture.

HB 1844 raises significant concerns for agriculture because it could require reclassifying agricultural lands based on their location within county urban growth areas or development plans. While county plans play an important role in long-range planning, they are policy documents and often identify areas for potential future use decades in advance. In many cases, lands within these areas are actively farmed.

Agriculture has evolved well beyond traditional soil classifications. Productive farming now includes greenhouse operations, diversified crops, orchard systems, and value-added agriculture that can occur on lands not historically considered "prime." Reclassifying agricultural land solely because it appears within a county's planned urban growth area risks prematurely removing land from agricultural use, even when it is viable and contributing to the local food system.

Once agricultural land is reclassified, it is effectively lost to agriculture. Increased land values, development pressure, and land use conflicts often follow, making continued farming increasingly difficult. Agricultural land, once lost, is rarely recovered.

The Land Use Commission provides an important statewide safeguard by balancing housing needs with agricultural protection, water resources, and long-term land use planning. HB 1844 would significantly reduce that role by limiting the Commission's discretion and placing greater weight on county planning documents that may not fully account for agricultural viability or food security considerations.

We support affordable housing, but not at the expense of Hawai'i's agricultural lands. Housing solutions must be pursued in a way that protects bona fide agriculture, avoids land use conflicts, and preserves the capacity to grow food locally.

For these reasons, the Hawai'i Farm Bureau has concerns with HB 1844 and respectfully urges the Committee to carefully consider its impacts on agriculture and the long-term protection of agricultural lands.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



House Committee on Water & Land

Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) Opposes: HB 1844

Tuesday, February 10th, 2026 9:00 a.m. Conference Room 411

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the Committee on Water & Land.

HAPA opposes HB1844 which seeks to enable the Land Use Commission (LUC) to fast track the reclassification of lands to an urban district for development, by side-stepping the current evidence-based process currently required by the LUC. The process by which the LUC would modify and update land use classifications would be predicated upon the county submitting to the commission a request to amend the urban district boundary for those lands designated for urban growth under a county general plan or county development plan. The commission would then have 90 within the receipt of the request to update the boundary lines and notify the county of implementation of the requested change.

Currently, the Commission must hold a hearing on the island on which the subject property is situated within not less than 60 days and not more than 180 days. The Commission must decide within defined timelines not exceeding a year and the Commission may approve, approve with conditions or deny the petition. On petitions to redistrict Conservation lands, the requirements of the "Chapter 343 – Environmental Impact Statements" must be met before the petition to reclassify Conservation land can be officially accepted as a proper filing and acted upon by the Commission. By forgoing the process of the LUC's "quasi-judicial proceedings", the aforementioned steps are not applied and due diligence in the process of issuing decisions with long-term ramifications may not be adequately assessed.

In essence, HB1844 would prevent the Land Use Commission from applying this careful, objective, and transparent process to the urbanization of lands at the request of the counties. This all but invites impacts to food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests that may not have been adequately examined or even considered in the county general plan process.

Please oppose HB1844 to ensure due diligence in the process of confirming land use re-classifications. Mahalo for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anne Frederick', written in a cursive style.

Anne Frederick, Executive Director

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/7/2026 10:07:30 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

My name is Bo Breda and I **STRONGLY OPPOSE** HB1844.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public’s interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected. **One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai‘i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public’s interests.**

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the careful, comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests that may not have been adequately examined or even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to **HOLD** this measure.

Sincerely,
Bo Breda

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/7/2026 10:10:25 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Donelle Sawyer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa, and members of the Committee,

My name is Donelle Sawyer and I **STRONGLY OPPOSE** HB1844.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public’s interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected. **One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai‘i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public’s interests.**

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the careful, comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests that may not have been adequately examined or even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to **HOLD** this measure.

Sincerely,
Donelle Sawyer

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/7/2026 10:12:34 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa, and members of the Committee,

My name is Peter Wilson and I **STRONGLY OPPOSE** HB1844.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public’s interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected. **One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai‘i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public’s interests.**

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the careful, comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests that may not have been adequately examined or even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to **HOLD** this measure.

Sincerely,
Peter Wilson

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/7/2026 10:25:11 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Linda Lyerly	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please do NOT pass this bill. Mahalo, Linda Lyerly Lahaina 96761

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/7/2026 11:12:49 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ANDREW ISODA	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa, and members of the Committee,

My name is Andrew Isoda and I **STRONGLY OPPOSE** HB1844.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public’s interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected. **One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai‘i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public’s interests.**

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the careful, comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests that may not have been adequately examined or even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to **HOLD** this measure.

Sincerely,
Andrew Isoda
Lahaina, Mau‘i

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/7/2026 11:57:04 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Princeton Yamaguchi	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa, and members of the Committee,

My name is Princeton Yamaguchi and I **STRONGLY OPPOSE** HB1844.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public’s interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected. **One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai‘i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public’s interests.**

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the careful, comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests that may not have been adequately examined or even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to **HOLD** this measure.

Sincerely,

Princeton Yamaguchi

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/7/2026 11:58:26 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Thomas Brandt	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly oppose.

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/7/2026 12:20:29 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deborah Umiamaka	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Re: HB1844 – Strong Opposition

I write in *unequivocal*** and resolute opposition to HB1844 and respectfully urge this Committee not only to hold, but to formally reject this measure in its entirety.**

HB1844 is fundamentally flawed because it sacrifices the long-term welfare of Hawai‘i’s people and resources for short-term, speculative interests. It undermines the public trust in our lands and waters, erodes protections that safeguard Native Hawaiian cultural and subsistence practices, and exposes future generations to irreversible environmental and social harm. Any bill that weakens these core protections is inherently contrary to the State’s constitutional duties and to basic principles of justice and equity for kama‘āina and ‘āina alike.

HB1844 jeopardizes Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights by accelerating the conversion of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into urban districts, thereby disrupting access to and the integrity of sacred sites, subsistence areas, and customary gathering practices that depend on healthy, intact ecosystems. By incentivizing speculative urbanization of ‘āina that presently supports small-scale farming, kalo cultivation, and local food production, the bill directly threatens Hawai‘i’s already fragile food security and undermines the State’s constitutional trust obligations to both Native Hawaiian beneficiaries and the broader public. Such reclassification is not a neutral administrative change; it is a one-way ratchet that invites intensive development, degrades watersheds and nearshore fisheries, and irreversibly forecloses the ability of our grandchildren and great-grandchildren to exercise customary rights, maintain self-reliance, and sustain a viable relationship with their ancestral lands.

The measure fails the test of sound public policy: it is overbroad, invites abuse, and shifts burdens and risks onto communities who are least able to bear them, including our children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. It creates unacceptable uncertainty around the stewardship of natural resources, invites protracted conflict and litigation, and destabilizes the very regulatory framework designed to ensure orderly, sustainable, and culturally respectful use of land in Hawai‘i. In short, HB1844 is neither necessary nor prudent; it is dangerous.

For these reasons, I respectfully but firmly request that the Committee vote to reject HB1844 outright and decline to advance it in any form.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Umiamaka

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/7/2026 12:39:42 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha:

I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB1844.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public’s interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected. **One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai‘i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public’s interests.**

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the careful, comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests that may not have been adequately examined or even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to **HOLD** this measure.

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/7/2026 12:59:38 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jody Smith	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa, and members of the Committee

I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB1844.

- The Land Use Commission (LUC) administers a comprehensive process to identify and mitigate impacts of land reclassification on natural and cultural resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, food security, and other public interests.
 - The LUC’s quasi-judicial district boundary amendment process ensures input from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and stakeholders is thoroughly considered.
 - This process differs from county land use decisionmaking and provides greater objectivity, transparency, and rigor.
 - The LUC has significant institutional knowledge for consistently protecting the public interest in large-scale land use changes.
 - Strong safeguards exist because land in Hawai‘i is extremely important and land use changes can have significant, long-lasting, or irreversible impacts.
 - The measure would require the LUC to urbanize land at county request without its current careful review process.
 - This could lead to insufficient examination of impacts to food security, Native Hawaiian rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and other critical public interests.

I strongly urge the Committee to **HOLD** this measure.

Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify.

Jody Smith
East Honolulu 96725

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/7/2026 2:37:57 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa, and members of the Committee,

My name is Michele Nihipali and I **STRONGLY OPPOSE** HB1844.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public’s interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected. **One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai‘i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public’s interests.**

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the careful, comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests that may not have been adequately examined or even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to **HOLD** this measure.
Sincerely,

Michele Nihipali

54-074 A Kam Hwy.

Hauula, HI 96717

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/7/2026 3:44:20 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

More voices mean a wider range of opinions and evidence heard.

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/7/2026 11:43:02 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mark Tamosiunas	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose.

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 8:15:21 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
J. Kehau Lucas	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

I respectfully but strongly oppose HB1844.

The Hawai‘i State Land Use Commission (LUC) was established to provide a uniform, statewide, and evidence-based framework for reviewing major land use changes with far-reaching public consequences. District boundary amendments administered by the LUC require a quasi-judicial process that is distinct from county land use decision-making. This process mandates the consideration of substantial evidence, including technical studies, environmental review, cultural impact assessments, expert testimony, and input from affected communities and Native Hawaiian cultural practitioners.

This structure exists for a reason. Reclassifying lands from Conservation, Rural, or Agricultural districts to the Urban district has significant and often irreversible impacts on food security, water resources, climate resilience, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices, and the long-term availability of land for future generations. State-level oversight ensures that these impacts are evaluated consistently across counties and that decisions are based on a complete factual record rather than solely on local planning priorities or development pressures.

County general plans, while important, are primarily policy documents and are not required to meet the same evidentiary standards, procedural safeguards, or scope of review as the LUC’s district boundary amendment process. Transferring effective decision-making authority to counties without requiring an equivalent, evidence-driven review would significantly reduce transparency and weaken protections for statewide public interests. Numerous studies and past land use decisions in Hawai‘i demonstrate that once agricultural or conservation lands are urbanized, those lands are rarely, if ever, returned to productive or protected status.

By compelling the LUC to approve urbanization requests initiated by counties, HB1844 would undermine the Commission’s role as an independent, objective decision-maker and erode safeguards that exist to balance development with long-term public needs. This approach increases the risk of unintended consequences, including the loss of prime agricultural lands, diminished food self-sufficiency, and harm to Native Hawaiian rights that depend on access to and stewardship of land.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to hold HB1844.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Aloha 'āina

J Kēhau Lucas

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 10:38:05 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ezgi Green	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa, and members of the Committee,

I oppose HB1844.

The Land Use Commission (LUC) administers a process for evaluating the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. This process examines impacts to natural and cultural resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, food security, and other public interests. The LUC’s quasi-judicial district boundary amendment process requires consideration of data and information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders. The LUC has developed institutional knowledge regarding the protection of public interests in large-scale land use changes.

This measure would require the LUC to urbanize lands upon request from counties without following its current review process. County general plan processes may not include the same level of examination of impacts to food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and other public interests that the LUC process provides.

The difference between the two processes is significant. The LUC process is designed to evaluate long-term impacts of land use changes, which can be difficult or impossible to reverse once implemented. Bypassing this process could result in land use decisions made without the comprehensive analysis currently required.

I respectfully urge the Committee to hold this measure.

Sincerely,

Ezgi Green, Waialua

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 10:57:02 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nancy Harter	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa, and members of the Committee,

My name is Nancy Harter and I **STRONGLY OPPOSE** HB1844.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public’s interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected. **One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai‘i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public’s interests.**

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the careful, comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests that may not have been adequately examined or even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to **HOLD** this measure.

Sincerely,

Nancy Harter, Lahaina, HI

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 11:59:25 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Travis Tsuda	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the House Committee,

Please oppose HB1844 which seeks to fast track the reclassification of lands to an urban district for development, by side stepping the current evidence-based process currently required by the Land Use Commissions (LUC). The process by which the LUC would modify and update land use classifications would be predicated upon the county submitting to the commission a request to amend the urban district boundary regardless of potential impacts to food security, sensitive ecosystems or native and public trust rights.

By forgoing the process of the LUC’s “quasi-judicial proceedings” and removing the due diligence in the process of issuing decisions long-term ramifications may not be adequately assessed. There would be no opportunity to consider the testimonies and evidence provided by potentially afflicted communities including farmers, cultural practitioners, and community experts, and no opportunity to issue environmental assessments to ensure the state’s agreement with proposed county plans.

Please oppose HB1844 to ensure due diligence in the process of confirming land use re-classifications.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Travis, Kaneohe

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 12:02:31 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pam Murphy	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the House Committee,

Please oppose HB1844 which seeks to fast track the reclassification of lands to an urban district for development, by side stepping the current evidence-based process currently required by the Land Use Commissions (LUC). The process by which the LUC would modify and update land use classifications would be predicated upon the county submitting to the commission a request to amend the urban district boundary regardless of potential impacts to food security, sensitive ecosystems or native and public trust rights.

By forgoing the process of the LUC’s “quasi-judicial proceedings” and removing the due diligence in the process of issuing decisions long-term ramifications may not be adequately assessed. There would be no opportunity to consider the testimonies and evidence provided by potentially afflicted communities including farmers, cultural practitioners, and community experts, and no opportunity to issue environmental assessments to ensure the state’s agreement with proposed county plans.

Please oppose HB1844 to ensure due diligence in the process of confirming land use re-classifications.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Pamela Murphy, Kilauea, Kauai

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 12:03:27 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bianca Isaki	Individual	Oppose	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

Please OPPOSE HB 1844. It would require Land Use Commission to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without any opportunity to consider the testimonies and evidence provided by farmers, cultural practitioners, climate scientists, and other experts and stakeholders, much less make written findings of fact and conclusions of law to address impacts to our food security, cultural integrity, and other public interests. This will create prolonged conflict and undermine the apparent purpose of the bill in fasttracking urbanization.

Yours,

Bianca Isaki

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 12:07:58 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Valerie Weiss	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this measure. Please continue to protect AG LAND.

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 12:40:31 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Erin Hagan	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the House Committee,

Please oppose HB1844 which seeks to fast track the reclassification of lands to an urban district for development, by side stepping the current evidence-based process currently required by the Land Use Commissions (LUC). The process by which the LUC would modify and update land use classifications would be predicated upon the county submitting to the commission a request to amend the urban district boundary regardless of potential impacts to food security, sensitive ecosystems or native and public trust rights.

By forgoing the process of the LUC’s “quasi-judicial proceedings” and removing the due diligence in the process of issuing decisions long-term ramifications may not be adequately assessed. There would be no opportunity to consider the testimonies and evidence provided by potentially afflicted communities including farmers, cultural practitioners, and community experts, and no opportunity to issue environmental assessments to ensure the state’s agreement with proposed county plans.

Please oppose HB1844 to ensure due diligence in the process of confirming land use re-classifications.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Erin Hagan, Waialua

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 12:43:51 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

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 testifying in opposition to HB1844, a bill that would dismantle a core safeguard of Hawai'i's statewide land use planning system. This legislation would mandate the Land Use Commission (LUC) to automatically reclassify lands to an urban district at the request of a county, stripping away the essential, evidence-based public hearing process that currently allows for the consideration of broad public interests and long-term consequences.

HB1844 is not a streamlining measure; it is an undemocratic and reckless shortcut. It would require the LUC to rubber-stamp county requests without any opportunity to hear from or weigh the testimonies and evidence provided by the very communities most affected: farmers, cultural practitioners, climate scientists, housing advocates, and concerned residents. Crucially, it would eliminate the requirement for the LUC to issue written findings of fact and conclusions of law. This means there would be no legal or factual record to justify a decision, no accountability for how impacts were considered, and no opportunity for meaningful judicial review if the process is flawed.

The implications of this are severe and far-reaching:

- **Threatens Food Security:** By fast-tracking the urbanization of agricultural lands without assessing the cumulative loss to our local food production capacity, this bill directly undermines our state's food security and resilience. It prioritizes speculative development over the stewardship of finite agricultural resources.
- **Circumvents Environmental & Cultural Protection:** The bill would allow massive land use changes without any mandated environmental assessment to evaluate impacts on watersheds, sensitive ecosystems, or historic properties. It disregards the rights of Native Hawaiians and the public trust doctrine, which obligates the state to protect customary and traditional practices and natural resources for future generations.
- **Removes Due Process and Public Trust:** The LUC's quasi-judicial proceedings exist for a reason: to ensure that decisions of immense consequence are made transparently, based on evidence, and with careful deliberation. HB1844 replaces this due process with an automatic, ministerial act, silencing community voices and removing the checks and

balances essential for good governance.

- **Creates Long-Term Risk:** Decisions to urbanize land are permanent and shape our islands for centuries. Making such decisions without a thorough, recorded analysis of infrastructure needs, climate vulnerability, and socioeconomic impacts is irresponsible and will lead to costly problems for future generations to solve.

The current LUC process, while imperfect, provides a critical statewide perspective that balances county initiatives with overarching state interests like environmental protection, cultural preservation, and agricultural sustainability. HB1844 abolishes that balance in favor of unchecked, expedited development.

I urge you to protect the integrity of our land use planning and the voice of our communities. Please reject this dangerous and undemocratic bill. Vote NO on HB1844.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 1:02:10 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Perle Besserman	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the House Committee,

Please oppose HB1844 which seeks to fast track the reclassification of lands to an urban district for development, by side stepping the current evidence-based process currently required by the Land Use Commissions (LUC). The process by which the LUC would modify and update land use classifications would be predicated upon the county submitting to the commission a request to amend the urban district boundary regardless of potential impacts to food security, sensitive ecosystems or native and public trust rights.

By forgoing the process of the LUC’s “quasi-judicial proceedings” and removing the due diligence in the process of issuing decisions long-term ramifications may not be adequately assessed. There would be no opportunity to consider the testimonies and evidence provided by potentially afflicted communities including farmers, cultural practitioners, and community experts, and no opportunity to issue environmental assessments to ensure the state’s agreement with proposed county plans.

Please oppose HB1844 to ensure due diligence in the process of confirming land use re-classifications.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Perle Besserman, Oahu

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 1:08:13 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
denise woods	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the House Committee,

Please oppose HB1844 which seeks to fast track the reclassification of lands to an urban district for development, by side stepping the current evidence-based process currently required by the Land Use Commissions (LUC). The process by which the LUC would modify and update land use classifications would be predicated upon the county submitting to the commission a request to amend the urban district boundary regardless of potential impacts to food security, sensitive ecosystems or native and public trust rights.

By forgoing the process of the LUC’s “quasi-judicial proceedings” and removing the due diligence in the process of issuing decisions long-term ramifications may not be adequately assessed. There would be no opportunity to consider the testimonies and evidence provided by potentially afflicted communities including farmers, cultural practitioners, and community experts, and no opportunity to issue environmental assessments to ensure the state’s agreement with proposed county plans.

Please oppose HB1844 to ensure due diligence in the process of confirming land use re-classifications.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Denise Woods, RN Kapa'a

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 1:08:29 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Georgia L Hoopes	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the House Committee,

Please oppose HB1844 which seeks to fast track the reclassification of lands to an urban district for development, by side stepping the current evidence-based process currently required by the Land Use Commissions (LUC). The process by which the LUC would modify and update land use classifications would be predicated upon the county submitting to the commission a request to amend the urban district boundary regardless of potential impacts to food security, sensitive ecosystems or native and public trust rights.

By forgoing the process of the LUC’s “quasi-judicial proceedings” and removing the due diligence in the process of issuing decisions long-term ramifications may not be adequately assessed. There would be no opportunity to consider the testimonies and evidence provided by potentially afflicted communities including farmers, cultural practitioners, and community experts, and no opportunity to issue environmental assessments to ensure the state’s agreement with proposed county plans.

Please oppose HB1844 to ensure due diligence in the process of confirming land use re-classifications.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Georgia Hoopes, Kalaheo

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 1:26:54 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha, I am writing in opposition to HB1844. I do not believe that urbanizing our ag and conservation lands at the counties' request based on county plans is a good idea. I believe that more is at stake with regards to what our food producers and cultural practitioners want, as well as the preservation needed for our biosphere and the ag lands we will need if we are to pursue a more self-sufficient food supply in these times of climate change and geopolitical upheaval. Mahalo for your consideration.

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 1:45:03 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
cheryl burghardt	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Committee members,

Please OPPOSE HB1844 which seeks to fast track the reclassification of lands to an urban district for development, by side stepping the current evidence-based process currently required by the Land Use Commissions (LUC). The process by which the LUC would modify and update land use classifications would be predicated upon the county submitting to the commission a request to amend the urban district boundary regardless of potential impacts to food security, sensitive ecosystems or native and public trust rights.

It always seems that the issues often come down to the processes and procedures not being followed. By forgoing the process of the LUC’s “quasi-judicial proceedings” and removing the due diligence in the process of issuing decisions long-term ramifications may not be adequately assessed. There would be no opportunity to consider the testimonies and evidence provided by potentially afflicted communities including farmers, cultural practitioners, and community experts, and no opportunity to issue environmental assessments to ensure the state’s agreement with proposed county plans.

Please oppose HB1844 to ensure due diligence in the process of confirming land use re-classifications.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Cheryl Burghardt

Nuuanu Oahu

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 2:04:36 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Priscilla Stuckey	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa, and Members of the House Committee,

Please oppose HB1844, which seeks to fast-track the reclassification of lands to an urban district for development by side-stepping the current evidence-based process currently required by the Land Use Commissions (LUC). The process by which the LUC would modify and update land use classifications would be predicated upon the county submitting to the commission a request to amend the urban district boundary regardless of potential impacts to food security, sensitive ecosystems, or native and public trust rights.

By forgoing the process of the LUC’s “quasi-judicial proceedings” and removing the due diligence, long-term ramifications may not be adequately assessed. There would be no opportunity to consider the testimonies and evidence provided by potentially afflicted communities, including farmers, cultural practitioners, and community experts, and there would be no opportunity to issue environmental assessments to ensure the state’s agreement with proposed county plans.

Please oppose HB1844 to ensure due diligence in the process of confirming land use re-classifications.

Mahalo for your consideration!
Priscilla Stuckey, Kihei

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 2:15:14 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
KEALA FUNG	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the House Committee,

Please oppose HB1844 which seeks to fast track the reclassification of lands to an urban district for development, by side stepping the current evidence-based process currently required by the Land Use Commissions (LUC). The process by which the LUC would modify and update land use classifications would be predicated upon the county submitting to the commission a request to amend the urban district boundary regardless of potential impacts to food security, sensitive ecosystems or native and public trust rights.

By forgoing the process of the LUC’s “quasi-judicial proceedings” and removing the due diligence in the process of issuing decisions long-term ramifications may not be adequately assessed. There would be no opportunity to consider the testimonies and evidence provided by potentially afflicted communities including farmers, cultural practitioners, and community experts, and no opportunity to issue environmental assessments to ensure the state’s agreement with proposed county plans.

Please oppose HB1844 to ensure due diligence in the process of confirming land use re-classifications.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Keala Fung, Honolulu HI

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 3:16:48 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
kimdonghyeon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the House Committee,

Please oppose HB1844 which seeks to fast track the reclassification of lands to an urban district for development, by side stepping the current evidence-based process currently required by the Land Use Commissions (LUC). The process by which the LUC would modify and update land use classifications would be predicated upon the county submitting to the commission a request to amend the urban district boundary regardless of potential impacts to food security, sensitive ecosystems or native and public trust rights.

By forgoing the process of the LUC’s “quasi-judicial proceedings” and removing the due diligence in the process of issuing decisions long-term ramifications may not be adequately assessed. There would be no opportunity to consider the testimonies and evidence provided by potentially afflicted communities including farmers, cultural practitioners, and community experts, and no opportunity to issue environmental assessments to ensure the state’s agreement with proposed county plans.

Please oppose HB1844 to ensure due diligence in the process of confirming land use re-classifications.

Mahalo for your consideration!

kimdonghyeon

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 4:37:06 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ruta Jordans	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Strongly oppose.

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 4:41:43 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Teri Corpuz	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa, and members of the Committee,

My name is Teri Corpuz and I **STRONGLY OPPOSE** HB1844.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public’s interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected. **One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai‘i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public’s interests.**

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the careful, comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests that may not have been adequately examined or even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to **HOLD** this measure.

Sincerely,

Teri Corpuz (Pukalani, Maui)

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 7:27:37 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ann Dorsey	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the House Committee,

Please oppose HB1844 which seeks to fast track the reclassification of lands to an urban district for development, by side stepping the current evidence-based process currently required by the Land Use Commissions (LUC). The process by which the LUC would modify and update land use classifications would be predicated upon the county submitting to the commission a request to amend the urban district boundary regardless of potential impacts to food security, sensitive ecosystems or native and public trust rights.

By forgoing the process of the LUC’s “quasi-judicial proceedings” and removing the due diligence in the process of issuing decisions long-term ramifications may not be adequately assessed. There would be no opportunity to consider the testimonies and evidence provided by potentially afflicted communities including farmers, cultural practitioners, and community experts, and no opportunity to issue environmental assessments to ensure the state’s agreement with proposed county plans.

Please oppose HB1844 to ensure due diligence in the process of confirming land use re-classifications.

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 7:48:22 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Does not allow for community testimony or evidence

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 8:12:48 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jasmine Balangitao	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hi chair and committee members I'm writing to you to oppose this bill. Land use re classification is very important and needs to have input from all communities. This bill is wrong for what we need to achieve responsibly for the next generation.

Thank you , Jasmine Balangitao of Kaimuki

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 8:56:34 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the House Committee,

Please oppose HB1844 which seeks to fast track the reclassification of lands to an urban district for development, by side stepping the current evidence-based process currently required by the Land Use Commissions (LUC). The process by which the LUC would modify and update land use classifications would be predicated upon the county submitting to the commission a request to amend the urban district boundary regardless of potential impacts to food security, sensitive ecosystems or native and public trust rights.

By forgoing the process of the LUC’s “quasi-judicial proceedings” and removing the due diligence in the process of issuing decisions long-term ramifications may not be adequately assessed. There would be no opportunity to consider the testimonies and evidence provided by potentially afflicted communities including farmers, cultural practitioners, and community experts, and no opportunity to issue environmental assessments to ensure the state’s agreement with proposed county plans.

Please oppose HB1844 to ensure due diligence in the process of confirming land use re-classifications.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Kaleiheana Stormcrow, Mountain View

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 9:18:50 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
B.A. McClintock	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please oppose HB1844 which seeks to fast track the reclassification of lands to an urban district for development, by side stepping the current evidence-based process currently required by the Land Use Commissions (LUC). The process by which the LUC would modify and update land use classifications would be predicated upon the county submitting to the commission a request to amend the urban district boundary regardless of potential impacts to food security, sensitive ecosystems or native and public trust rights.

By forgoing the process of the LUC’s “quasi-judicial proceedings” and removing the due diligence in the process of issuing decisions long-term ramifications may not be adequately assessed. There would be no opportunity to consider the testimonies and evidence provided by potentially afflicted communities including farmers, cultural practitioners, and community experts, and no opportunity to issue environmental assessments to ensure the state’s agreement with proposed county plans.

Please oppose HB1844 to ensure due diligence in the process of confirming land use re-classifications.

Mahalo for your consideration!

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 10:02:38 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cheryl Ho	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa, and Committee Members:

I strongly oppose HB 1844!

We must not leave the decision to urbanize Agricultural and Conservation Lands up to the Counties without carefully considering the testimonies of their original cultivators, cultural practitioners, climate scientists, and other stakeholders. This has happened in too many places and too many times, leading to the loss of precious ‘āina for the purposes which perpetuate our culture and livelihood.

Please oppose HB1844 to ensure due diligence in the process of confirming land use re-classifications.

Mahalo,

Cheryl Ho, Nu‘uanu

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/9/2026 12:32:54 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
L. Osterer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the House Committee,

I oppose HB1844 because fast tracks reclassification of lands for urban development by eliminating the current process currently required for due diligence by the Land Use Commissions (LUC). It would allow the county to submit a request to the commission to amend the urban district boundary regardless of potential impacts to food security, sensitive ecosystems or native and public trust rights. Long-term ramifications may not be adequately assessed. There would be no opportunity to consider the testimonies and evidence provided by potentially afflicted communities: farmers, cultural practitioners, and community experts. And no environmental assessments would be required. Often it is requests for ag land reclassification. Climate scientists, and other experts and stakeholders should be able to submit findings of fact and conclusions of law to address impacts to our food security, cultural integrity, and other public interests.

Please oppose HB1844 to ensure due diligence in the process of confirming land use re-classifications.

Mahalo for your consideration!

L. Osterer, Koloa, Hi. registered voter

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/9/2026 4:22:54 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jodi Rodar	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the House Committee,

Please oppose HB1844 which seeks to fast track the reclassification of lands to an urban district for development, by side stepping the current evidence-based process currently required by the Land Use Commissions (LUC). The process by which the LUC would modify and update land use classifications would be predicated upon the county submitting to the commission a request to amend the urban district boundary regardless of potential impacts to food security, sensitive ecosystems or native and public trust rights.

By forgoing the process of the LUC’s “quasi-judicial proceedings” and removing the due diligence in the process of issuing decisions long-term ramifications may not be adequately assessed. There would be no opportunity to consider the testimonies and evidence provided by potentially afflicted communities including farmers, cultural practitioners, and community experts, and no opportunity to issue environmental assessments to ensure the state’s agreement with proposed county plans.

Please oppose HB1844 to ensure due diligence in the process of confirming land use re-classifications.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jodi Rodar

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/9/2026 8:07:32 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
wayne zebzda	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

no please

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/9/2026 8:23:42 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Taylor McKenzie	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the House Committee,

Please oppose HB1844 which seeks to fast track the reclassification of lands to an urban district for development, by side stepping the current evidence-based process currently required by the Land Use Commissions (LUC). The process by which the LUC would modify and update land use classifications would be predicated upon the county submitting to the commission a request to amend the urban district boundary regardless of potential impacts to food security, sensitive ecosystems or native and public trust rights.

By forgoing the process of the LUC’s “quasi-judicial proceedings” and removing the due diligence in the process of issuing decisions long-term ramifications may not be adequately assessed. There would be no opportunity to consider the testimonies and evidence provided by potentially afflicted communities including farmers, cultural practitioners, and community experts, and no opportunity to issue environmental assessments to ensure the state’s agreement with proposed county plans.

Please oppose HB1844 to ensure due diligence in the process of confirming land use re-classifications.

Mahalo for your consideration!

TK McKenzie

Honolulu, O‘ahu

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/9/2026 8:41:47 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leilani Mayer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the House Committee,

Please oppose HB1844 which seeks to fast track the reclassification of lands to an urban district for development, by side stepping the current evidence-based process currently required by the Land Use Commissions (LUC). The process by which the LUC would modify and update land use classifications would be predicated upon the county submitting to the commission a request to amend the urban district boundary regardless of potential impacts to food security, sensitive ecosystems or native and public trust rights.

By forgoing the process of the LUC's "quasi-judicial proceedings" and removing the due diligence in the process of issuing decisions long-term ramifications may not be adequately assessed. There would be no opportunity to consider the testimonies and evidence provided by potentially afflicted communities including farmers, cultural practitioners, and community experts, and no opportunity to issue environmental assessments to ensure the state's agreement with proposed county plans.

Please oppose HB1844 to ensure due diligence in the process of confirming land use re-classifications.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Leilani, Wailua Kaua'i

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/9/2026 8:59:23 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
pamela burrell	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha House members,

I strongly appose this bill.

We do need housing but not on conservation land and ag land.

please appose HB 1844

thankyou,

Pamela Burrell , Kalihiwai, Kaua'i

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/9/2026 9:00:43 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Breon Michel	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the House Committee,

Please oppose HB1844 which seeks to fast track the reclassification of lands to an urban district for development, by side stepping the current evidence-based process currently required by the Land Use Commissions (LUC). The process by which the LUC would modify and update land use classifications would be predicated upon the county submitting to the commission a request to amend the urban district boundary regardless of potential impacts to food security, sensitive ecosystems or native and public trust rights.

By forgoing the process of the LUC’s “quasi-judicial proceedings” and removing the due diligence in the process of issuing decisions long-term ramifications may not be adequately assessed. There would be no opportunity to consider the testimonies and evidence provided by potentially afflicted communities including farmers, cultural practitioners, and community experts, and no opportunity to issue environmental assessments to ensure the state’s agreement with proposed county plans.

Please oppose HB1844 to ensure due diligence in the process of confirming land use re-classifications.

Thank you for your consideration.

Breon Michel, Kula, HI

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/9/2026 9:03:59 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Soo Sun Choe	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Reclassifying land for urban use without the proper safeguards puts our agricultural lands, food security, and cultural integrity at risk.

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/9/2026 9:19:37 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leo Nahe Smith	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the House Committee,

Please oppose HB1844 which seeks to fast track the reclassification of lands to an urban district for development, by side stepping the current evidence-based process currently required by the Land Use Commissions (LUC). The process by which the LUC would modify and update land use classifications would be predicated upon the county submitting to the commission a request to amend the urban district boundary regardless of potential impacts to food security, sensitive ecosystems or native and public trust rights.

By forgoing the process of the LUC’s “quasi-judicial proceedings” and removing the due diligence in the process of issuing decisions long-term ramifications may not be adequately assessed. There would be no opportunity to consider the testimonies and evidence provided by potentially afflicted communities including farmers, cultural practitioners, and community experts, and no opportunity to issue environmental assessments to ensure the state’s agreement with proposed county plans.

Please oppose HB1844 to ensure due diligence in the process of confirming land use re-classifications.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Leo Nahe, Nu'uuanu

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/9/2026 10:16:47 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jackie Keefe	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

My name is Jackie Keefe and I am writing in **strong opposition of HB1844**, which seeks to fast track the reclassification of lands to an urban district for development by sidestepping the current evidence-based process required by the land use commission (LUC).

We recognize that Hawai'i is in a housing crisis, but this does not excuse the elimination of consideration of testimonies and evidence provided by farmers, cultural practitioners, climate, scientists, and other experts and stakeholders. When considering rezoning, we must always consider the potential impacts of food security, sensitive ecosystems, or native and public trust rights.

Fast-tracking reclassification of zoning removes the due diligence in the process by disregarding possible long-term ramifications.

Please oppose HB1844 to ensure our values are upheld in the process of confirming land use reclassifications.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Jackie Keefe, Lahaina

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/9/2026 10:31:45 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Regina Gregory	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

oppose

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/9/2026 11:47:51 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hayley Peter-Contesse	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the House Committee,

Please oppose HB1844 which seeks to fast track the reclassification of lands to an urban district for development, by side stepping the current evidence-based process currently required by the Land Use Commissions (LUC). The process by which the LUC would modify and update land use classifications would be predicated upon the county submitting to the commission a request to amend the urban district boundary regardless of potential impacts to food security, sensitive ecosystems or native and public trust rights.

By forgoing the process of the LUC’s “quasi-judicial proceedings” and removing the due diligence in the process of issuing decisions long-term ramifications may not be adequately assessed. There would be no opportunity to consider the testimonies and evidence provided by potentially afflicted communities including farmers, cultural practitioners, and community experts, and no opportunity to issue environmental assessments to ensure the state’s agreement with proposed county plans.

Please oppose HB1844 to ensure due diligence in the process of confirming land use re-classifications.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Hayley Peter-Contesse, Makaha

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/9/2026 1:43:53 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Stacey Alapai	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Please OPPOSE HB1844 and uphold the protections of Agricultural and Conservation lands. This bill would require the Land Use Commission to urbanize lands at counties request WITHOUT any opportunity for public testimony or evidence. This weakens our chances to give input and ensure the impacts are adequately addressed.

Mahalo,

Stacey Alapai, Maui

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/9/2026 1:49:54 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Molly Mamaril	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the House Committee,

Please oppose HB1844 which seeks to fast track the reclassification of lands to an urban district for development, by side stepping the current evidence-based process currently required by the Land Use Commissions (LUC). The process by which the LUC would modify and update land use classifications would be predicated upon the county submitting to the commission a request to amend the urban district boundary regardless of potential impacts to food security, sensitive ecosystems or native and public trust rights.

By forgoing the process of the LUC’s “quasi-judicial proceedings” and removing the due diligence in the process of issuing decisions long-term ramifications may not be adequately assessed. There would be no opportunity to consider the testimonies and evidence provided by potentially afflicted communities including farmers, cultural practitioners, and community experts, and no opportunity to issue environmental assessments to ensure the state’s agreement with proposed county plans.

Please oppose HB1844 to ensure due diligence in the process of confirming land use re-classifications.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Molly Mamaril

Kaimukī, O‘ahu

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/9/2026 2:05:01 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

HB1844 Change Agricultural Land to Urban: Please keep the Agricultural lands AGRICULTURAL! With the recent cutbacks from our Federal Government depleting our help from the mainland, we need to be able to supply our own food. We need agricultural lands to do that.

I appreciate your consideration of our needs!

Dr. Patricia Fallbeck

1341 Kapiolani Blvd. #18 B

Honolulu, HI, 96814

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/9/2026 2:10:05 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Annalise Hart	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the House Committee,

Please oppose HB1844 which seeks to fast track the reclassification of lands to an urban district for development, by side stepping the current evidence-based process currently required by the Land Use Commissions (LUC). The process by which the LUC would modify and update land use classifications would be predicated upon the county submitting to the commission a request to amend the urban district boundary regardless of potential impacts to food security, sensitive ecosystems or native and public trust rights.

By forgoing the process of the LUC’s “quasi-judicial proceedings” and removing the due diligence in the process of issuing decisions long-term ramifications may not be adequately assessed. There would be no opportunity to consider the testimonies and evidence provided by potentially afflicted communities including farmers, cultural practitioners, and community experts, and no opportunity to issue environmental assessments to ensure the state’s agreement with proposed county plans.

Please oppose HB1844 to ensure due diligence in the process of confirming land use re-classifications.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Annalise Hart

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/9/2026 2:22:30 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa, and members of the Committee,

I write today in strong opposition to HB1844.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public’s interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected. **One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai‘i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public’s interests.**

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the careful, comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests that may not have been adequately examined or even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to **HOLD** this measure.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

Noelle Lindenmann, Kailua-Kona

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/9/2026 2:36:29 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa, and members of the Committee,

My name is Anne M. Lorenzo and I **STRONGLY OPPOSE** HB1844.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public’s interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected. **One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai‘i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public’s interests.**

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the careful, comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests that may not have been adequately examined or even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to **HOLD** this measure.

Sincerely,

Anne M. Lorenzo

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/9/2026 3:30:28 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Nelson	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose this legislation. Fast tracking reclassification of lands leaves no opportunity for testimonies and evidence by farmers, cultural practitioners and other experts and stakeholders.

I ask you to carefully consider the consequences of this bill. Thank you so much.

Elizabeth Nelson

Kaneohe

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/9/2026 4:01:46 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
malcolm mackey	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa, and members of the Committee,

My name is Malcolm Mackey and I **STRONGLY OPPOSE** HB1844.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public’s interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected. **One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai‘i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public’s interests.**

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the careful, comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests that may not have been adequately examined or even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to **HOLD** this measure.

Sincerely,
Malcolm Mackey

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/9/2026 4:24:40 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa, and members of the Committee,

My name is Keri Zacher and I **STRONGLY OPPOSE** HB1844.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public’s interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected. **One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai‘i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public’s interests.**

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the careful, comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests that may not have been adequately examined or even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to **HOLD** this measure.

Sincerely,
Keri Zacher

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/9/2026 4:26:30 PM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Charlene Casserley	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the House Committee,

I believe public input and the opportunity to look at long term ramifications relating to land use and classification are vital to address our food security, cultural integrity, and other public interests. Its important that these processes are not bypassed.

Please oppose HB1844 which seeks to fast track the reclassification of lands to an urban district for development, by side stepping the current evidence-based process currently required by the Land Use Commissions (LUC). The process by which the LUC would modify and update land use classifications would be predicated upon the county submitting to the commission a request to amend the urban district boundary regardless of potential impacts to food security, sensitive ecosystems or native and public trust rights.

By forgoing the process of the LUC’s “quasi-judicial proceedings” and removing the due diligence in the process of issuing decisions long-term ramifications may not be adequately assessed. There would be no opportunity to consider the testimonies and evidence provided by potentially afflicted communities including farmers, cultural practitioners, and community experts, and no opportunity to issue environmental assessments to ensure the state’s agreement with proposed county plans.

Please oppose HB1844 to ensure due diligence in the process of confirming land use re-classifications.

Mahalo for your consideration!

Charlene Casserley,

Kula Maui

HB-1844

Submitted on: 2/10/2026 12:50:55 AM

Testimony for WAL on 2/10/2026 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lucienne de Naie	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa and Members of the House Committee,

I strongly oppose this bill. Based upon first hand experience . Please, Please, Please listen to folks who live in communities across our state who want the Land Use Commission to exercise common sense and provide a second "set of eyes" for properties that have been given urbanidesignation in County Community Plans, due to political pressure by local legislative bodies.

Too often, local city councils can be charmed by high paid consultants into giving Urban designations in Community Plans to lands with high hazard conditions, no infrastructure and no easy way to make the situation workable. We have seen this happen on Maui with hundreds of acres proposed for completely unrealistic development. In the end, these areas often are not developed and the county needs to revert them back to Agricultural status- wasting everyone's time and money.

I served on an island wide planning group on Maui island and have seen this happen first hand. Please do not support this bill that will enshrine lucrative development rights on a variety of unsuitable high risk lands, simply because they have pushed their way into a Community Plan growth boundary. We need the LUC to apply a stricter standard.

Mahalo for your consideration

Lucienne de Naie Huelo, Maui

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 12:56:41 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Barbara Kaaumoana	Hanalei Watershed Hui	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Alha,

The Hanalei Watershed Hui STRONGLY OPPOSES HB1844 HD1 as it requires the Land Use Commission to urbanize large areas of land without any opportunity for community practices or knowledge to be heard or their experience considered.

We stand for community based knowledge and culturally pono practices.

THIS BILL ALLOWS NONE OF THAT..PLEASE HOLD/KILL THIS BAD BILL.

Me ka pono,

Makaala Kaaumoana

Executive Director



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

February 24, 2026

TO: Chair Tarnas and Members of the Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs Committee
RE: HB 1844, Relating to the Land Use Commission

Dear Chair Tarnas and Committee Members,

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

We support House Bill 1844. This bill will require the Land Use Commission to reclassify lands that are designated for urban growth under a county general plan or county development plan as being in the urban district at the request of the county.

Hawai'i's housing shortage is, in large part, a supply constraint driven by layered and duplicative approval processes. When lands that have already been vetted and designated for urban expansion at the county level must undergo a separate reclassification process before the Hawaii Land Use Commission, the result is added delays, uncertainty, and added cost.

As Hawai'i faces a persistent housing deficit across income levels, policy alignment between state and county planning frameworks is essential. This bill advances that alignment in a targeted and responsible manner.

Let's advance HB 1844.

Thank you,

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

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

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

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

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 2:06:07 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
laurel brier	Kauai Climate Action Coalition	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Land Use Commission plays a critical role in protecting the 'aina. HB1844 would allow for permanent impacts to our food security, climate resilience, housing affordability traditional rights of Native Hawaiians, as well as other unforeseen repercussions. **STRONG OPPOSITION** to this bill

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 7:55:29 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Susan B Roberts Emery	Green Party of Hawai'i	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of Committee,

My name is Susan RobertsEmery, as Co Chair of the Green Party of Hawai'i members, I write today on behalf of our members, in VERY STRONG OPPOSITION TO HB1844 HD1. By forcing the Land Use Commission to urbanize lands at the request of counties, without a comprehensive and transparent process or review , would set a string of irreversible environmental impacts in motion. Do No Harm! That is the Precautionary Principle that the Green Party follows and we will allow you to use it in the legislature.

With great Respect the Green Party of Hawai'i asks that you HOLD THIS MEASURE.

Mahalo,

Susan RoberstEmery

Green Party of Hawai'i

Paauilo



February 23, 2026

Representative David Tarnas, Chair
Representative Mahina Poepoe, Vice Chair
Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

RE: **HB 1844 - Relating to the Land Use Commission**
Hearing date: February 24, 2026, at 2:00 PM

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

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of NAIOP Hawaii in **STRONG SUPPORT** of **HB 1844 RELATING TO THE LAND USE COMMISSION**. NAIOP Hawaii is the local chapter of the nation's leading organization for office, industrial, retail, residential and mixed-use real estate. NAIOP Hawaii has over 200 members in the State including local developers, owners, investors, asset managers, lenders, and other professionals.

HB 1844 addresses the procedural overlap known as "double entitlement." The bill provides a mechanism for counties to process State Land Use District Boundary Amendments (SLUDBA) for lands already designated for growth within their respective, adopted community plans.

The core of this issue is the sequential nature of two separate public review processes. County General Plans and Community Development Plans are adopted following multi-year public processes. These planning efforts typically involve:

- **Public & Stakeholder Engagement:** A series of community meetings, design charrettes, and informational workshops.
- **Technical Review:** Supporting technical studies concerning infrastructure capacity, environmental impacts, socioeconomic effects, and cultural resources.
- **Formal Public Hearings:** A quasi-legislative adoption process that includes multiple readings and formal public hearings before county planning commissions and county councils, providing platforms for public testimony.

When a county designates an "Urban Growth Boundary" through this process, it codifies a community-vetted consensus on future growth locations.

Under the current system, a project that conforms to this adopted county plan must subsequently undergo a separate, quasi-judicial public approval process at the State Land Use Commission (LUC). This second process often re-examines land use questions that were addressed during the county planning phase.

This duplicative "double entitlement" system, as identified in the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development's 2022 "State Land Use Review of Districts,"¹ is a documented driver of project delays and cost increases. The quasi-judicial nature of the LUC process can add years to project timelines and introduces litigation risks, which in turn contribute to higher costs for Hawai'i's homebuyers and renters.

To ensure HB 1844 functions as intended and avoids unintended procedural barriers, NAIOP Hawaii respectfully suggest the following technical clarifications:

1. Define "requisite analyses."

Page 2, Line 3 should specify that "requisite analyses" means those required under **HRS §226-58**, to prevent expansion through administrative rulemaking.

2. Make the LUC role administrative; assign compliance review to OPSD.

The bill should clarify that the LUC's role is purely ministerial and require the **Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD)** to issue a limited-scope letter certifying county plan compliance with **HRS §226-58**, to be included with the county's submission. OPSD should issue the letter within **90 days** of request.

3. Add a deemed-approval failsafe. Land should be deemed urban upon the earlier of:

- (1) the LUC's recording of the boundary amendment, or
- (2) expiration of the applicable 90-day period, to provide a clear and predictable effective date.

HB 1844 does not bypass planning; it better aligns the state and county planning designations. It empowers counties to implement their own community-derived vision for growth. By aligning the state district boundary with the county's designated growth boundary, this bill removes a documented procedural redundancy, allowing for the more timely and efficient creation of housing for Hawai'i's residents.

For these reasons, NAIOP Hawai'i supports the passage of HB 1844. NAIOP Hawaii appreciates the Legislature's commitment to creating forward looking policy for Hawaii residents and we look forward to working together. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Mahalo for your consideration,



Ken Hayashida, President
NAIOP Hawaii

¹ [https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/op/lud/20220128 State Boundary Review-Final/SLUReviewofDistricts1-28-22Final3.pdf](https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/op/lud/20220128%20State%20Boundary%20Review-Final/SLUReviewofDistricts1-28-22Final3.pdf)

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 4:40:02 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deborah Umiamaka	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

Testifying in ****STRONG OPPOSITION**** to HB 1844, HD1. This legislation contravenes HRS Chapter 205 by mandating automatic reclassification of agricultural, rural, and conservation lands upon county request, thereby abrogating the Land Use Commission's statutorily required contested case proceedings and constitutional due process safeguards under Article XI, §9—****HOLD**** forthwith.

Constitutional Infirmities

The measure obliterates quasi-judicial protections, including public hearings, evidentiary cross-examination, and findings of fact, exposing public trust resources to arbitrary urbanization in violation of judicial precedents upholding LUC rigor.

Public Trust Breaches

It imperils Article XII, §7 Native Hawaiian customary rights, watershed functions, and post-Lahaina fire resilience by fast-tracking sprawl sans legislative findings, precipitating litigation under HRS §205-4.

Viable Alternatives

Counties possess plenary zoning authority per charter; advance HB 2103's targeted reforms to reconcile development with public trust duties absent evisceration of statewide oversight.

Mahalo. ****HOLD HB 1844**** to preserve ‘āina intergenerational equity.

Sincerely,

Deborah Umiamaka

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 4:54:46 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee,

My name is Kealii Pang, Ph.D., and I reside in Kaimukī, Hawai‘i. As a former environmental consultant and regulator, I have spent my career navigating the delicate balance between development and preservation. I have seen firsthand why rigorous oversight isn't just "red tape"—it is the baseline for protecting our future.

I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB1844 HD1.

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
- Food security
- Climate resilience

The reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district is a high-stakes decision with permanent consequences. Unlike existing county land-use decision-making, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC process ensures that data from technical experts and cultural practitioners is not just "heard," but is adequately considered and incorporated into approvals.

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties—bypassing the objective and transparent process currently in place—this measure all but invites long-term or irreversible impacts. My experience in the field has taught me that once these lands are urbanized without proper vetting, there is no going back. We risk sacrificing our food security and housing affordability for short-term gains that ignore the specific nuances of Hawai‘i’s landscape.

The LUC possesses the institutional knowledge necessary to protect the public interest. Removing their teeth doesn't streamline progress; it streamlines risk.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to HOLD this measure.

Sincerely,

Kealii Pang, Ph.D. Kaimukī, Hawai'i

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 5:29:15 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christy Shaver	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee,

My name is Christy Shaver and I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB1844 HD1.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public’s interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected.

One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai‘i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public’s interests.

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests, including those that are not closely examined or in some cases even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to HOLD this measure.

Sincerely,
Christy Shaver

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 6:16:48 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee,

My name is Michele Mitsumori, and I **STRONGLY OPPOSE** HB1844 HD1.

Decisions that are long-lasting or irreversible should be treated with greater care and diligence than those that are temporary and able to be undone.

Land use is of utmost importance, as we have seen from the overuse of water, to frequent fires, to lack of affordable housing. Therefore, urbanization of potentially large swaths of land at the request of counties should NOT be fast tracked. The Land Use Commission's processes must be applied consistently to all.

I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to HOLD this measure.

Sincerely,
Michele Mitsumori
Hilo

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 6:18:53 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
cheryl burghardt	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Committee members,

I OPPOSE HB 1844 HD1.

I ask that you oppose the bill as well.

Cheryl Burghardt

Nuuanu Oahn

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 6:25:36 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ANDREW ISODA	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee,

My name is Andrew Isoda and I **STRONGLY OPPOSE** HB1844 HD1.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public’s interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected. **One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai‘i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public’s interests.**

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests, including those that are not closely examined or in some cases even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to **HOLD** this measure.

Sincerely,
Andrew Isoda
Lahaina, Mau‘i

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 7:17:49 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

My name is Diane Ware and I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB1844 HD1.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public’s interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected.

One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai‘i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public’s interests.

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests, including those that are not closely examined or in some cases even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to HOLD this measure.

Sincerely, Diane Ware Volcano HI 96785

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 8:22:51 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shannon Rudolph	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

OPPOSE

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 8:47:20 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

My name is William Reese Liggett and I **STRONGLY OPPOSE** HB1844 HD1.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public’s interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected. **One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai‘i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public’s interests.**

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests, including those that are not closely examined or in some cases even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to **HOLD** this measure.

Sincerely,
William Reese Liggett

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 9:15:40 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
jeanne wheeler	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha: this bill denies input from informed public - please DO NOT PASS! Mahalo, JW

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 9:45:57 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee,

I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB1844 HD1.

Do not mess with the Land Use Commission's current responsibilities.

It's easy to understand why politicians would want to support this pro-development measure for their developer friends and supporters. But, do not lose sight of the fact that our 'aina is the most important and precious resource for all, not just developers and politicians, and needs to stop being politicized.

Please HOLD this measure.

Thank you.

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2026 10:09:18 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Guy Kudo	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee,

I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB1844 HD1.

Please HOLD this measure.

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 5:42:42 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisa Darcy	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

STRONGLY OPPOSE HB1844 HD1.

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee,

My name is Lisa Darcy and I live in Kula, Maui, HI. The time is now ot be recognizing and restoring cultural practices and customary rights to urgently preserve the history of the Hawaiian people.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public’s interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected.

One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai‘i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public’s interests.

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests, including those that are not closely examined or in some cases even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to **HOLD** this measure.

Sincerely,

Lisa Darcy

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 7:44:59 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee,

My name is Bo Breda and I **STRONGLY OPPOSE** HB1844 HD1.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public’s interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected. **One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai‘i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public’s interests.**

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests, including those that are not closely examined or in some cases even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to **HOLD** this measure.

Sincerely,
Bo Breda

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 7:50:43 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee,

My name is Peter Wilson and I **STRONGLY OPPOSE** HB1844 HD1.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public’s interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected. **One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai‘i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public’s interests.**

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests, including those that are not closely examined or in some cases even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to **HOLD** this measure.

Sincerely,
Peter Wilson

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 8:40:36 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB1844 HD1.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public’s interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected. **One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai‘i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public’s interests.**

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests, including those that are not closely examined or in some cases even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to **HOLD** this measure.

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 8:52:01 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

I strongly oppose HB1844 HD1 that would require the Land Use Commission to urbanize potentially large swaths of land at the request of the counties, without any input from stakeholders. Potentially farmers, cultural practitioners, climate scientists, and other experts would not have their recommendations considered, accounted for, and used to protect our food security, cultural integrity, resilience, and other critical public interests. This would be done under the pretext of the need for affordable housing. This is a false narrative and a scapegoating tactic used to undermine protections. We have a shortage of affordable housing because of developers who are greedy, and despite a multitude of opportunities to provide truly affordable housing, they don't. This bill will not fix this problem and is wholly unacceptable. Please **HOLD** this irresponsible measure.

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 9:02:06 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony today in **STRONG** opposition to HB1844 HD1. 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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public’s interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected. One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai‘i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public’s interests.

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests, including those that are not closely examined or in some cases even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to **HOLD** this measure.

Mahalo for this opportunity share testimony,

Noelle Lindenmann, Kailua-Kona

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 9:25:47 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dee Green	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose HB1844 HD1.

This bill weakens one of the few statewide checks we have on major land use changes. The Land Use Commission exists to carefully review proposals that shift conservation, rural, or agricultural lands into the urban district. Its process requires expert testimony, cultural input, and a thorough review of long-term impacts — especially to Native Hawaiian rights, food security, and natural resources. That level of scrutiny matters in Hawai'i, where land decisions are permanent and far-reaching.

Forcing the Commission to approve urbanization at the counties' request, without its full independent review, strips away critical safeguards. It opens the door to rushed decisions that could permanently harm our agricultural lands, cultural practices, and climate resilience.

I urge the Committee to hold this bill.

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 9:28:40 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Hello Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee,

My name is Nanea Lo and I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB1844 HD1.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public’s interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected.

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Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to HOLD this measure.

me ke aloha ‘āina,

Nanea Lo, 96826

Sierra Club of Hawai'i Member

Hawai'i Workers Center Board Member

Honolulu Tenants Union Member

350 Hawai'i Member

Carbon Cashback Hawai'i Member

Hawai'i Tax Fairness Coalition Member

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 9:47:35 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cristina Holt	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

I am submitting testimony in opposition to HB 1844 HD1.

This bill would turn the Land Use Commission into a filing cabinet. A county decides it wants to develop land, sends a request, and the commission is required to say yes. No independent review. No ability to push back. Just update the maps and send a notification. The commission might as well not exist.

We are supposed to believe this is about affordable housing. It is not. Reclassifying land as urban has never once guaranteed that affordable housing gets built on it. Not here, not anywhere. What it guarantees is that developers gain access to land they could not touch before. The luxury units and the resorts come first. They always do. Working families are the sales pitch, not the outcome.

This is the same session where the Governor is trying to redefine public use to hand our beaches to private interests through SB 3148, and where HB 1823 would gut coastal zone permits for government projects. Every single one of these bills is chipping away at the same thing: the public's ability to have any say over what happens to our land.

Hawaii's land does not grow back. When it is gone it is gone. The Land Use Commission exists because we learned the hard way what happens when there is no check on development pressure. This bill forgets that lesson entirely.

Do not pass this. Hold it.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 9:52:06 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michelle Pieper	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members,

I stand in strong opposition to HB1844.

This bill represents yet another consolidation of power allowing urbanization of land at a county’s request while sidelining meaningful public testimony and expert review. Decisions that permanently convert agricultural or rural lands into urban districts must not be fast-tracked or politically driven. These lands are our food security, our watershed protection, and our cultural foundation.

Urbanization is not a minor adjustment, it is a generational shift. Weakening public process and limiting expert analysis undermines transparency and the safeguards meant to protect Hawai‘i’s people and natural resources.

Around the world, governments are recognizing that nature itself holds rights. In Aotearoa (New Zealand), the Whanganui River was legally recognized as a living entity with its own rights — affirming the principle: “Ko au te awa, ko te awa ko au” (“I am the river, and the river is me”). That acknowledgment reflects Indigenous knowledge that land and water are not commodities, but living relatives. Hawai‘i should be moving toward stronger protection and deeper stewardship, not faster pathways to urbanization with less oversight.

Communities like Wai‘anae already carry the burden of overdevelopment and legacy pollution. We should be strengthening review and accountability, not eroding them. Land decisions must reflect collective stewardship, transparency, and long-term thinking.

HB1844 moves us in the wrong direction.

I urge you to defer this bill.

**Michelle Pieper
Wai‘anae, O‘ahu**

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 10:15:17 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Derek Kamakanaaloha Soong	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee,

My name is Derek Kamakanaaloha Soong and I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB1844 HD1.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public's interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected.

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By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests, including those that are not closely examined or in some cases even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to HOLD this measure.

Sincerely,

Derek Kamakanaaloha Soong

Council Chair
Alice L. Lee

Vice-Chair
Yuki Lei K. Sugimura

Councilmembers
K. Kauano'e 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

February 23, 2026

TO: Honorable Chair Tarnas, Vice-Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee on Judiciary and Hawaiian Affairs

FROM: TAMARA PALTIN
Councilmember

DATE: February 23, 2026

SUBJECT: **OPPOSITION TO HB 1844, HD1, RELATING TO THE LAND USE COMMISSION**

The Hawai'i Land Use Commission (LUC) has long administered a critical and comprehensive process designed to identify, evaluate, and mitigate impacts associated with the reclassification of lands from the Conservation, Rural, and Agricultural Districts into the Urban District. These decisions are not merely administrative; they carry significant and often irreversible consequences for natural and cultural resources, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, food security, infrastructure demands, and other core public interests.

Unlike county land use decision-making processes, the LUC's district boundary amendment proceedings are quasi-judicial in nature. This structure ensures that testimony, expert analysis, cultural impact assessments, and other evidentiary submissions are formally received, scrutinized, and incorporated into the record. It provides a transparent forum in which technical experts, cultural practitioners, community members, and affected stakeholders may meaningfully participate.

These safeguards exist for a reason. Land in Hawai'i is finite, culturally significant, and foundational to our long-term economic and environmental stability. Changes to land use designations can permanently alter ecosystems, agricultural viability, watershed function, and community character. Once urbanized, lands rarely revert.

By compelling the LUC to approve urbanization at the request of the counties, without adherence to its established, comprehensive, and objective review process, this measure would undermine critical statewide protections. It would effectively sidestep the formal, evidence-based review process and transparency that currently guard

February 23, 2026
Page 2

against unintended consequences. In doing so, it risks long-term or irreversible harm to food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices, climate resilience, housing affordability, and other public trust interests—many of which are not thoroughly analyzed, and in some instances not addressed at all, within county general plan processes.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tamara A.M. Paltin". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'T' and 'P'.

TAMARA PALTIN
Councilmember

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 10:35:19 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Williams	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

There is no problem on Maui this bill is supposed to fix. As you know, if it ain't broke, . . .

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 11:11:32 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Bianca Isaki	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members,

PLEASE **OPPOSE** HB1844 HD1.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public’s interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected.

One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai‘i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public’s interests.

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests, including those that are not closely examined or in some cases even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to **HOLD** this measure.

Bianca Isaki, Kane`ohe

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 11:17:11 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daniel Kanahale	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Oppose

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 11:43:00 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lisette Akamine	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha nui e Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee.

I am testifying in strong OPPOSITION to HB1844 HD1.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district.

Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public’s interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected.

One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai‘i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public’s interests.

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests, including those that are not closely examined or in some cases even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to HOLD this measure.

Na‘u nō,

Lisette Puanani Akamine

Kahalu‘u, O‘ahu

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 11:53:31 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jonathan Likeke Scheuer	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members,

I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB1844 HD1.

The bill is fatally flawed, because it will deny required due process for interested property owners (including holders of traditional and customary rights) that can be impacted from redistricting.

There is no amendment that could cure this defect, it is inherent in trying to use the General Plans as a district boundary amendment vehicle.

Rather than passing a bill that will be overturned in court and serve as an embarassement to our Legislative branch, please hold the bill.

Jonathan Likeke Scheuer, Ph.D.
Kahālāwai Consulting LLC

Managing Environmental Conflict

Read: [Water and Power In West Maui](#) (2021)

Listen: [Hawai`i News Now Be Akamai: Why wai?](#) (2024)

Watch: [What Does Sustainable Yield Sustain? What \(and Who\) is Left Out?](#) (2021)

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 12:26:03 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sunshine Eckstrom	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please oppose HB 1844 which would force the Land Use Commission to urbanize land at county request, sidelining public testimony and expert review. We need to be extremely cautious about urbanizing land when our goal should be increased sustainability for our island and our environment. We need more expert input to do that, not less. And reducing the input of the public is anti-democratic and should not even be considered.

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 12:28:24 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nancy Harter	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee,

My name is Nancy Harter and I **STRONGLY OPPOSE** HB1844 HD1.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public's interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected. **One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai'i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public's interests.**

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests, including those that are not closely examined or in some cases even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to **HOLD** this measure.

Sincerely, Nancy Harter, Lahaina, HI

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 1:31:30 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

HB1844 would require the Land Use Commission to reclassify conservation, rural, and agricultural lands as urban at the request of the counties. This bill would give no opportunity for farmers, cultural practitioners, climate scientists, and other experts and stakeholders to give testimony and inform land-use decision makers. Stakeholders' concerns and expertise would not be incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals, and ill-informed land mismanagement is sure to result.

I strongly oppose this measure.

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 1:32:58 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
janice palma-glenie	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

fast track is never anything other than a dirty word in Hawai`i politics.

fasttracking would require the Land Use Commission to urbanize potentially large swaths of land at the request of the counties, without any opportunity for farmers, cultural practitioners, climate scientists, and other experts and stakeholders to have their rights and testimonies explicitly considered, accounted for, and used to protect our food security, cultural integrity, resilience, and other critical public interests. auwe.

say "no" to this and other bills that use the word "fast track" as they are only used to get around public participation and the objectives of the public to protect land and other natural resources for the use by special interests.

mahalo and sincerely,

janice palma-glennie

kailua-koa

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 2:42:30 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leah Kocher	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee,

My name is Leah Kocher and I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB1844 HD1.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public’s interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected.

One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai‘i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public’s interests.

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests, including those that are not closely examined or in some cases even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to HOLD this measure.

Sincerely,

Leah Kocher

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 2:48:44 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee,

My name is Anne M. Lorenzo and I **STRONGLY OPPOSE** HB1844 HD1.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public's interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected. **One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai'i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public's interests.**

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests, including those that are not closely examined or in some cases even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to **HOLD** this measure.

Sincerely,
Anne M. Lorenzo

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 5:24:38 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Monica Morris	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee,

My name is Monica Morris and I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB1844 HD1.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public’s interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected.

One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai‘i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public’s interests.

By requiring the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests, including those that are not closely examined or in some cases even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to HOLD this measure.

Sincerely,

Monica Morris

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 6:52:33 PM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

/Cmd+VAloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee,

My name is Diane Choy Fujimura and I **STRONGLY OPPOSE** HB1844 HD1.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decision-making, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public’s interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected. **One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai‘i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public’s interests.**

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests, including those that are not closely examined or in some cases even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to **HOLD** this measure.

Sincerely,

Diane Choy Fujimura

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 12:05:59 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Soo Sun Choe	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee

I am writing in opposition to IHB1844 HD 1. We should not risk losing rural land to urbanization without a thorough evaluation of its implications and impacts. We already have the Land Use Commission (LUC) to administer a thoughtful and thorough process evaluating impacts to natural and cultural resources, along with Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, our agriculture and food security.

Mahalo for your attention,

Soo Sun Choe

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 7:56:22 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elena Arinaga	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee,

My name is Elena Arinaga and I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB1844 HD1.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public's interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected.

One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai'i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public's interests.

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests, including those that are not closely examined or in some cases even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to HOLD this measure.

Sincerely,

Elena Arinaga

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 8:19:26 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jubilee Johanna	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee,

My name is Jubilee Westergaard and I STRONGLY OPPOSE HB1844 HD1.

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, food security, and other public interests that may be affected by the reclassification of conservation, rural, and agricultural lands into the urban district. Unlike existing county land use decisionmaking, the quasi-judicial nature of the LUC district boundary amendment process ensures that data and other information from technical experts, cultural practitioners, and other stakeholders are adequately considered and incorporated in district boundary amendment approvals. The LUC also possesses substantial institutional knowledge regarding how the public's interest in large-scale land use changes can be consistently protected. One of the key reasons we have these safeguards in place is because of the extreme importance of land in Hawai'i, and the significant, myriad, and long-lasting if not irreversible impacts that land use changes can have on the public's interests.

By forcing the LUC to urbanize lands at the request of the counties, without the comprehensive, objective, and transparent process it currently follows, this measure would all but invite long-term or irreversible impacts to our food security, Native Hawaiian traditional and customary rights, climate resilience, housing affordability, and many other important public interests, including those that are not closely examined or in some cases even considered in the county general plan process.

Accordingly, I respectfully but strongly urge the Committee to HOLD this measure.

Sincerely,

Jubilee Westergaard

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 8:57:24 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
J. Kehau Lucas	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and members of the Committee,

My name is Kēhau Lucas, and I **strongly oppose HB1844 HD1.**

The **State Land Use Commission (LUC)** administers Hawai‘i’s statewide land use system, created under **HRS Chapter 205**, which classifies all land into the Urban, Rural, Agricultural, or Conservation districts. The LUC is specifically responsible for **district boundary amendments (DBAs)** involving lands greater than 15 acres, Conservation lands, and Important Agricultural Lands—areas that require heightened scrutiny because of their public importance.

[\[planning.hawaii.gov\]](http://planning.hawaii.gov)

The LUC’s decision-making process is **quasi-judicial**, requiring formal petitions, evidentiary hearings, expert input, and findings based on statutory criteria. These procedures are detailed in **HRS §205-4** and **HAR §15-15**, and ensure that technical evidence, expert analysis, and public agency review are incorporated before any large-scale reclassification can occur. The LUC must hold hearings on-island, review complete records, and issue decisions within mandated timelines.

[\[luc.hawaii.gov\]](http://luc.hawaii.gov)

Because **only 5% of all land in Hawai‘i is designated Urban**, while approximately **95% remains Conservation or Agricultural**, any proposal to convert non-urban land to urban use carries long-term and often irreversible implications for natural resources, cultural practices, climate resilience, and statewide food security. These proportions are documented by the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD), which also participates as a required party in LUC boundary amendment proceedings. [\[planning.hawaii.gov\]](http://planning.hawaii.gov)

Counties manage zoning and development approvals, but **county-level land use processes are not required to apply the same rigorous statewide criteria** that the LUC must consider. The LUC’s statutory criteria under **HRS §205-17** include protection of cultural and natural resources, impacts to state infrastructure, consistency with the Hawai‘i State Plan, and effects on agricultural viability—factors that county general plans or zoning procedures may not fully evaluate. [\[planning.hawaii.gov\]](http://planning.hawaii.gov)

HB1844 HD1 would require the LUC to urbanize land **at the request of the counties**, significantly weakening the independent, evidence-based review that currently safeguards statewide interests. Removing or reducing the LUC’s evaluative role would:

- Undermine protections for **Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices**, which are explicitly considered in LUC proceedings through expert and practitioner testimony.
- Reduce scrutiny of impacts to **food security**, despite Hawai‘i’s Agricultural district making up nearly half of all state lands. [planning.hawaii.gov]
- Compromise statewide **climate resilience planning**, which relies on consistent standards for evaluating land conversion, especially for areas vulnerable to wildfire, drought, flooding, and sea level rise.
- Allow large-scale reclassification decisions to proceed without the **transparent, formal, and quasi-judicial process** that the current LUC framework provides.

The LUC holds over **60 years of institutional expertise**—established in 1961 when the statewide land use law was created—to ensure that district boundary changes align with Hawai‘i’s long-term public welfare, not just short-term development preferences. [luc.hawaii.gov]

For these reasons, weakening or bypassing the LUC’s review process creates foreseeable risks of **permanent land conversion** without adequate environmental, cultural, agricultural, or climate-related evaluation. These risks would directly affect statewide public interests that the counties alone are not required to assess comprehensively.

Accordingly, I respectfully urge the Committee to HOLD HB1844 HD1.

Aloha ‘āina,
J. Kēhau Lucas

HB-1844-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2026 9:47:34 AM

Testimony for JHA on 2/24/2026 2:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

NO