

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND PERMITTING
KA 'OIHANA HO'OLĀLĀ A ME NĀ PALAPALA 'AE
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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TESTIMONY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND PERMITTING

BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

February 27, 2026
Conference Room 016

TO: The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair, The Honorable Mike Gabbard,
Vice Chair, and Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary

RE: COMMENTS ON SENATE BILL NO. 2192, SD 1, RELATING TO HOUSING

The Department of Planning and Permitting (DPP) **offers comments** on Senate Bill No. 2192, SD 1, which authorizes a county to reduce the number of housing units that may be built within any geographical area of the county only if the county increases the number of housing units that may be built elsewhere in the county, such that there is no net loss in residential capacity in the county.

While the City supports policies that will stimulate housing production, respectfully, the language of this Bill is problematic. While the Bill appears to give counties discretion with the use of the word "may," upon close reading, the Bill implements a mandate. A county would be allowed to reduce the number of housing units within any geographical area of the county, only if it increases the number of units that may be built elsewhere. This Bill shifts the focus from the City's long-range planning framework, which considers many critical inter-related topics, other than just housing, to a mathematical equation of the net increase or decrease in housing units.

Moreover, this mathematical balancing act would apply to any geographical area where the allowable number of housing units is decreased, even for a single parcel of land. This approach, while attractive on the surface, does not work well for fluid long-range planning of communities. Furthermore, pursuant to Ordinance 25-2, effective September 30, 2025, the City has already significantly increased development capacity in residential zoning districts by allowing one accessory dwelling unit and one ohana unit in addition to the principal dwelling unit on most zoning lots. Ordinance 25-2 also makes changes to the B-1 (Neighborhood Business District) and B-2 (Community Business District) to allow multi-unit dwellings, subject to meeting other requirements of

The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
and Members of the Committee on Judiciary
Hawai'i State Senate
Senate Bill No. 2192, SD 1
February 27, 2026
Page 2

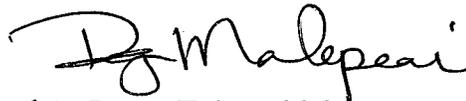
the Land Use Ordinance. As such, the City has already significantly added capacity to housing inventory, policy changes that are not captured in this Bill

Lastly, with increasing hazards due to climate change, e.g., sea level rise and wildfires, counties need to address the potential downzoning of properties due to the growing risk to public health and safety. To do so, automatically requiring the City to upzone other portions of the county or expand the community growth boundary as defined in our development plans, which is a key element of our directed growth policy, is problematic.

We respectfully offer these comments on Senate Bill No. 2192, SD 1, and request that the Bill be held in committee for further discussion. The City is prepared to meet and discuss the impacts of this Bill, which will complicate responsible planning.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Very truly yours,



Fol: Dawn Takeuchi Apuna
Director



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**The Thirty-Third Legislature
Senate Committee on Judiciary
Friday, February 27, 2026
Conference Room 016
10:30 a.m.**

TO: The Honorable Karl Rhoads, Chair
FROM: Keali'i S. López, State Director
RE: Support for S.B. 2192, SD1 Relating to Housing

Aloha Chair Rhoads and Members of the Committee:

My name is Keali'i López, the State Director of AARP Hawai'i. On behalf of our more than 135,000 members statewide, thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support of S.B. 2192, S.D. 1.**

AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan social impact organization dedicated to **empowering people age 50 and older to choose how they live as they age.** In Hawai'i, that choice is increasingly constrained by the **excessive cost and limited availability of housing.** Safe, stable, and affordable housing is not only a basic human need, but also a **cornerstone of healthy aging, financial security, and community stability.** When housing options are scarce or unaffordable, older adults are often **forced to make impossible tradeoffs** between housing, health care, food, and transportation, or to leave the communities they have long called home.

S.B. 2192, S.D. 1 advances an important and measured approach to addressing Hawai'i's housing shortage by ensuring that **countywide residential capacity is not unintentionally reduced.** The bill allows counties to adjust housing density in particular geographic areas **only if any reductions are fully offset elsewhere,** resulting in no net loss of overall housing capacity. This framework **preserves local control over land use decisions** while safeguarding against policies that could further restrict housing supply at a time when Hawai'i cannot afford it.

The need for this safeguard is clear. Hawai'i faces a significant housing deficit, with **tens of thousands of additional homes needed statewide** in the near term and production falling far short of demand. In this environment, even well-intentioned **downzoning or reductions in allowable units can exacerbate shortages, drive up costs, and limit future housing options,**



particularly smaller, more attainable homes that are often **best suited for older adults and multigenerational families.**

Older adults are especially vulnerable to the consequences of constrained housing supply. Many live on fixed incomes and **already experience some of the highest housing cost burdens in the nation.** Policies that shrink overall residential capacity **without replacement can unintentionally intensify competition for existing homes,** placing additional upward pressure on rents and prices. By maintaining countywide housing capacity, S.B. 2192, S.D. 1 helps support a **more balanced housing pipeline** without imposing mandates on where or how counties plan for growth.

Importantly, this measure **does not dictate zoning outcomes or override county authority.** Instead, it encourages thoughtful, holistic planning by ensuring that decisions made in one area **do not undermine housing availability countywide.** This approach aligns with AARP's long-standing advocacy for **flexible, forward-looking housing policies** that expand options, promote affordability, and allow residents to age safely and securely in their communities.

For these reasons, AARP Hawai'i respectfully urges the **Committee on Judiciary to pass S.B. 2192, S.D. 1.** Mahalo for the opportunity to testify and for your continued attention to Hawai'i's housing challenges.

Feb. 27, 2026, 10:30 a.m.
Hawaii State Capitol
Conference Room 016 and Videoconference

To: Senate Committee on Judiciary
Sen. Karl Rhoads, Chair
Sen. Mike Gabbard, Vice Chair

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

RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB2192 SD1 — RELATING TO HOUSING

Aloha chair, vice chair and other committee members,

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii **supports** [SB2192 SD1](#), which would allow counties to decrease the number of housing units that can be built in one area of the county only if the county allows more housing units to be built in another area of the county — so there is no net loss in residential development potential.

This bill would prevent counties from exacerbating the housing crisis, because changing a zoning code to reduce the amount of housing that is allowed in a certain zone reduces the overall potential housing supply.

After all, Hawaii's housing shortage is acute. The Hawaii Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism pointed out in a March 2024 report that Hawaii needs an average of 3,297 new housing units per year between 2025 and 2035 to satisfy demand.¹

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Ted Kefalas
Director of Strategic Campaigns
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

¹ "[Hawai'i Housing Demand: 2025-2035](#)," Research and Economic Analysis Division, Hawaii Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, March 2024, p. 2.