

**BOARD OF WATER SUPPLY**  
**KA 'OIHANA WAI**  
**CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

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March 18, 2026

The Honorable Luke A. Evslin, Chair  
and Members  
House Committee on Housing  
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 430  
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Evslin and Members:

Subject: Senate Bill 2398 Senate Draft 2: Relating to Residential Housing Utilities

The Honolulu Board of Water Supply (BWS) respectfully opposes Senate Bill 2398 Senate Draft (SD) 2, which requires county boards of water supply to publicly disclose through their websites information on service connection availability for residential permitting and construction.

The measure proposes to add a new section to part II and III of Chapter 54, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) requiring all county boards of water supply to reflect the availability of domestic water service, including the specificity of any limitations and supporting analysis explaining any deficiency that would disallow a service connection. The measure also requires general descriptions of broad geographic zones including limitations relating to unfulfilled, unconstructed, or incomplete developer-funded improvements. The bill further provides that a disclaimer may be included relating to the preliminary nature of the information and shall not be the actual permit determination on water availability.

Our testimony on February 5, 2026 on SB 2398 expressed our concerns about posting generalized GIS information regarding the water system.

An administratively less burdensome alternative is to post generalized areas where residential water service is not available with an explanation of the outage or water shortage designation. The BWS water system is maintained and expanded concurrently with City growth projections in alignment with the City's general plan, and development and sustainable communities plans and is generally adequate to

The Honorable Luke A. Evslin, Chair  
and Members  
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accommodate most developments, subject to a case-by-case parcel specific engineering evaluation.

BWS already offers free, parcel-specific water availability assessments that can be used for planning, engineering and financing for new and renovated developments. The case by case evaluations are based on best available information and accounts for site-specific conditions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to SB 2398 SD 2.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ernest Y. W. Lau', written in a cursive style.

ERNEST Y. W. LAU, P.E.  
Manager and Chief Engineer



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**WRITTEN TESTIMONY  
IN SUPPORT OF S.B. NO. 2398, S.D. 2  
RELATING TO RESIDENTIAL HOUSING UTILITIES**

Avalon Development Company strongly supports S.B. No. 2398, S.D. 2, which requires county boards of water supply to publish generalized, non-binding information regarding the availability of domestic water service for residential development.

As a developer in Hawai'i, we have directly experienced how uncertainty around water service availability undermines project feasibility, extends timelines, and increases financial risk. Too often, projects advance through planning and early permitting stages only to encounter previously undisclosed infrastructure constraints. The result is avoidable delay, escalating costs, and, in some cases, the loss of otherwise viable housing opportunities.

At a time when Hawai'i faces an acute housing shortage, infrastructure uncertainty should not remain an invisible barrier to production. Reliable access to water is fundamental to residential development. Providing high-level reference maps and explanatory analysis, clearly identified as preliminary and non-determinative, will give landowners, developers, lenders, and public agencies the early insight necessary to make informed decisions. Importantly, S.D. 2 appropriately clarifies that water service limitations may include unfulfilled or incomplete developer-funded improvements, reflecting real-world capacity constraints without requiring parcel-specific determinations.

We also appreciate the Legislature's continued attention to balancing transparency with operational concerns. The use of broad geographic zones, the authorization of disclaimers, and the absence of any reliance, appeal, or entitlement provisions ensure that this measure improves coordination without compromising utility operations or permitting authority.

S.B. No. 2398, S.D. 2 is a practical, targeted reform that will improve planning certainty, reduce wasted effort, and support the responsible delivery of much-needed housing across the state. For these reasons, Avalon Development respectfully urges support for S.B. No. 2398, S.D. 2.

Respectfully submitted,  
**Avalon Development Company LLC**



**Hawai'i YIMBY**  
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March 18, 2026

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

**RE: SUPPORT for SB 2398 SD2 - RELATING TO RESIDENTIAL HOUSING UTILITIES**

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

On behalf of Hawai'i YIMBY, we are writing in **support of SB 2398 SD2**, which is an important step toward more responsible and timely housing development by improving transparency around water infrastructure capacity. Access to clear, publicly available information about water service availability helps communities better understand where new homes can realistically be built and where constraints exist.

In the midst of a severe housing shortage and affordability crisis, uncertainty around infrastructure can add unnecessary delays, costs, and risk to housing projects. When builders, homeowners, and permitting agencies lack clear information, projects are often stalled late in the process or redesigned after significant time and money have already been spent. SB 2398 SD2 helps address this problem by making water availability information accessible upfront.

By allowing homebuilders to identify parcels where water capacity already exists, this bill helps target housing production to areas that are ready to support growth. This can shorten development timelines, reduce carrying costs, and lower overall project expenses, all of which are critical to producing housing that people can afford. Clear information also allows public agencies to coordinate permitting more efficiently and plan infrastructure investments more strategically.



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Transparency in infrastructure capacity does not weaken protections. Instead, it strengthens planning, accountability, and trust. SB 2398 SD2 supports smarter growth by aligning housing development with real-world infrastructure conditions, helping ensure that new homes are built where they make the most sense and can be delivered more quickly to the people who need them most.

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

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

Sincerely,  
Damien Waikoloa  
Chapter Lead, Hawai'i YIMBY

Edgardo Díaz Vega  
Chapter Lead, Hawai'i YIMBY

Huey Kwik  
Chapter Lead, Hawai'i YIMBY



March 18, 2026

TO: Chair Evslin and Members of the House Committee on Housing  
RE: Senate Bill 2398 SD2, Relating to Residential Housing Utilities

Dear Chair Evslin 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 urge the House Committee on Housing to advance Senate Bill 2398 SD2.**

Without transparent information about our infrastructure capacity, we can't plan for future housing opportunities. By requiring county boards of water supply to publicly disclose service connection availability, this bill empowers prospective homeowners, developers, and community stakeholders with timely and essential information. This is tremendously beneficial for planning purposes.

Currently, uncertainty regarding water service connection can create bottlenecks in the permitting process, leading to project delays and increased costs. Enhanced transparency can help streamline residential construction timelines by allowing applicants to make informed decisions early in the planning process.

**We are grateful for your careful consideration of Senate Bill 2398 SD2.**

Thank you,



Lee Wang  
Executive Director  
Housing Hawai'i's Future  
[lee@hawaiisfuture.org](mailto:lee@hawaiisfuture.org)



Perry Arrasmith  
Director of Policy  
Housing Hawai'i's Future  
[perry@hawaiisfuture.org](mailto:perry@hawaiisfuture.org)

**SB-2398-SD-2**

Submitted on: 3/16/2026 7:14:22 PM

Testimony for HSG on 3/18/2026 9:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, Oppose 2398 SB RELATING TO RESIDENTIAL HOUSING UTILITIES.

w/comment, I stand on testimony dated 2/26/26 from BWS, Ernest Y. W. Lau, P.E. Manager & Chief Engineer