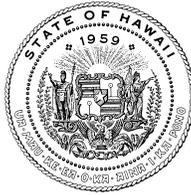


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR



DEAN MINAKAMI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM

HAWAII HOUSING FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

677 QUEEN STREET, SUITE 300

HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

FAX: (808) 587-0600

Statement of

DEAN MINAKAMI

Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation

Before the

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

AND

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

February 10, 2026 at 1:00 p.m.

State Capitol, Room 225

In consideration of

SENATE BILL 2957

RELATING TO HOUSING.

Chairs Chang and Buenaventura, Vice Chairs Hashimoto and McKelvey, and members of the Committee.

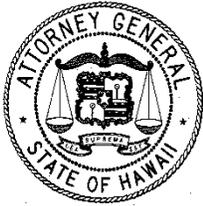
HHFDC **supports** Senate Bill 2957, which addresses the critical issue of tenant displacement during housing redevelopment projects.

Most of HHFDC's affordable housing projects do not displace residents. If a project does cause displacement, we typically require developers to provide relocation assistance.

This bill provides a balanced approach by ensuring that affordable housing projects supported by HHFDC include measures to protect displaced tenants. Specifically, the bill requires developers to:

1. Offer displaced tenants the right of first offer for a comparable unit in the new project.
2. Provide replacement housing payments to ease the financial burden of relocation.
3. Share clear information and maintain communication with tenants throughout the redevelopment process.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



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

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:
S.B. NO. 2957, RELATING TO HOUSING.

BEFORE THE:
SENATE COMMITTEES ON HOUSING AND ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

DATE: Tuesday, February 10, 2026 **TIME:** 1:00 p.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 225

TESTIFIER(S): Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or
Klemen Urbanc, Deputy Attorney General

Chairs Chang and San Buenaventura and Members of the Committees:

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

This bill amends section 201H-38, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), to require developers of projects receiving assistance from the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation (HHFDC) under that section to: (1) grant certain tenants displaced by the proposed project the right of first offer of a comparable unit in the project; (2) provide displaced tenants with a replacement housing payment; (3) give displaced tenants information on how to obtain assistance and exercise the right of first offer; and (4) establish procedures for maintaining communication with displaced tenants. The bill also provides that HHFDC may take certain actions if developers fail to comply.

A new subparagraph (E)(i) of section 201H-38(a)(1), HRS (page 7, lines 17-19), requires developers to offer displaced tenants a right of first offer for **comparable units** in the proposed housing project (emphasis added). The Department notes that the bill does not define what factors make a unit "comparable." To reduce uncertainty and potential disputes in implementation, the Department recommends defining "comparable unit" or authorizing HHFDC to establish minimum comparability criteria by rule.

Additionally, the bill contains an apparent typographical error in section 201H-38(a)(1)(E)(iv) (page 9, line 2), which requires the developer to implement the right of first offer to the displaced or evicted tenants at the completion of the project, "if that option is chosen by the *developer* under clause (i)." (italics added). The Department recommends amending page 9, line 2, to change "developer" to "tenants," because the evicted or displaced tenants, not the developer, have the option to exercise the right of first offer under section 201H-38(a)(1)(E)(i).

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



‘Ōlelo Hō‘ike ‘Aha Kau Kānāwai

SENATE BILL 2957

Ke Kōmike ‘Aha Kenekoa o ke Kuleana Hale Noho

Ke Kōmike ‘Aha Kenekoa o ke Olakino a me ka Lawelawe Kanaka

(Senate Committee on Housing)

(Senate Committee on Health and Human Services)

Hawai‘i State Capitol

Pepeluali 10th, 2026

1:00 PM

Lumi 225

Aloha e Chair Chang, Vice Chair Hashimoto, Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair McKelvey and Members of the Committee:

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** SB2957, which codifies clear tenant protection requirements in state law for housing projects receiving development assistance from the Hawai‘i Housing Finance and Development Corporation (HHFDC) when those projects result in tenant displacement. OHA recognizes and the State’s urgent need to increase housing production. However, policy strategies that support development must be paired with focused protections to ensure re-development projects do not unintentionally displace the very residents they intend to serve. Displacement caused by re-development, rising rents, or housing market pressures destabilizes families, erodes social networks, and weakens community cohesion. For Native Hawaiians housing displacement can mean the loss of multigenerational support systems, cultural connections, and access to essential services. Housing instability is strongly linked to negative health, educational, and economic outcomes. Native Hawaiians are disproportionately represented among low-income renter households and among households experiencing housing instability.

This issue is particularly acute given that more than half of all Native Hawaiians now live outside of Hawai‘i, largely due to housing costs and displacement. OHA is

increasingly concerned that many new developments often utilizing HRS §201H exemptions and significant state subsidies are removing older housing stock that was previously affordable to local families. While these projects may increase the total number of units, the replacement units are frequently priced at levels that make it impossible for former tenants to return. Without clear tenant protections and a right of first return, re-development can result in a net loss of truly affordable housing for the very communities these projects are intended to serve.

Ensuring displaced tenants and Native Hawaiian families have the right to return to their community, or at minimum the first opportunity to compete for new units is essential. Without these safeguards, communities understandably view re-development negatively, as a process that removes existing residents to make way for newcomers, contributing to anti-development sentiment when Native Hawaiian families who once lived in a community are unable to live in nor offered the first opportunity to live in the newly constructed housing.

While some in the development industry claim SB 2957 is duplicative of relocation protections under HRS §111-1, that statute applies only when displacement results from state acquisition or condemnation. In many re-development projects, the State is not acquiring property but privatizing land it already owns, and HRS §111-1 has therefore been construed not to apply. Moreover, HRS §111-1 provides no right of return or first opportunity for displaced tenants to return to their community following re-development in any project. Many other states have chosen to codify tenant relocation and right-of-return protections in state law, rather than relying on federal law alone. It is critical that minimum tenant protections be clearly established in state law, rather than embedded in HHFDC contractual documents, and that HHFDC's enforcement authority be explicit in state law. SB 2957 is necessary to ensure these baseline protections are clearly established, enforceable, and consistently applied in Hawai'i.

OHA supports policies that increase the supply of affordable housing while ensuring that the communities most impacted by Hawai'i's housing crisis are not displaced in the process of creating new housing opportunities. This measure creates reasonable tenant protections when public resources, regulatory exemptions, or government assistance are used to support development.

For these reasons, OHA respectfully urges the committee to **PASS SB2036**.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2957 RELATING TO HOUSING

TO: Chair Chang, Vice-Chair Hashimoto, & Members,
Senate Committee on Housing

Chair San Buenaventura, Vice-Chair McKelvey, & Members,
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

FROM: Trisha Kajimura, Vice-President of Strategy and External Affairs

DATE: February 10, 2026 at 1:00 PM

Parents and Children Together (PACT) supports SB 2957, which requires developers under the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation to assist certain tenants who are subject to displacement or eviction due to the development of affordable housing projects. These tenants will have the right of first offer of a comparable unit, receive replacement housing payments and assisted through the process. Developers will also be required to establish procedures to track and maintain communication with the displaced tenants through the redevelopment period.

PACT's origins are in public housing. We were founded by residents of Kuhio Park Terrace in 1968 and have had a home-base there ever since. Currently we have programs based at KPT, including our Family and Economic Opportunities Centers, Head Start and Early Head Start classrooms and offices, and our Tenacious, Rooted Youth Center (formerly known as the Teen Center). We also have a Youth Center at Pu'uwai Momi Public Housing in Halawa. These roots in public housing and our relationship with families over the years are key to PACT's values and identity as an organization.

Through these programs we provide direct services and partner with families to connect them with support for their health, safety, and economic stability. Displacement and relocation without intensive support disconnects people from critical services such as healthcare, childcare, and the school environments they are familiar with. It's important to us that the community we have been nurtured in is similarly treated with respect and dignity as their legal rights are protected. Residents forced to relocate during development or redevelopment must retain their access to community, services and schools.

Over the years, PACT has developed into a statewide community-based organization providing a wide array of innovative and educational social services to families in need. Assisting more than 18,000 people across the state annually, we help identify, address, and successfully resolve challenges through our 20 programs. Among our services are early education programs, domestic violence prevention and intervention programs, child abuse prevention and intervention programs, childhood sexual abuse

supportive group services, child and adolescent behavioral health programs, sex trafficking intervention, poverty prevention and community building programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Please contact me at (808) 847-3285 or tkajimura@pacthawaii.org if you have any questions.





Medical-Legal Partnership for Children in Hawai'i
A Project of the William S. Richardson School of Law

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

Senator Stanley Chang, Chair

Senator Troy N. Hashimoto, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair

Senator Angus L.K. McKelvey, Vice Chair

Hearing Date: February 10, 2026 at 1:00pm (Room 225)

Re: SUPPORT for SB 2957, Relating to Housing

Dear Committee Members,

The Medical-Legal Partnership for Children in Hawai'i provides free, direct legal services to patients in community health settings. Many of our clients are public housing tenants and residents facing unstable housing situations. We testify in **SUPPORT for SB 2957**, which would prevent further displacement of low-income residents impacted by affordable housing redevelopment across Hawai'i.

Our Medical-Legal Partnership program has worked with residents of the Kūhiō Park Terrace (KPT) Low-Rise over the last two years as they faced the demolition of their homes in the name of redevelopment. We have seen how the redevelopment of low-income housing can result in the permanent uprooting of tight-knit local communities, with longtime resident families left to face further housing instability. This occurs when developers promise, but are not required, to provide relocation services and a meaningful right of first offer in the new housing project.

As detailed by [Civil Beat](#)¹, over the last year, sixty-four KPT Low-Rise units were demolished to build 304 affordable housing units, yet most residents faced deeply inadequate relocation services. Despite some federal protections that require these relocation services, tenants had limited recourse to bring complaints. Importantly, the tenants had no process to facilitate their contractually required right to return. Because state law does not require this right to return.

As more housing is redeveloped, the state must step in to pass legislation to ensure minimal protections are clear in state law, not buried in contractually documents from HHFDC. Additionally, enforcement powers of HHFDC must be made clear. I personally accompanied KPT residents to a “comparable unit” that was boarded up and uninhabitable. Households with disabled elders were offered walk-ups and inaccessible units. And families with school-aged children were sent to units far outside their school districts. This struggle is still on-going, and some of those same KPT tenants filed a lawsuit against the Hawai'i Public Housing Authority for violating their rights under federal law related to the KPT redevelopment. If HHFDC had enforcement powers, this litigation would be unnecessary.

¹ Jeremy Hay, *O'ahu Public Housing Tenants Promised Relocation Help Hit Dead-Ends*, Honolulu Civil Beat, February 27, 2025, <https://www.civilbeat.org/2025/02/o%ca%bbahu-public-housing-tenants-promised-relocation-help-hit-dead-ends/>.



Medical-Legal Partnership for Children in Hawai'i
A Project of the William S. Richardson School of Law

I have heard it claimed that the provisions in SB 2957 and HB 1777 are already covered by federal law. They are not. At best, the [massive redevelopment plans of Governor Green and HPHA](#) may only be required by federal law to provide displaced tenants with relocation to a comparable unit, as was required for KPT Low-Rise redevelopment. There was no federal right to return or rent support obligations. In fact the right of first refusal and ongoing communication with tenants (which was terribly executed) was required by HHFDC, not federal law.

I also heard claims that requiring these provisions under state law might delay redevelopment. This seems unlikely. Using [KPT Low-Rise](#) as an example, even if the 64 displaced households received the maximum rent support allowed in this bill (approx. \$1800/mo.), the 3 months' requirement for 64 units would be about \$345,000. This is a fraction of the \$65 million in subsidies and low-interest (0.0% to 0.25%) loans the developers are receiving. Further, the KPT residents served by our MLPC typically paid monthly rents from \$50 to \$1,300. So realistically, SB 2957's provisions would have required the developer to pay about \$120,000 in rent supports to the tenants. This is neither a burden to developers, nor a "windfall" for tenants.

SB 2957 is a critical step to prevent further loss of local families, and to begin building accountability into the numerous redevelopment projects to come in Hawai'i.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 2957.

/s/

Dina Shek
Legal Director



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

February 10, 2026

Senate Committee on Housing
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services
Hawai'i State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: SUPPORT for SB 2957 - RELATING TO HOUSING

Aloha Chairs Chang & San Buenaventura, Vice Chairs Hashimoto & McKelvey, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Hawai'i YIMBY, we write in **support of SB 2957**, which requires protections and assistance for tenants who are displaced by housing projects that receive support from the Hawai'i Housing Finance and Development Corporation. Hawai'i's housing shortage remains severe and will continue to require the redevelopment of existing residential areas into more dense housing. As we redevelop older housing stock, it is essential that current residents are treated fairly and given a meaningful opportunity to remain part of their community.

SB 2957 strikes an important balance by allowing housing development to move forward while recognizing the real human costs of displacement. The bill requires developers to offer displaced tenants the right of first offer to a comparable unit in the new project and to provide replacement housing payments and clear information about relocation assistance. While we agree that lowering the overall cost of building housing must remain a priority, we also believe that the impacts of displacement should not be ignored or shifted entirely onto tenants. These costs should be acknowledged as part of responsible redevelopment.



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

We also strongly support the bill's emphasis on communication and transparency. Requiring developers to maintain contact with displaced tenants throughout the redevelopment process helps ensure that tenants understand their rights and are able to plan for their housing future. These provisions promote housing stability and reduce unnecessary disruption for families and communities.

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

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

Sincerely,
Damien Waikoloa
Chapter Lead, Hawai'i YIMBY

Edgardo Díaz Vega
Chapter Lead, Hawai'i YIMBY

Huey Kwik
Chapter Lead, Hawai'i YIMBY



SB-2957

Submitted on: 2/6/2026 4:41:51 PM

Testimony for HOU on 2/10/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Doneileen Willets	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Doneileen Willets, and I am in full support of Bill SB 2957. I was a previous resident/tenant of kuhio homes and I have protested in opposition of new developments that were not open to discussion to the public first hand. I attest to the struggle myself, looking for a place was not easy especially without any assistance. The places being offered came with a lot of red flags and dead ends all the while fighting a deadline. This takes time and transparency. This would have worked out better if it included those who it affected most, working together through balance and harmony. Hopefully we can get this right this time around, listen to the people, their story matters. If there's something to win, it's when people are housed the proper way. Deadlines will be met and timeline would be a lot smoother if you communicate with the tenants, work diligently with them and listen to their needs.

Mahalo!

SB-2957

Submitted on: 2/6/2026 8:00:46 PM

Testimony for HOU on 2/10/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ANNETTE TASHIRO	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support this measure too many of Hawaii's people are losing decent places to live.

SB-2957

Submitted on: 2/8/2026 6:06:06 PM

Testimony for HOU on 2/10/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrew M. Kennedy	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

I support SB 2957

I am an attorney. In 2025 I represents tenants who were displaced due to the disposition of their HPA housing at the Kuhio Park Terrace low rise development. The clients were not against progress nor did they oppose having to move. Their concerns were reasonable as they related to finding comparable housing and their right to return to the completed project. This bill provides reasonable minimal safeguards to protect members of the community during a very stressful period in their lives. The burden on the government and developers imposed by this bill is minimal in light of the concern to the members of the community who would benefit from the bill.

I appreciate this Committee considering this bill.

Andrew M. Kennedy



HAWAII APPLESEED

CENTER FOR LAW & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

LATE

Testimony of the Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
Support for SB2957 – Relating to Housing
Senate Committee on Housing & Health and Homeless Services
Tuesday, February 10, 2026 at 10:00AM Conf. Rm. 225 and via Videoconference

Aloha Chair Chang, Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Hashimoto, Vice Chair McKelvey, and members of the committee;

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **strong support of SB2957**, which establishes a method of stabilizing residents who may be displaced by new HHFDC assisted projects. This legislation creates a framework that addresses potential tensions between our urgent need for new affordable housing and community concern of new developments, while protecting our existing communities and their residents.

201H is one of the best tools in this state to address our housing crisis and it is critical that we use this tool to promote new housing in a way that stabilizes existing residents and puts in a method for addressing potential displacement of tenants. One of the most persistent concerns raised about new development, and specifically redevelopment, is the displacement of current residents and the permanent loss of community connections.¹

SB2957 addresses the issues and concerns around displacement by establishing a clear, predictable framework for residents protections during redevelopment. By requiring meaningful relocation assistance, clear communication, and the right return to comparable affordable units, the measure ensures that new housing investment does not come at the expense of people who already call these communities home.

These protections could help reduce opposition to housing projects by addressing the human impacts of development head-on. Research consistently shows that new housing supply helps moderate housing costs over time,² but when residents fear displacement without recourse, resistance hardens.³ This bill helps bridge that gap by allowing housing to move forward while maintaining trust, dignity, and stability for affected residents.

SB2957 recognizes that housing production and resident stability are not competing goals. When done thoroughly, they reinforce each other.

¹ <https://escholarship.org/content/qt7bx938fx/qt7bx938fx.pdf>

²

https://escholarship.org/content/qt5d00z61m/qt5d00z61m_noSplash_2f9309175eb6c1375a544dc12b3ae1e6.pdf

³ <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/07352166.2019.1623684>



HAWAII APPLESEED
CENTER FOR LAW & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Testimony of the Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
Support for SB2957 – Relating to Housing
Senate Committee on Housing & Health and Homeless Services
Tuesday, February 10, 2026 at 10:00AM Conf. Rm. 225 and via Videoconference

We respectfully urge the committee to move SB2957 forward. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



1001 Bishop Street #625 | Honolulu, HI 96813
866-295-7282 | aarp.org/hi | hiaarp@aarp.org |
[Twitter.com/aarphawaii](https://twitter.com/aarphawaii) | facebook.com/aarphawaii

The Thirty-Third Legislature
Senate Committees on Housing and Health and Human Services
Tuesday, February 10, 2026
Conference Room 225
1:00 p.m.

LATE

TO: The Honorable Stanley Chang, Chair
The Honorable Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
FROM: Keali'i S. López, State Director
RE: Support for S.B. 2957 Relating to Housing

Aloha Chair Evslin and Members of the Committee:

I am Keali'i Lopez, State Director of AARP Hawai'i. AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, social impact organization dedicated to empowering people 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. We advocate at the state and federal level for the issues that matter most to older adults and their families. On behalf of our nearly 135,000 members statewide, thank you for the opportunity to testify on H.S. 2957.

AARP stands in strong support of S.B. 2957 which strengthens protections for tenants who are **displaced or evicted** due to redevelopment of housing projects that receive **assistance from the Hawai'i Housing Finance and Development Corporation (HHFDC)**. The bill requires developers to:

- Provide displaced tenants with a **Right of First Offer (RFO)** for a **comparable unit** in the new project.
- Pay each displaced tenant a **replacement housing payment** equal to the **lesser of** three months' rent or three months of rent affordable to a two-person household at **60% AMI**.
- Ensure tenants receive **information and assistance** on relocation and how to exercise their right to return.
- **Track and maintain communication** with tenants starting **120 days before** issuing notices to vacate and continuing through project completion.
- Comply with HHFDC oversight, with penalties for noncompliance including funding delays, halting relocation, withholding disbursements, or ineligibility for HHFDC programs for at least a year.



S.B. 2957 Relating to Housing

February 4, 2026

Page2

Stable and affordable housing is foundational to strong, resilient communities. By supporting this measure, the state can help promote long-term community stability and reduce the significant impact of displacement whether it be due to redevelopment or rising rents. In a report by Smart Growth America for AARP in 2024, it was estimated that between 2031 and 2040, affordability expirations will occur for approximately 5,000 units in Hawai'i. With a little over 50% of these expirations occurring between 2031 and 2035. Should the affordability expire as estimated, Hawai'i will see significant upheaval of numerous individuals and families.

Displacement can be devastating for older adults who rely on proximity to doctors, transit, caregivers, and familiar communities. S.B. 2957 ensures these individuals are **not left behind during redevelopment** by guaranteeing a **right to return** and requiring ongoing communication. Also, by requiring **replacement housing payments** of up to three months' rent, S.B. 2957 provides for assistance to cover moving expenses such as deposits, temporary housing, and movers which can otherwise overwhelm older adults with fixed incomes. The bill mandates structured **communication and tracking**, starting months before displacement. This means tenants get timely notices, clear guidance, and support throughout the entire redevelopment process, reducing stress and confusion. Additionally, the **Right of First Offer** ensures displaced tenants can return to a comparable unit when the project is completed. This preserves community ties and supports aging in place, a top priority for older adults.

AARP requests that the House Committee on Housing pass S.B. 2957.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of this important measure.