

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

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HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

**Testimony of
LEAH LARAMEE
Climate Change Coordinator on behalf of
Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission
Co-Chair Ryan K. P. Kanaka'ole**

**Before the Senate Committees on
HOUSING
and
ENERGY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS
and
WATER, LAND, CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

**Tuesday, February 17, 2026
3:02 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 224**

**In consideration of
SENATE BILL 2981
RELATING TO LAND USE**

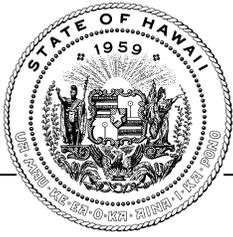
Senate Bill 2981 proposes to prohibit minimum off-street parking requirements for any new development in an urban district and requires each county to amend or repeal any charter provision, ordinance, code, standard, or administrative procedure that imposes a minimum off-street parking requirement by 7/1/2027. **The Hawai'i Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Commission (Commission) supports this measure.**

The Commission consists of a multi-jurisdictional effort between 20 departments, committees, and counties with the purpose of promoting ambitious, climate-neutral, culturally responsive strategies for climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Parking mandates subsidize the cost of parking by providing an excess of free and low-cost parking space, incentivizing drivers to take more trips by car. This drives development that is unsafe and sprawling, making travel by walking and biking challenging and perpetuating the choice of driving a car over healthier and more sustainable modes of travel. Car centric development is not only a significant contributor to climate change but also exacerbate the impacts of climate change such as urban heat island effects and flooding and run off from intensifying weather events.

Parking policy also is a fairness issue as low-income residents often subsidize infrastructure that tends to benefit wealthier car owners. Parking minimums increase construction costs and reduce the availability of much needed housing. Communities that have eliminated parking minimums have seen benefits including economic growth and healthier, more livable communities that prioritize fair access to community resources while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Mahalo for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



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

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

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LT. GOVERNOR

MARY ALICE EVANS
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Statement of
MARY ALICE EVANS, Director

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

Tuesday, February 17, 2026
3:02 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 224

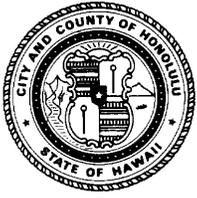
in consideration of
**SB 2981
RELATING TO LAND USE**

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

The Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) **supports** SB 2981 which prohibits minimum off-street parking requirements for any new development or redevelopment projects located within a transit-oriented development infrastructure improvement program area. Removing parking minimums removes financial, infrastructure and land barriers in transit-oriented development areas should agencies and developers see parking requirements as a hinderance to housing production or other projects. This measure may encourage those living within half mile of the transit stations to commute using public transit and reduce the demand and cost for vehicle ownership.

The removal of parking minimums is in alignment with the State's Transit-Oriented Development Council's Strategic Plan to encourage more public transit ridership, walking, biking, etc. This will help create more housing, compact development, walkable neighborhoods, and a mixed-use community centered around transit.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL
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February 13, 2026

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

Senate Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs
Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair
Senator Stanley Chang, Vice Chair

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

RE: Testimony in Support of SB2981

I write in **support** of SB2981, relating to land use, which would prohibit minimum off-street parking requirements for any new development in an urban district.

Mandatory parking minimums are often set arbitrarily and applied uniformly, without regard for context, actual demand, or community input. As a result, projects are typically required to build more parking than residents will ever use. These excessive requirements drive up costs, which are then passed on to residents through higher rents and sales prices. The impact is especially acute for developments where households own fewer cars, such as senior housing, student housing, housing for people with disabilities, or projects near public transit.

Residents themselves are best positioned to determine how much parking they truly need. Letting parking supply reflect actual demand can reduce unnecessary construction costs, improve project feasibility, and help produce housing that more people can actually afford. Providing this flexibility does not eliminate parking where it is needed—it simply lowers construction costs and ensures that parking better aligns with community needs.

Please advance SB2981. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Weyer", is written over a horizontal line.

Matt Weyer
Councilmember, District 2
Honolulu City Council

COUNTY COUNCIL

Mel Rapozo, Chair
KipuKai Kualii, Vice Chair
Addison Bulosan
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Jade K. Fountain-Tanigawa, County Clerk
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Council Services Division
4396 Rice Street, Suite 209
Lihu'e, Kaua'i, Hawaii 96766

February 13, 2026

TESTIMONY OF ADDISON BULOSAN
COUNCILMEMBER, KAUAI COUNTY COUNCIL
ON
SB 2981, RELATING TO LAND USE
Senate Committee on Housing
Senate Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs
Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts
Tuesday, February 17, 2026
3:02 p.m.
Conference Room 224
Via Videoconference

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

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in SUPPORT of SB 2981, Relating to Land Use. My testimony is submitted in my individual capacity as a member of the Kaua'i County Council.

I enthusiastically support SB 2981, which prohibits minimum off-street parking requirements for any new development in an urban district beginning July 1, 2027. Minimum off-street parking regulations, particularly in urban areas, stifle construction by adding to both the overall cost and timeline of housing projects. Therefore, increasing parking flexibility will alleviate barriers to housing construction and promote alternative transit options and thoughtful parking solutions.

Thank you again for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 2981. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Council Services Staff at (808) 241-4188 or via email to cokcouncil@kauai.gov.

Sincerely,

ADDISON BULOSAN
Councilmember, Kaua'i County Council

RM:sf

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 14, 2026

TO: Honorable Stanley Chang, Chair, and
Members of the Senate Committee on Housing

Honorable Glenn Wakai, Chair, and
Members of the Senate Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs

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

FROM: Nohelani U'u-Hodgins
Councilmember

DATE: Tuesday, February 17, 2026
3:02 p.m., Conference Room 224

SUBJECT: **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2981, RELATING TO LAND USE**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. The purpose of this measure is to prohibit minimum off-street parking requirements for any new development in an urban district. Requires each county to amend or appeal any charter provision, ordinance, code, standard, or administrative procedure that imposes a minimum off-street parking requirement by 7/1/2027.

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

Minimum parking mandates often increase construction costs without reflecting transportation requirements or neighborhood conditions. By requiring a fixed number of parking stalls regardless of context. These rules can make housing and mixed-use projects more expensive and less feasible. Those added costs are ultimately passed on to residents and businesses through higher rents and prices.

February 14, 2026

Page 2

Allowing parking decisions to be made on a case-by-case basis gives flexibility to developers and communities to better match real demand. This is especially important in urban areas where residents may rely more on walking, biking, and transit, and where land is limited and valuable. Reducing unnecessary parking construction can help support more housing production, more efficient land use, and more vibrant, pedestrian-focused neighborhoods.

SB 2981 also supports the adaptive reuse and smaller unit types by removing regulatory barriers that can prevent older buildings from being converted into productive housing. By easing these constraints, this bill helps unlock underused buildings for housing, reduces redevelopment costs, shortens project timelines, and limits unnecessary demolition and new construction. This encourages more efficient use of existing infrastructure and expands affordable housing options.

Thank you for your consideration.

LATE

SB-2981

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 10:01:51 PM

Testimony for WLA on 2/17/2026 3:02:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Councilmember Tamara Paltin	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha e Chair and members,

My name is Tamara Paltin and I am writing in strong opposition to SB2981. Since the August 8, 2023 wildfires I have gone to dozens of community meetings where residents express concern about the safety of their neighborhoods and the loss of human life due to on street parking that blocks emergency access. It is critical that we keep enough roadway open that fire engines can enter neighborhoods at the same time residents flee or people will die as has already happened during the August 8, 2023 wildfires. As bigger and bigger homes are allowed and rooms are rented out and each room may have one or more vehicles, these cars are parked in the street, there is abysmal county enforcement and many neighborhoods have people parking on both sides of substandard roads essentially creating one lane roads in and out which become death traps during disaster. Even after the August 8 fires, in one of the still existing neighborhoods in Lahaina fire engines could not make it into the neighborhood and they had to approach the fire from the street above. I know that we are in a housing crisis but please do not supersede county parking requirements that are meant to keep our residents safer and allow for the free flow of traffic out and first responders in, human safety must come first.

Mahalo for your ;ervice to our communities and the opportunity to provide testimony on this critical issue of safety.

Tamara Paltin - Councilmember West Maui



Testimony of the Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization

**Committee on Housing
Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs
Committee on Water, Land, and Culture and the Arts**

**February 17, 2026 at 3:02PM
Conference Room 224**

**SB 2981
Relating to Parking**

Dear Chairs Chang, Wakai, and Lee, Vice Chairs Hashimoto, Chang, and Inouye, and Committees Members,

The Oahu Metropolitan Planning Organization (OahuMPO) **supports SB 2981**, which would beginning 7/1/2027, prohibit minimum off-street parking requirements for any new development in an urban district, and require each county to amend or repeal any charter provision, ordinance, code, standard, or administrative procedure that imposes a minimum off-street parking requirement by 7/1/2027.

This bill is consistent with several goals of the Oahu Regional Transportation Plan including support for active and public transportation, promoting an equitable transportation system, and improving air quality and protecting environmental and cultural assets.¹ Prohibiting minimum off-street parking requirements for new development in an urban district can help reduce housing costs for residents, increase transportation choices, reduce transportation emissions and traffic congestion, and improve resident quality of life.

Optimizing parking supply, coupled with encouraging density and mixed land use in strategic areas and enabling and providing multiple modes of active and shared transportation can improve livability of neighborhoods and reduce the cost of living for residents. Excessive parking on the other hand, reduces walkability of a neighborhood, promotes sprawl, and leads to car-oriented development patterns.

Right sizing parking supply is particularly important to help the State and County address cost of living and equity concerns as well as meet [the State's codified carbon net-negative goal](#) and [requirements in the Navahine Settlement](#). The bill is consistent with strategies and actions identified in other regional plans, including the [Honolulu Urban Core Parking](#)

¹ https://oahumpo.org/?wpfb_dl=2215

[Master Plan](#), [Climate Action Plan](#), [Honolulu Transportation Demand Management Plan](#), and [Energy Conservation and Emissions Reduction Plan for Honolulu Transportation Systems](#), [Investing in Transportation Choices](#), and [Drivers of Vehicle Miles Traveled and Priority Reduction Strategies](#).

The OahuMPO is the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) on the island of Oahu responsible for carrying out a multimodal transportation planning process, including the development of a long-range (25-year horizon) metropolitan transportation plan, referred to as the Oahu Regional Transportation Plan (ORTP), which encourages and promotes a safe and efficient transportation system to serve the mobility needs of people and freight (including walkways, bicycles, and transit), fosters economic growth and development, and takes into consideration resiliency needs, while minimizing fuel consumption and air pollution ([23 CFR 450.300](#)).

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

February 17, 2026

The Honorable Stanley Chang, Chair
Senate Committee on Housing

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

The Honorable Chris Lee, Chair
Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts
State Capitol, Conference Room 430 & Videoconference

RE: Senate Bill 2981, Relating to Land Use

HEARING: Tuesday, February 17, 2026, at 3:02 p.m.

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

My name is Lyndsey Garcia, Director of Advocacy, testifying on behalf of the Hawai'i Association of REALTORS® ("HAR"), the voice of real estate in Hawaii and its over 10,000 members. HAR **supports the intent** of Senate Bill 2981, which beginning 7/1/2027, prohibits minimum off-street parking requirements for any new development in an urban district. Requires each county to amend or repeal any charter provision, ordinance, code, standard, or administrative procedure that imposes a minimum off-street parking requirement by 7/1/2027.

A study by Hawai'i Appleseed found that providing parking can increase the cost of a single affordable rental unit by over \$55,000, and up to \$77,000 for market-rate, for-sale units.¹ Instead of requiring minimum parking, this measure allows projects the flexibility to account for the specific needs of the community, which can vary based on factors like walkability and access to transit or other transportation options. As such, this measure can help to reduce overall costs for much needed housing projects while still allowing developers to build parking they find fits the needs and demands of the consumer.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

¹ Seitz, Gilliam & Heim. (October 1, 2025). Stalled. How Parking Mandates Drive Up Housing Costs. <https://hiappleseed.org/publications/stalled-parking-mandates-housing-costs>



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SENATE JOINT COMMITTEES
HOUSING, ENERGY & INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS, WATER, LAND, CULTURE & THE ARTS
Tuesday - February 17, 2026 - 3:02PM

Hawai'i Bicycling League Supports SB2981, relating to Land Use

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs and Members of this Joint Senate Committee,

My name is Eduardo Hernandez and I am the Advocacy Director of the Hawai'i Bicycling League (HBL). We are a non-profit organization founded in 1975 with the mission of enabling more people to ride bicycles for health, recreation, and transportation. We strive to create communities across our islands that have safe, accessible, and inclusive environments for people to bike, walk, and roll.

HBL supports SB 2981 to prohibit minimum off-street parking requirements for any new development in an urban district.

For too long, state land use policies and statutes have worked in concert with transportation planning in ways that prioritize private cars. This has created roads that are unsafe for walking and bicycling, which in turn has been a barrier for people to choose these options for transportation, recreation, and health. Further, in prioritizing private cars, we are contributing to an unsustainable rise in the cost of developing housing, and for families to be able to afford housing.

At HBL, we see opportunities to de-prioritize private cars and parking to create opportunities for safer streets and more affordable housing for all. In this light, SB2981 will provide for essential flexibility to increase housing options and decrease housing costs. There is also an opportunity for parking reform to elevate public policy discussion around issues like increasing secure off-street bicycle parking, expanding bike share initiatives, and enhancing Complete Streets statutes and policies. These linkages demonstrate a better way to consider land use policies, in ways that provide affordable and safer options for housing and transportation.

I urge you to pass SB2981 and move it along for further consideration this legislative session.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share testimony on this important matter..

S/Eduardo Hernandez

Eduardo Hernandez
Advocacy Director
Hawai'i Bicycling League

February 17, 2026

TO: Chair Lee and the Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts
Chair Wakai and the Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs
Chair Chang and the Committee on Housing

RE: Senate Bill 2981, Relating to Land Use

Dear Chairs Lee, Wakai, Chang, and Committee Members,

We strongly support Senate Bill 2981. If builders need to build parking to meet community needs, they build it. If a homeowner or renter needs parking, they look for housing opportunities with parking. Through Senate Bill 2981, we remove waste and added cost from this naturally occurring dynamic.

Parking minimums are a major, avoidable cost that raises rents and home prices.

Decades of modern analysis show that off-street parking mandates add very large amounts to the per-unit cost of new housing, conservatively in the tens of thousands of dollars per stall (the cost of an average stall in Honolulu is **\$68,000**), and local analyses often estimate **\$70k–\$100k** per unit when parking is overbuilt.¹

The City and County of Honolulu and other localities have already moved to remove or loosen parking requirements for certain projects (for example, Ordinance 19-8 eliminated many parking requirements for qualified rental housing projects), and those reforms have shown how policy change can unlock housing without jeopardizing neighborhood character.

Removing arbitrary minimums lets builders meet real demand rather than paying to store vehicles people may not own or use. Local governments, project applicants, and neighborhoods retain the ability to propose, negotiate, and supply parking in ways that match actual community needs. **Let's advance SB 2981.**

Thank you,



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



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

¹ For figures, see <https://tinyurl.com/mswb7hwr>
hawaiisfuture.org



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

February 17, 2026

Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts
Senate Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs
Senate Committee on Housing
Hawai'i State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: SUPPORT for SB 2981 - RELATING TO LAND USE

Aloha Chairs Lee, Wakai & Chang, Vice Chairs Hashimoto & Inouye, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Hawai'i YIMBY, we are writing in **strong support of SB 2981**.

Hawai'i is facing a severe housing shortage, and every unnecessary cost added to housing construction makes that problem worse. SB 2981 addresses one of the most expensive and outdated requirements driving up housing costs: mandatory minimum parking. Each required parking stall can cost tens of thousands of dollars to build, costs that are ultimately passed on to renters and homebuyers. At a time when families are already struggling to afford housing, these added costs do real harm.

SB 2981 asks us to choose people over parking. Instead of forcing builders to meet arbitrary parking minimums, this bill **allows parking to be right-sized** based on actual needs. The money saved by eliminating unnecessary parking can be used to lower rents, reduce purchase prices, or build additional homes. In many cases, the land currently reserved for excess parking could be used to create more housing units, helping to address the shortage directly.

Importantly, **this bill does not ban parking** or prevent it from being built. Developers will still provide parking where it makes sense for residents, businesses, and communities. SB



Hawai'i YIMBY
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2981 simply removes rigid minimums that do not reflect local conditions, changing transportation patterns, or the needs of modern households. Accessible parking and disability requirements remain fully protected.

By allowing flexibility, SB 2981 supports affordable housing, smaller homes, adaptive reuse of existing buildings, and mixed-use development. These are exactly the kinds of projects Hawai'i needs to house local families, seniors, and workers. Requiring excessive parking only makes these projects harder and more expensive to build.

SB 2981 is a practical reform that prioritizes housing affordability and efficient land use.

Choosing people over parking means choosing homes over empty stalls and families over unnecessary costs.

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





holomua

COLLABORATIVE

OUR MISSION

To support and advance public policies that make Hawai'i affordable for all working families.

OUR VISION

Collaborative, sustainable, and evidence-based public policies that create a diverse and sustainable Hawai'i economy, an abundance of quality job opportunities, and a future where all working families living in Hawai'i can thrive.

BOARD MEMBERS

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Meli James, *Board Chair*
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Sunshine Topping

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Page 1 of 2

Committee:

Senate Committee on Water, Land, Cultural and the Arts
Senate Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs

Senate Committee on Housing

Bill Number:

SB2981, Relating to Land Use

Hearing Date and Time: February 17, 3:02pm, Room 224

Re:

Testimony of Holomua Collaborative – Support

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

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB2981, Relating to Land Use. This bill would prohibit counties imposing minimum off-street parking requirements for any new development in an urban district

Hawai'i remains in a severe housing crisis. Skyrocketing home prices leave many local families struggling to secure safe, attainable places to live. The median single family home price in Hawai'i now exceeds \$1,000,000, while the median for a condominium is nearly \$650,000, creating an impossible barrier for most residents. As a result, many local families are being forced to leave in search of more affordable options elsewhere. Between July 2024 and July 2025, an average of 11 people left Hawai'i *each day*.¹ More Native Hawaiians now live outside Hawai'i than within it, representing a staggering loss of our culture, traditions, and the very essence of what makes Hawai'i home.

In October 2025, a survey² on the day-to-day financial experience of local workers suggested that this crisis continues to reach alarming levels. When nearly 3,200 local workers were asked if they might need to move to a less expensive state, only 25 percent answered a definitive “no”, which is a decrease from 31 percent in 2024. Meanwhile, 75 percent said “yes” or were “unsure”, representing an increase from 69 percent in 2024. Additionally, more than half of respondents cited housing costs as the primary driver of their high cost of living.

The high cost of living and limited housing options have led essential members of our workforce, including teachers, firefighters, and health care workers, to consider relocating. This exodus deepens our state's labor shortages and diminishes the quality of life for all residents. Each local worker and family we lose to the continent contributes to the erosion of our economy, our culture, and our community.

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division Estimates, released January 2026; and calculations by the Hawai'i State Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism, Hawai'i State Data Center.

https://files.hawaii.gov/dbedt/census/popestimate/2025/state-pop/2025_daily_est_state.pdf

² 2025 Hawai'i Affordability Survey - <https://holomuacollective.org/survey-25/#3>

SB2981 addresses a critical, yet often overlooked, driver of these high housing costs: outdated government mandates that require a fixed number of parking stalls for every new home. While these requirements were originally intended to manage street congestion, they have evolved into a significant financial barrier that makes housing development prohibitively expensive. In Hawai'i, the cost of constructing a single parking stall in a structured garage can range from \$50,000 to over \$80,000. When developers are forced to build more parking than the market or the specific site requires, that massive capital expense is not absorbed by the developer; it is passed directly to the local family through higher rents or a higher mortgage. For many working families, the "cost" of these mandated stalls can mean the difference between qualifying for a home or being priced out of the islands entirely.

Beyond the direct construction costs, parking minimums also limit the number of housing units that can be built on a single lot. By requiring significant square footage be dedicated to cars rather than people, we are effectively choosing to house vehicles over our neighbors. This is particularly damaging for infill development and affordable housing projects near transit hubs, where residents may not even own a vehicle but are still forced to pay for the "bundled" cost of a parking space they do not use. Removing these mandates does not mean parking will disappear; it simply allows homebuilders and homeowners to determine the right amount of parking based on the actual needs of the residents and the unique constraints of the site.

By passing SB2981, we can take a tangible step toward reducing the cost of housing production and making the dream of homeownership more attainable for the 75 percent of local workers who are currently questioning their future in Hawai'i. We must prioritize people over pavement if we hope to stem the tide of residents leaving for the mainland.

I urge you to support SB2981.

Sincerely,

Matthew Prellberg
Policy & Communications Director



Email: communications@ulupono.com

SENATE COMMITTEES ON WATER, LAND, AND CULTURE AND THE ARTS, ENERGY AND
INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS, & HOUSING
Tuesday, February 17, 2026 — 3:02 p.m.

Ulupono Initiative supports SB 2981, Relating to Land Use.

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

My name is Micah Munekata, and I am the Vice President of Government Affairs at Ulupono Initiative. We are a Hawai'i-focused impact investment firm that strives to improve the quality of life throughout the islands by helping our communities become more resilient and self-sufficient through locally produced food, renewable energy, clean transportation choices, and better management of freshwater resources.

Ulupono supports SB 2981, which prohibits minimum off-street parking requirements for any new development in an urban district; requires each county to amend or repeal any charter provision, ordinance, code, standard, or administrative procedure that imposes a minimum off-street parking requirement by 7/1/2027.

Land Use

By requiring minimum parking mandates for development, our state is prioritizing parking over many of our most critical issues — housing, food, and jobs. Land used for these parking mandates accumulates project by project across our communities, and Hawai'i has plenty of parking. There are 4.5 million parking spaces across the state of Hawai'i. This is equal to 1.5 billion square feet, or 53 square miles. That's 35 Waikiki neighborhoods, or 3-4 spaces for every vehicle in Hawai'i. In a state with finite land resources, we must ask whether the best use of that land is for parking — an important consideration.

Costs

The high cost of building parking makes housing more expensive for all residents — including those who rent, those who own, and even those without cars who still pay for parking they'll never use. Ulupono's "[The Costs of Parking in Hawai'i](#)" report, published in 2020, documents the costs of building parking. Construction costs range from \$4,200 per space in a surface lot to \$60,400 per space in a free-standing parking garage. These construction and ongoing carrying costs are passed on to Hawai'i residents, businesses, and visitors through higher rents and housing prices, regardless of their use. That's between

Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i

\$226 and \$511 per unit added to the cost of monthly rent, or an additional \$100,000 per 2-bedroom house or condo purchase in Honolulu.¹ It's worth noting that these numbers are likely much higher now given the past few years of inflation.

[Sightline Institute](#) illustrated how significantly parking mandates can alter a developer's plans. With current parking mandates in Portland, Oregon, the most profitable proposal is for high-cost townhomes in the range of \$700,000. Removing the requirement allows the developer to propose mixed-income \$280,000 condominiums.² The implications this has on the feasibility of creating more affordable housing is clear and could be duplicated here by allowing the market to dictate parking, not government. Similar tradeoffs likely occur here regularly as well. There are numerous examples of transit-oriented projects all over the state in which the number of parking stalls is higher than the units being provided or land area dedicated to commercial/educational uses.³

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Micah Munekata
Vice President of Government Affairs

¹ <https://ulupono.com/news-listing/report-reveals-the-hidden-costs-of-parking-in-hawaii/>

² <https://www.sightline.org/2019/10/02/in-mid-density-zones-portland-has-a-choice-garages-or-low-prices/>

³ Liliha mixed use center, Mayor Wright Homes, Kahului Civic Mixed-Use Complex to name a few but many more exist across the state.



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The Thirty-Third Legislature
Senate Committees on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts;
on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs; and on Housing
Tuesday, February 17, 2026
Conference Room 224
3:02 p.m.

TO: The Honorable Chris Lee, Chair
The Honorable Glenn Wakai
The Honorable Stanley Chang, Chair
FROM: Keali'i S. López, State Director
RE: Support for S.B. 2981 Relating to Land Use

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

My name is Keali'i López, and I serve as 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 strong support of S.B. 2981**. AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan social impact organization dedicated to **empowering people age 50 and older to choose how they live as they age**. Access to **stable, affordable housing** is fundamental to that mission and is essential to ensuring that Hawai'i residents can **age with dignity and remain in their communities**.

S.B. 2981 would prohibit minimum off-street parking requirements for any **new development located in an urban district**, beginning July 1, 2027. The measure would preempt conflicting county laws, ordinances, codes, or standards and require counties to amend or repeal those provisions by that date. Outdated parking mandates often **discourage walkability and the use of multimodal transportation**, while consuming valuable land that could otherwise be used for housing or community-serving purposes.

This measure would help support the production of more affordable housing options statewide. **Minimum parking requirements significantly increase construction costs**, particularly for residential projects, and those costs are **passed on to renters, homebuyers, and small businesses**. By eliminating unnecessary parking mandates, S.B. 2981 modernizes land use policy while still allowing parking decisions to be **tailored to actual community needs and project-specific conditions**, rather than one-size-fits-all requirements.



S.B. 2981 Relating to Land Use
February 17, 2026
Page 2

At a time when Hawai'i faces a **severe housing shortage and rising costs of living**, S.B. 2981 represents a **practical and meaningful step forward**. AARP Hawai'i respectfully urges the Senate Committees on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts; Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs; and Housing to **pass S.B. 2981**.

Mahalo for your continued leadership.



Feb. 17, 2026, 3:02 p.m.

Hawaii State Capitol

Conference Room 224 and Videoconference

To: Senate Committee on Housing

Sen. Stanley Chang, Chair

Sen. Troy N. Hashimoto, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs

Sen. Glenn Wakai, Chair

Sen. Stanley Chang, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Water, Land, Culture and the Arts

Sen. Chris Lee, Chair

Sen. Lorraine R. Inouye, Vice Chair

From: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

Ted Kefalas, Director of Strategic Campaigns

RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB2981 — RELATING TO LAND USE

Aloha chairs, vice chairs and other members of the committees,

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii **supports** [SB2981](#), which would prohibit off-street parking requirements for any new development in an urban district.

This bill would help reduce housing prices and remove some of the regulatory barriers to construction.

Research has shown that imposing parking mandates increases housing costs. Construction costs for parking garages or spaces, as well as the cost of acquiring land for parking, are passed on to homebuyers and renters.¹

¹ [“The Costs of Parking in Hawai‘i,”](#) prepared by PBR & Associates for the Ulupono Initiative, August 2020, p. 3; C. J. Gabbe and Gregory Pierce, [“Hidden Costs and Deadweight Losses: Bundled Parking and Residential Rents in the Metropolitan United States,”](#) Housing Policy Debate, Vol. 27, Issue 2, Aug. 8, 2016.

Cities that have reduced or eliminated required parking see less parking built, which frees up land for new and expanded homes and businesses.²

Parking mandates also have hidden costs. Space dedicated to parking cannot be used to expand housing and can make it difficult to create walkable communities.

Moreover, parking mandates can frustrate renovation and rebuilding. In many areas of the state, an old building that does not meet current parking rules cannot be retrofitted to a new use without having to purchase land to add the required parking.

A planned bowling alley on Lanai encountered this problem, and construction was delayed as the owners of the lot tried to figure out how to provide more parking.³

In Lahaina, owners of historic-zoned buildings destroyed by the wildfires could have been required to add parking spaces as part of the rebuilding process, but the Maui County Office of Recovery issued a directive waiving those rules.⁴ Paving more of Lahaina just to provide parking would have made it impossible to recreate its walkable, historic aesthetic.

By reforming county parking mandates, the Legislature can help address the housing crisis as well as remove burdensome and unnecessary barriers to growth. We urge you to pass SB2981.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Ted Kefalas
Director of Strategic Campaigns
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

² Abbey Seitz, Trinity Gilliam and Arjuna Heim, "[Stalled: How parking mandates drive up housing costs](#)," Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice, October 2025, pp. 16-17; and Daniel Baldwin Hess and Brendan Flowers, "[Developer Response to the Removal of Minimum Parking Requirements in Buffalo](#)," Transportation Research Journal, Volume 2677, Issue 12, May 10, 2023; C. J. Gabbe, Gregory Pierce and Gordon Clowers, "[Parking policy: The effects of residential minimum parking requirements in Seattle](#)," Land Use Policy, Vol. 91, February 2020

³ Ahry McGurik, "[Lanai bowling alley saga shines light on county's cumbersome parking mandates](#)," The Maui News, Oct. 30, 2025.

⁴ Josiah Nishita and John Smith, "[Recovery Coordination Directive No. 4](#)," Maui Office of Recovery, Dec. 9, 2025.



**Testimony in Support for SB2981 - Relating to Land Use
Committee on Water, Land, Culture, and the Arts (WLA)
Committee on Energy And Intergovernmental Affairs (EIG), and
Committee on Housing (HOU)
Tuesday, February 17th, 2026 at 3:02PM**

Dear Chairs, Vice Chairs, and members of the joint WLA/EIG/HOU committee,
Mahalo for the opportunity to **testify in support of SB2981**, which would remove barriers to affordable housing by prohibiting minimum off-street parking requirements for any new development in an urban district.

Hawai'i Appleseed supports the proposed legislation for numerous reasons, including that:

1. **Parking mandates are costly and counterproductive.** A 2020 study from the Ulupono Initiative found that the cost to build parking in high-rise buildings (with podium-style parking) for affordable and mixed-income rentals in Honolulu's urban core costs up to \$55,000 per unit.¹ Adjusted for inflation, this cost now exceeds \$68,000 per unit. These expenses do not come out of thin air—they are baked into the overall cost of development, reducing the number of affordable units that can be built and increasing the cost of rent or sale for local families. According to the 2020 study from Ulupono Initiative, for a single person renting a small studio in urban Honolulu, parking could add up \$410 per month to their rent – even if they don't own a vehicle.²
2. **More parking does not mean more housing security.** Individuals living in affordable housing are less likely to own cars, and data shows that lower-income residents often prioritize affordable rents and proximity to transit, jobs, and schools over parking availability. Moreover, mandating more parking means reducing the number of affordable homes that can be built on a given parcel due to land and cost constraints. For example, imagine that a high-rise building of 200 mixed-income rental units was being planned in Honolulu. If one parking stall was built for every two units, in today's dollars, this would add a whopping \$6.8 million to the cost of the project.
3. **Eliminating parking mandates aligns with national best practices and local priorities.** Across the country, over 90 jurisdictions have eliminated or significantly reduced parking minimums, recognizing that such mandates hinder housing production and promote sprawl.³ In 2020, the Honolulu City Council removed parking minimums for new housing and commercial development in the urban core and transit oriented development (TOD) areas through

¹ Ulupono Initiative, "The Costs of Parking in Hawai'i," Prepared by PBR Hawai'i, August, 2020.
<https://ulupono.com/media/ivcfs2pu/the-cost-of-parking-in-hawaii-report-2020-08.pdf>.

² Ibid.

³ Parking Reform Network, "Parking Mandates Map," January 6, 2025.
<https://parkingreform.org/resources/mandates-map/>

Ordinance 20-41. Recent analysis from Hawai'i Appleseed shows that permitted parking within housing developments in TOD areas on O'ahu approved from 2010–2025 decreased by over 12 percent following passage of Ordinance 20-41, with the greatest reductions in parking made by affordable housing developers.⁴

4. **Eliminating parking mandates advances the state's climate and equity goals.** We cannot meet our climate commitments or equity objectives if we continue to design our neighborhoods around car storage instead of people. Forcing developers to build more parking locks residents into car dependency and undermines investment in walking, biking, and public transit infrastructure. It also disproportionately harms lower-income residents who are the least likely to benefit from car-centric policies.

In summary, SB2981 represents a common-sense reform that will help reduce the cost of housing and allow communities and developers to respond to actual needs rather than the outdated, one-size-fits-all approach of parking mandates.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.



Abbey Seitz

Director of Transportation Equity

Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice

⁴ Seitz, A., Gilliam, T., and Heim, A, "Stalled: How Parking Mandates Drive Up Housing Costs," Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice, October 2025.
https://static1.squarespace.com/static/601374ae84e51e430a1829d8/t/68f15c7cbf563d6a7080bf8f/1760648316670/Stalled_FINAL.pdf.



**HAWAII STATE SENATE
COMMITTEE ON WATER & LAND, COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL
AFFAIRS, AND COMMITTEE ON HOUSING
Conference Room 224
State Capitol
3:02 PM**

February 17, 2026

Subject: SB 2981 - RELATING TO LAND USE

Chairs, Vice-Chairs, and members of the Committees:

My name is Roseann Freitas, CEO of the Building Industry Association of Hawaii (BIA-Hawaii). Chartered in 1955, the Building Industry Association of Hawaii is a professional trade organization affiliated with the National Association of Home Builders, representing the building industry and its associates. BIA-Hawaii takes a leadership role in unifying and promoting the interests of the industry to enhance the quality of life for the people of Hawaii. Our members build the communities we all call home.

BIA-Hawaii is in support of SB 2981, which would, beginning July 1, 2027, prohibit counties from imposing minimum parking mandates for certain developments, including affordable housing projects, accessory dwelling units, senior housing, housing for persons with disabilities, and other community-serving facilities.

Hawaii's housing affordability crisis requires practical policy responses that remove unnecessary cost without sacrificing quality of life. Parking stalls can add tens of thousands of dollars per unit to the cost of housing, even when residents do not own cars or the stalls go unused — cost that is ultimately passed on to buyers and renters. Allowing developers and communities greater flexibility to match parking supply with real needs — rather than mandating parking stalls as a precondition to development — supports more affordable housing production, more efficient use of limited land, and broader consumer choice in how residents live and move around our islands.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide our comments on this matter.



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WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF S.B. 2981

Relating to Land Use – Parking Reform and Modernization Act

Submitted by: Avalon Development Company, LLC

Avalon Development Company, LLC strongly supports S.B. 2981, which would prohibit minimum off-street parking requirements for new development in urban districts beginning July 1, 2027.

As a developer of residential and mixed-use housing throughout Hawai‘i, we have seen firsthand how rigid parking minimums increase construction costs, limit design flexibility, and reduce the number of homes that can be built on a site. Structured parking is extremely expensive, often costing tens of thousands of dollars per stall. When excessive parking is mandated, those costs are embedded in rents and sales prices, directly worsening housing affordability.

S.B. 2981 addresses this inefficiency by eliminating one-size-fits-all parking mandates in urban districts. Mandatory parking ratios frequently require more parking than residents actually use—particularly in areas near transit, employment centers, and services. The result is higher housing costs, less efficient land use, and fewer units delivered.

Importantly, the bill does not prohibit parking. It restores flexibility. Developers will continue to provide parking based on market demand and project context, while counties retain oversight through existing permitting and planning processes. What the bill removes is the requirement to overbuild parking solely to satisfy prescriptive numerical standards.

This reform also advances statewide goals to reduce automobile dependency, support transit-oriented development, and lower greenhouse gas emissions. Urban districts are precisely where flexibility in parking policy can produce smarter growth patterns and more attainable housing.



By establishing a clear statewide standard and directing counties to amend conflicting ordinances, S.B. 2981 provides regulatory certainty while modernizing Hawai'i's land-use framework.

For these reasons, Avalon Development Company, LLC respectfully urges the Committee to PASS S.B. 2981.

Respectfully submitted,
Avalon Development Company, LLC



Cade Watanabe, Financial Secretary-Treasurer

Gemma G. Weinstein, President

Eric W. Gill, Senior Vice-President

February 16, 2026

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

Senate Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs
Sen. Glenn Wakai, Chair
Sen. Stanley Chang, Vice Chair

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

Testimony With Comments re: SB 2981

Chairs Chang, Wakai and Lee, Vice Chairs Hashimoto, Chang, and Inouye, and Committee Members:

UNITE HERE Local 5 represents 10,000 working people in the hotel, food service and health care industries across Hawaii. We note the egregious traffic situation in Hawai'i and the need to get cars off the road. At the same time, we note that solutions to this problem must involve real, working alternatives, such as an enhanced bus system or promotion of other means of transportation. We note that affordable housing development is not sufficient in amount or in actual affordability to meet people's needs. At the same time, we feel the solution to this problem is to require more from developers, especially when they receive a benefit of any sort from the government.

In that regard, we would recommend that this bill be amended to create some alternative requirements for developers that contribute to the transit solution rather than just a ban on off-street parking minima. Alternatively, it should be amended to put some requirements on affordability of units in projects with reduced off-street parking.

As currently written, the bill could be used to significantly reduce developers' construction costs and allow them to build greater dwelling or transient unit density, without requiring anything in return, and thus provides benefit to the industry. Will the industry pass on those benefits to our communities? Maybe, maybe not – this bill can require that they do, and in this crucial moment, such a requirement is necessary.

Thank you.

SB-2981

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 6:22:26 PM

Testimony for WLA on 2/17/2026 3:02:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacob Wiencek	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

These parking requirements worsen traffic, neighborhood order, and drive up housing costs. They're negative across the board. Let's deep six them. I urge the committee to **SUPPORT** this proposal!

SB-2981

Submitted on: 2/13/2026 6:29:36 PM

Testimony for WLA on 2/17/2026 3:02:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, Support the INTENT of

2981 SB RELATING TO LAND USE.

On street parking should be PROHIBITED, especially is the roadway are built at the minimum standards. Street parkings is a CHRONIC problem says HFD, include me.