



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

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Statement of
MARY ALICE EVANS, Director

before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER & LAND

Tuesday, March 17, 2026, 9:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 411

in consideration of
SB 3048, SD 1
RELATING TO THE STATE BUILDING CODE COUNCIL.

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

The Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) **supports SB 3048, SD 1**, which establishes one permanent full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) permanent position for the State Building Code Council (SBCC) to support statewide building code coordination, permitting transparency, and modernization initiatives; requires county reporting on building permitting performance; requires the State Building Code Council to develop a plan for the creation of a standardized statewide permitting data system or public dashboard and a state building code modernization and transparency initiative; requires the State Building Code Council to develop standardized credentials and training requirements for permitting officials; and requires a report.

OPSD **supports** the establishment of one permanent full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) position with the State Building Code Council. The restoration of the Council's operational capacity is a critical prerequisite for the SBCC to fulfill its existing duties and effectively execute any new mandates. We recognize and value SBCC's technical expertise; it is a vital resource that must be leveraged to address the regulatory complexities currently slowing the development of housing across the State. Without dedicated staff, the Council cannot provide the consistent oversight necessary to streamline our permitting processes.

We also **support** the requirement for consistency in county reporting regarding building permitting performance. Currently, the lack of comparable metrics across jurisdictions hampers our ability to conduct meaningful performance evaluations or pinpoint the exact nature of backlogs. Establishing a uniform set of metrics is essential for identifying systemic issues and ensuring that all counties are working toward the same efficiency goals. By implementing a standardized framework, the State can move towards evidence-based decision-making that simplifies the permitting path for future development.

Furthermore, OPSD **supports** the development of statewide standards for credentialing, training, and training of permitting officials. We appreciate the bill's inclusion of language ensuring the SBCC will consult with county agencies and relevant stakeholders in this process. Maintaining these standards as advisory, unless otherwise provided by law, provides a helpful benchmark for professional excellence while respecting the operational nuances of the individual counties. OPSD also appreciates the changes made in SD 1 version of SB 3048. By directing the SBCC to develop a formal, actionable plan to effectuate the creation of a statewide permitting data system or public dashboard, this measure ensures that future appropriations are used effectively and transparently.

In summary, OPSD supports SB 3048, SD 1 and its efforts to standardize data metrics, improve transparency, and promote uniform professional standards for permitting administration statewide. By addressing the current administrative bottlenecks and providing the SBCC with the tools it needs, we can make significant strides in accelerating housing development.

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

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Vice-Chair
Yuki Lei K. Sugimura

Councilmembers
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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
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WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
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March 16, 2026

TO: Honorable Mark J. Hashem, Chair, and
Members of the House Committee on Water and Land

FROM: Nohelani U'u-Hodgins *Nohelani U'u-Hodgins*
Councilmember

DATE: Tuesday, March 17, 2026
9:00 a.m., Conference Room 411

SUBJECT: **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 3048, SD1, RELATING TO THE
STATE BUILDING CODE COUNCIL**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this important measure. The purpose of this measure is to establish one full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) permanent position for the State Building Code Council to support statewide building code coordination, permitting transparency, and modernization initiatives. It also requires county reporting on building permitting performance, requires the State Building Code Council to develop a plan for the creation of a standardized statewide permitting data system or public dashboard and a state building code modernization and transparency initiative, requires the State Building Code Council to develop standardized credentials and training requirements for permitting officials, requires a report to the Legislature and appropriate funds.

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.

Delays, inconsistencies, and limited visibility into county permitting timelines contribute significantly to increased housing and infrastructure costs across the state. By establishing a dedicated full-time position within the State Building Code Council, this measure ensures that there is focused capacity to coordinate statewide building code efforts, collect and analyze permitting data, and advance modernization initiatives.

March 16, 2026

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Requiring standardized county reporting on permitting performance is a critical step toward identifying systemic bottlenecks and deploying targeted solutions. The development of a statewide permitting data system or public dashboard will provide consistent, comparable metrics across counties, enabling data-driven improvements and greater public transparency.

Additionally, the bill's direction to develop recommended credentialing and training standards for permitting officials will promote professionalism and consistency in permitting administration statewide. Stronger coordination and clearer performance metrics will help reduce unnecessary delays, lower development costs, and support the timely delivery of housing and infrastructure projects.

SB 3048, SD1 represents a practical and forward-thinking approach to improving government efficiency while addressing one of the root contributors to high construction costs in Hawai'i.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge your support of SB 3048, SD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of this measure.



March 17, 2026

TO: Honorable Mark Hashem, Chair
Honorable Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair
House Committee on Water and Land

Hawaii State Council
A Chapter of the
American Institute of Architects

FROM: Legislative Advocacy Committee
American Institute of Architects, Hawai'i State Council

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1.1.19 ver.

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

The American Institute of Architects, Hawaii Chapter (AIA Hawaii) would like to submit testimony in **SUPPORT OF SB 3048**, which would strengthen the capacity and effectiveness of the State Building Code Council by establishing dedicated staffing, promoting permitting transparency, and advancing modernization of building code administration statewide.

Under current law (HRS § 107-23), the State Building Code Council is already authorized to appoint an executive director, executive assistant, and additional staff, and its budgetary requirements are to be included in the *Department of Accounting and General Services* (DAGS) budget. However, the position authorized by statute has *never been funded* by DAGS, leaving the Council without the capacity necessary to fulfill its mandate. SB 3048 acknowledges this oversight and would rectify it by appropriating funds to finally support the position in law with actual budget authority. This step is critical to empowering the Council to carry out the work envisioned in statute.

By explicitly empowering the Council with funded staffing and support for data collection and analysis, this measure will facilitate more efficient coordination between the State and counties. The additional capacity will allow the Council to better modernize codes and support permitting improvements that benefit designers, builders, and the public.

The bill directs the Council to develop recommended credentialing, training, and continuing education standards for permitting officials in consultation with counties. Increasing professionalism and consistency in permitting administration benefits the entire built environment sector and the public interest.

Standardized metrics, comparative county data, and a central repository of permitting information will help policymakers and practitioners identify best practices, allocate technical support where needed, and implement reforms that reduce unnecessary delays. Improved performance in permitting is directly tied to AIA Hawai'i's goals of enhancing housing affordability, infrastructure delivery, and economic growth.

We ask the committee to pass this bill and mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Islam, AIA
President
AIA Hawai'i

**Testimony to the House Committee on Water & Land
Representative Mark J. Hashem, Chair
Representative Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair**

**Tuesday, March 17, 2027, at 9:00AM
Conference Room 411 & Videoconference**

RE: SB3048 SD1 Relating to the State Building Code Council

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

My name is Sherry Menor, President and CEO of the Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber"). The Chamber supports Senate Bill 3048 Senate Draft 1 (SB3048 SD1), which establishes one permanent full-time equivalent (1.0 FTE) permanent position for the State Building Code Council to support statewide building code permitting transparency and modernization; requires data reporting and development of a statewide permitting data system; and requires the Council to develop credentials and training requirements.

SB3048 SD1 aligns with our 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii: An Economic Action Plan, specifically under the policy pillar for Small Business. This bill prioritizes addressing bottlenecks and friction points in Hawaii's permitting system to support business expansion and economic activity. Allocating human capital dedicated to system modernization and data reporting will meaningfully expedite the permitting process and give granular insight into persistent systems challenges related to permitting.

With the consistent permitting backlogs and delays, there is no shortage of economic will for infrastructural development. The issue at hand is the inefficiency that creates long wait times and tremendous delay costs. For small businesses, permitting delays represent a significant barrier to expansion, job creation, and capital investment. By institutionalizing a permanent position within the State Building Code Council focused on coordination, standardized reporting, and modernization, SB3048 SD1 will help lower these barriers and reduce approval timelines. Improving system agility and responsiveness provides industry with predictability and reliability that supports confident decision making around infrastructural investment and growth initiatives.

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii is the state's leading business advocacy organization, dedicated to improving Hawaii's economy and securing Hawaii's future for growth and opportunity. Our mission is to foster a vibrant economic climate. As such, we support initiatives and policies that align with the 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii that create opportunities to strengthen overall competitiveness, improve the quantity and skills of available workforce, diversify the economy, and build greater local wealth.

We respectfully ask to pass Senate Bill 3048 Senate Draft 1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



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February 12, 2026

TO: Honorable Carol Fukunaga, Chair Honorable Chris Lee, Vice Chair Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs Honorable Glenn Wakai, Chair Honorable Stanley Chang, Vice Chair Senate Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs

FROM: Palmer W. Hafdahl, AIA

RE: **Support SB3048**

I am submitting testimony in **support of SB 3048**, which would strengthen the capacity and effectiveness of the State Building Code Council by establishing dedicated staffing, promoting permitting transparency, and advancing modernization of building code administration statewide. Under current law (HRS § 107-23), the State Building Code Council is currently authorized to appoint an executive director, executive assistant, and additional staff, and its budgetary requirements are to be included in the Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS) budget. However, the position authorized by statute has never been funded by DAGS, leaving the Council without the capacity necessary to fulfill its mandate. SB 3048 acknowledges this oversight and would rectify it by appropriating funds to finally support the position in law with actual budget authority. This step is critical in empowering the Council to conduct the work envisioned by statute. By explicitly empowering the Council with funded staffing and support for data collection and analysis, this measure will facilitate more efficient coordination between the State and counties. The additional capacity will allow the Council to better modernize codes and support permitting improvements that benefit designers, builders, and the public in a safer, healthier, and more resilient built environment. The bill directs the Council to develop recommended credentialing, training, and continuing education standards for permitting officials in consultation with counties. Increasing professionalism and consistency in permitting administration benefits the entire built environment sector and the public interest. Standardized metrics, comparative county data, and a central repository of permitting information will help policymakers and practitioners identify Statewide best practices, allocate technical support where needed, and implement reforms that reduce unnecessary delays. Improved performance in permitting is critical to our common goal of enhancing housing affordability, infrastructure delivery, and economic growth. We ask the committee to pass this bill and mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Palmer W. Hafdahl, AIA



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March 15, 2026

**House Committee on Water & Land
Hearing Date: Tuesday, March 17, 2026, 9:00AM**

**Subject: SB 3048, Relating to the State Building Code Council
Testimony in Strong Support**

Dear Chair Hashem, Vice-Chair Morikawa, and Committee Members:

The American Council of Engineering Companies of Hawaii (ACECH) represents 68 member firms with over 2,000 employees throughout Hawaii. ACECH member firm projects directly affect the quality of the water we drink and the food we eat; the safety of our buildings, highways, bridges, and infrastructure; and the quality of the environment in which we work and play. **ACECH strongly supports SB3048 and its goal to provide a full-time position at the SBCC.**

The State Legislature recognized in Act 82 (2007) that “(t)he status of fragmented building requirements in Hawaii is of serious concern to those involved in building ownership, design, construction, and insurance,” and passed a bill to establish the State Building Code and Council. The State Building Code Council determines the amendments necessary to make national model codes and standards appropriate for Hawaii. These state codes are also used as the starting basis for the local county codes, so that unnecessary divergences between the building codes adopted by the counties are avoided.

Since its inception in 2007, the SBCC has not received funding for staff personnel or operating costs. Besides reviewing national codes and standards and deliberating the codes and standards best suited for use in Hawaii, volunteer members are tasked with responding to code inquiries, submitting legislative testimony and preparing and finalizing meeting agendas, minutes and annual reports in accordance with State Sunshine law requirements. We applaud the SBCC volunteer members but believe the SBCC cannot be fully functional and meet the worthy objectives of its establishment without more support, including full-time staff.

Therefore, **ACECH strongly supports this bill to fund the SBCC.** By doing so, the State would be better leveraging the hundreds of hours of volunteer effort expended by design and construction professionals on the SBCC.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony on this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

Charles Jury, President
AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES OF HAWAII



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TO: Committee on Water and Land
FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: March 17, 2026
TIME: 9am

RE: SB3048 SD1 Relating to the State Building Council
Position: Support

The Hawaii Food Industry Association is comprised of two hundred member companies representing retailers, suppliers, producers, manufacturers and distributors of food and beverage related products in the State of Hawaii.

HFIA is in support of this measure to improve the permitting process throughout the state. As the measure notes, delays, inconsistencies, and lack of transparency in state and county building permitting processes increase the cost of housing, infrastructure, and economic development projects across the State.

In a survey of HFIA members several years ago, improving permitting was cited as the number one way to increase adoption of solar on businesses. This is just one example of positive changes that businesses and residents are delaying, or not making at all, because of the current problems with the permitting process.

Making the permitting process more functional can enable economic growth, improved sustainability, and increased resilience for businesses individuals and our state.

We urge the Committee to pass this measure and we thank you for the opportunity to testify.



Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce

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Testimony to the House Committee on Water & Land Representative Mark J. Hashem, Chair Representative Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair

Tuesday, March 17, 2026 at 9:00 AM

RE: SB3048 SD1 Relating to the State Building Code Council - SUPPORT

Aloha e Chair Hashem, Vice Chair Morikawa, and Committee Members:

The Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce, representing more than 350 businesses and individual members primarily on the east side of Hawai'i Island, supports Senate Bill 3048 Senate Draft 1, which establishes one permanent full-time position within the State Building Code Council to improve statewide permitting efficiency and strengthen data transparency.

Hawai'i's economy continues to face persistent cost pressures. As noted in the *Beyond the Price of Paradise* by the University of Hawai'i Economic Research Organization, income and productivity growth in Hawai'i lag the national average once adjusted for the state's high cost of living. Improving the efficiency and predictability of permitting processes is an important step toward enabling investment, supporting housing production, and advancing critical infrastructure.

SB3048 SD1 would strengthen statewide oversight by supporting the collection and analysis of county permitting data, including timelines, permit volumes, and backlogs. This information will help identify bottlenecks, promote best practices across counties, and support more data-driven policymaking.

Creating this position is a modest but meaningful investment that can help reduce delays, improve transparency, and support more efficient permitting processes statewide.

For these reasons, we respectfully ask the Committee to **pass SB3048 SD1**. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Carla Kuo
Executive Officer
Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce



MAUI
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
VOICE OF BUSINESS

**HEARING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON WATER AND LAND
HAWAII STATE CAPITOL, HOUSE CONFERENCE ROOM 411
TUESDAY, MARCH 17, 2026 AT 9:00 A.M.**

To The Honorable Representative Mark J. Hashem, Chair
The Honorable Representative Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Water and Land

SUPPORT FOR SB3048 SD1 RELATING TO THE STATE BUILDING CODE COUNCIL

The Maui Chamber of Commerce supports SB3048 SD1 because it advances critical reforms to Hawai'i's building code and permitting systems, which are central to addressing the state's urgent housing needs. As housing has been one of our top priorities, we recognize that inefficiencies and inconsistencies in permitting processes are a major barrier to timely housing development and contribute to rising costs for both developers and residents.

The bill's provisions—establishing a dedicated position for the State Building Code Council, requiring county reporting on permitting performance, and initiating a plan for a standardized statewide permitting data system—align with best practices for improving transparency and accountability. These measures can help identify bottlenecks, reduce duplicative reviews, and promote a more predictable environment for housing projects. Standardized credentials and training for permitting officials further support consistency and professionalism across jurisdictions, which is especially important for innovative housing solutions such as modular, container, and tiny homes.

Clear timelines and measurable performance indicators will be essential to realizing the bill's intent of streamlining permitting and supporting timely, affordable housing delivery across Hawai'i.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share our support of SB3048 SD1.

Sincerely,

Pamela Tumpap
President

To advance and promote a healthy economic environment for business, advocating for a responsive government and quality education, while preserving Maui's unique community characteristics.