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Statement of
MARY ALICE EVANS, Director

before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Wednesday, February 25, 2026, 10:57 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

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

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means.

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.

**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair**

**Wednesday, February 25, 2026, at 10:57AM
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference**

RE: SB3048 SD1 Relating to the State Building Council

Aloha e Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Moriwaki, 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 SD1 (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.

With the consistent permitting backlogs and delays, there is no shortage of economic will for infrastructural development. The issue at hand is economic inefficiency that yields 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, shorten approval timelines, and provide predictability that improves business confidence in decision-making.

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 SD1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



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TO: Committee on Ways and Means
FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: February 25, 2026
TIME: 10:57am

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.