



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

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Statement of
MARY ALICE EVANS, Director

before the
**SENATE COMMITTEES ON
PUBLIC SAFETY AND MILITARY AFFAIRS
&
ENERGY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS**

Friday, February 13, 2026, 3:00 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 016

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

Chairs Fukunaga and Wakai, Vice Chairs Lee and Chang, and Members of the Committees,

The Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) **supports and offers amendments for SB 3048**, 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 standardized statewide permitting data system or public dashboard; requires the development of a state building code modernization and transparency initiative; and requires the State Building Code Council to develop standardized credentials and training requirements for permitting officials.

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. To further strengthen this initiative, **OPSD recommends adding language to specify that the SBCC shall provide the counties with a comprehensive list of all required metrics to include in their periodic reports, including detailed metric definitions.** This provision ensures clarity and sets clear expectations for county agencies.

While OPSD applauds the push for a standardized statewide permitting data system or public dashboard, we offer comments regarding its practical execution. Increased transparency is a powerful tool for streamlining government functions; however, we question the SBCC's ability to establish such a sophisticated digital infrastructure without a dedicated appropriation for software licensing and maintenance. To address this, **OPSD recommends amending the measure to either include an appropriation to fund the acquisition and maintenance of necessary software licensing OR amend the language to require the SBCC to develop a formal, actionable plan for the dashboard's creation as a first step.**

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.

In summary, OPSD supports SB 3048's provisions 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 on this measure.



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TO: Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs and Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: February 13, 2026

TIME: 3pm

RE: SB3048 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 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 Senate Committee on Public Safety & Military Affairs
Senator Carol Fukunaga, Chair • Senator Chris Lee, Vice Chair**

**Senate Committee on Economic Development & Tourism
Senator Lynn DeCoite, Chair • Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair**

Friday, February 13, 2026 at 3:00 PM

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

Aloha e Chair Fukunaga, Chair Wakai, Vice Chairs, 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, strongly **supports SB3048**, which strengthens the State Building Code Council by establishing a permanent full-time position, improving permitting transparency and data reporting, modernizing statewide permitting systems, and promoting standardized training and credentialing for permitting officials.

Efficient, predictable permitting processes are essential to public safety, housing production, infrastructure resilience, and economic competitiveness. SB3048 recognizes that meaningful reform requires dedicated operational support. Establishing a permanent staff position within the State Building Code Council will provide the continuity, accountability, and coordination needed to align state and county systems, maintain reliable data, support timely code updates, and standardize best practices. Modernized systems and structured training will further enhance professionalism, transparency, and consistency while maintaining rigorous safety standards.

As a priority of the Small Business Policy Committee within the 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii, this measure directly supports small business growth and economic competitiveness.

For these reasons, **we respectfully urge passage of SB3048**. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Carla Kuo
Executive Officer
Hawai'i Island Chamber of Commerce



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February 12, 2026

**Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs and
Senate Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs
Hearing Date: Friday, February 13, 2026, 3:00 p.m.**

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

Dear Chairs Fukunaga and Wakai, Vice-Chairs Lee and Chang, 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

LATE

Testimony to the Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs

Senator Carol Fukunaga, Chair

Senator Chris Lee, Vice Chair

Testimony to the Senate Committee on Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs

Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair

Senator Stanley Chang, Vice Chair

Friday, February 13, 2026, at 3:00PM
Conference Room 016 & Videoconference

RE: SB3048 Relating to the State Building Code Council

Aloha Chair Fukunaga, Vice Chair Lee, Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Chang, 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 (SB3048), 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 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 will help lower these barriers, shorten approval timelines, and provide predictability that supports business 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. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



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

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A Chapter of the
American Institute of Architects

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

Aloha Chairs and Members of the Committees,

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 Hawaii'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 Senate Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs
Senator Carol Fukunaga, Chair
Senator Chris Lee, Vice Chair**

LATE

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

**Friday, February 13, 2026, at 3:00 PM
Conference Room 016 & Videoconference**

RE: SB3048 – Relating to the State Building Code Council

Aloha e Chair Fukunaga, Chair Wakai, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committee(s):

My name is Karey Kapoi, Chair of the Small Business Policy Committee for the Chamber of Commerce Hawai'i's 2030 Blueprint, and a local small-business owner. I write in strong SUPPORT of Senate Bill 3048.

Predictable and efficient permitting is not just a bureaucratic issue, it directly impacts public safety, housing production, infrastructure resilience, and our ability to do business in Hawai'i. When permitting systems are inconsistent, under-resourced, or opaque, projects stall, costs rise, and small businesses are disproportionately affected.

SB3048 takes a practical step forward by strengthening the State Building Code Council with a permanent full-time position and by improving transparency, coordination, and data reporting across counties. Meaningful reform requires dedicated capacity. Without staffing and clear accountability, efforts to modernize and standardize permitting processes will continue to fall short.

Establishing a permanent staff position will improve continuity, support timely building code updates, and enhance alignment between state and county systems. Modernized processes and structured training for permitting officials will promote professionalism, predictability, and high safety standards statewide.

This measure is a priority within the Chamber's 2030 Blueprint because small businesses depend on a permitting system that is timely and reliable. For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to PASS SB3048. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Best,



Karey Kapoi
karey@kareykapoi.com