

**DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND LAND MANAGEMENT
KA 'OIHANA HO'OLĀLĀ KŪKULU HALE A ME KA HO'OKELE 'ĀINA
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

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March 27, 2026

The Honorable Stanley Chang, Chair
and Members of the Senate Committee on Housing
Hawaii'i State Senate
Hawaii'i State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii'i 96813

The Honorable Glenn Wakai, Chair
and Members of the Senate Committee on
Energy and Intergovernmental Affairs
Hawaii'i State Senate
Hawaii'i State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii'i 96813

**SUBJECT: Comments on Senate Concurrent Resolution 107 /
Senate Resolution 101**

Dear Chair Chang, Chair Wakai, and Committee Members:

The Department of Housing and Land Management (DHLM) appreciates the intent of SCR 107 / SR 101 which requests development of a housing pattern book to help streamline permit approvals and reduce regulatory barriers for safe, affordable, and well-designed homes. The resolution contemplates pre-reviewed residential designs and streamlined permitting for projects that use approved plans.

As noted by the resolution, other jurisdictions have adopted housing pattern books in an attempt to improve predictability, reduce some design costs, and support faster housing production.

If such an approach is pursued, its success will depend heavily on whether the designs are formally adopted by county planning departments and can move efficiently through the actual approval process. Because approval of such plans is critical to the efficacy of any such approach, county planning departments should have a more prominent role in both the development and implementation of the pattern book.

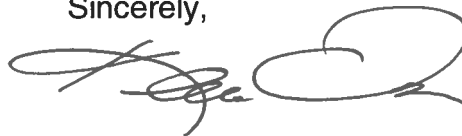
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Page 2

While the resolution does call for collaboration with county planning departments, their role should be central.

The resolution would also benefit from clarification regarding its geographic scope. Much of the resolution appears to be directed to the City and County of Honolulu, but some provisions reference other counties. For clarity, DHLM suggests clarifying whether the resolution is intended to apply only to Honolulu or statewide.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Gavin Thornton, Director of Housing Policy, at (808) 768-4277.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin D. Auger", with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Kevin D. Auger
Director

March 31, 2026, 1 p.m.
Hawaii State Capitol
Conference Room 225 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

From: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

Ted Kefalas, Director of Strategic Campaigns

RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SCR107/SR101 — REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND LAND MANAGEMENT OF THE CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU TO DEVELOP A COUNTYWIDE HOUSING PATTERN BOOK TO STREAMLINE PERMIT APPROVALS AND REDUCE REGULATORY BARRIERS FOR SAFE, AFFORDABLE, AND WELL-DESIGNED HOMES

Aloha Chairs, Vice Chairs and other Committee Members,

The Grassroot Institute **supports** [SCR107/SR101](#), which urges the City and County of Honolulu to produce a book of pre-approved designs in order to speed up approval and construction of new housing.

Approving this resolution would help address some of the regulatory delays that slow housing growth and add to the price of housing.

According to “The Hawai’i Housing Factbook,” produced by The Economic Research Organization at the University of Hawai’i, the median permit processing time across the state between mid-2018 and mid-2023 was 161 days.¹

¹ Justin Tyndall, Daniela Bond-Smith and Rachel Inafuku, “[The Hawai’i Housing Factbook](#),” The Economic Research Organization at the University of Hawai’i, June 28, 2023, p. 19.

A recent report from the Grassroot Institute, "[Seven low cost ways to speed up permitting in Hawaii](#)," provides a potential road map for permit reform. The first recommendation in the report is to provide preapproved design plans for homes, as they allow builders to avoid permit approval delays and eliminate the need to pay architects to produce new plans.².

Hawaii County already offers pre-approved plans. Builders who use them and already have any needed approvals from other county agencies can hear back from the county Department of Public Works within six working days of submission.³

Builders in Hawaii County have attested to the effectiveness of preapproved plans, noting that approvals are faster and that the certainty they provide makes it easier to obtain nonprofit or government funding for new projects.⁴

By issuing a book of preapproved plans, Honolulu would help reduce the burden on permitting department staff while also reducing permit delays and encouraging housing growth.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Ted Kefalas
Director of strategic campaigns
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

² Jonathan Helton, "[Seven low cost ways to speed up permitting in Hawaii](#)," Grassroot Institute of Hawaii, October 2024, p. 5.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.