



LIUNA!

Testimony for The Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation

June 23, 2025

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Secretary-Treasurer*

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Auditor

YUGAN HOTTENDORF
Sergeant-At-Arms

Honorable, Gary Mackler, Chair
Honorable, Carol Reimann, Vice Chair
Honorable Members of the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation
Board of Directors

RE: AUTHORIZE AN APPLICATION FOR EXEMPTIONS FROM STATUTES, ORDINANCES, AND RULES PURSUANT TO SECITON 201H-38, HAWAII REVISED STATUTES, AND APPROVE: (1) LAULIMA AFFORDABLE HOUSING, LLC AND WPP HAWAII, LLC, OR OTHER SUCCESSOR ENTITIES APPROVED BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AS ELIGIBLE DEVELOPERS PURSUANT TO SECITON 15-307-24, HAWAII ADMINISTRATIVE RULES; (2) THE PROJECT PROPOSAL; AND (3) EXECUTION OF DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENTS FOR THE APPROVED EXEMPTIONS, FOR LAULIMA PROJECT LOCATED IN HONOLULU, OAHU TMK NO: (1) 9-1-015: 081

Aloha Chair Mackler, Vice Chair Reimann, and Members of the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation Board of Directors,

The Laborer's International Union Local 368 represents 5000+ members working in construction, environmental remediation, maintenance, food service, health care, clerical, and other occupations, as well as in state, local, and municipal government jobs and as mail handlers in the U.S. Postal Service across the State.

The Laborer's International Union Local 368 **supports** the request to authorize and approve the application for exemptions from statutes, ordinances, and rules pursuant to section 201H- 38 for Laulima Affordable Housing, LLC, WPP Hawaii LLC, or other Sucessor Entities.

According to the Unilateral Agreement, this 750-unit development meets the affordable housing requirement. We commend the developer for prioritizing this segment of the project, as it directly addresses a critical housing need on the Westside. These homes are intended for essential members of the community—construction workers, teachers, restaurant staff, first responders, and small business employees—who are the backbone of the local economy. This is not high-end or investor-focused housing; it is designed for the individuals and families who already live and work in the area and are in need of stable, affordable places to call home.

We respectfully request you approve this request. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Peter A. Ganaban

Business Manager/Secretary Treasurer
Laborers International Union of North America - Local 368
1617 Palama Street
Honolulu, HI 96817

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Feel the Power

July 6, 2025, Honolulu, HI

SUBJECT: Meeting Agenda relating to Affordable Housing at 1234 Alexander St. Honolulu, Hawaii 96826

Dear Chair Mackler and Members of the HHFDC Board
Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism, State of Hawaii

My name is Colleen Sathre. I have attended two public meetings at which Ikenakea Development LLC presented plans for Kamoʻiliʻili Apartments at 1234 Alexander St. hereafter referred to as the 1234 Project. My husband and I live in a neighboring property.

THE PLAN. The Ikenakea firm intends to build a high-density, 180-unit, 21-story condominium (to include an affordable housing component) on a small 23,899 sq ft irregularly shaped lot at 1234 Alexander Street.

THE REQUEST. The Ikenakea firm seeks HHFDC approval of a Hawaii Revised Statutes 201H request based on the presumably affordable component of the 1234 Project. The HRS 201H exemptions and waivers allowed include as least the following.

1. Exempt projects from State and county laws, rules and requirements governing and regulating the planning, zoning and construction standards for residential buildings,
2. Seek exemptions of project impact studies and general excise tax obligations,
3. Waive sewer hookup and public park dedication fees,
4. Expedite agency reviews of affordable-housing plans, and
5. Steeply increase building height and density allowances and drastically reduce boundary set-back distances.

THE ISSUE BEFORE HHFDC. Should HHFDC approve now or in the future the Ikenakea firm's 201H request to develop affordable housing at 1234 Alexander Street?

OUR CONCLUSION. After careful consideration, we respectfully but strongly oppose the 1234 project and urge HHFDC to reject Ikenakea's 201H request. **Information Ikenakea presented at public meetings did not provide evidence that additional homes will be added to Honolulu's inventory of affordable housing in numbers justifying HHFDC approval of a 201H request. We call your attention to the following.**

At completion, the proposed 1234 development adds 36 affordable homes at 80% of AMI.

Twenty eight (28) existing homes at 1234 Alexander would be demolished. The actual number of affordable homes added to Honolulu's affordable inventory by the 1234 Project would be less than 36 and apparently only eight (8).

We note that public and web presentations attempted to cloak the proposed development in Hawaiian words and values by claiming to be stewards of the land having a profound love and respect for land and profound reverence and connection to the environment. Nothing could be further from the realities of the developer's presentations, and this claim is an insult to people of Hawaiian ancestry and the Hawaiian culture of this great State.

REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES. We respectfully suggest that HHFDC, Ikenakea, and any other developer pursue alternatives that advance *the good of the whole community* by (1) planning a much smaller all-affordable housing project at 1234 Alexander Street consistent with existing zoning laws and/or (2) planning affordable/market housing developments at locations close to Honolulu's mass transit lines.

Attachment 1 summarizes significant issues and concerns that at a minimum must be addressed before a commitment to Aloha ʻĀina can be taken seriously and before an HRS 201H request for the 1234 project can or should move forward.

**ISSUES AND CONCERNS RELATING TO
IKENAKEA AFFORDABLE HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AT 1234 ALEXANDER STREET**

1. **CLARIFY THE MEANING OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING. Share facts about affordable, market-priced, and vacation units—not just overheads that large audiences cannot see or understand.**
 - What does “affordable” mean in dollars and language readily understood by the public? How many affordable units will be added to (not just replaced) the inventory of available housing in Honolulu?
 - Will current residents residing at 1234 Alexander qualify for the new affordable units?
 - How long will it be before affordable units can be: sold at market prices? used as vacation rentals for tourists? who will be responsible for enforcing selling and rental restrictions?
2. **DO GOOD AND NOT HARM TO EXISTING COMMUNITY HOUSING. HONOR LEGAL ZONING, DENSITY, HEIGHT, SET-BACK, AND RELATED RESTRICTIONS.** If set-back rules and other restrictions were important enough to be included in Hawaii laws, there is no justification for simply waiving them. The neighborhood has a right to expect established laws to be enforced. Surely affordable housing can be built without punishing neighbors who bought into residential zoning, and without forcing legal action by neighbors.
3. **ADDRESS THE REALITY AND LIMITATIONS OF A SITE THAT LIKELY HAS UNSTABLE GROUND ISSUES** as acknowledged at the 03.04.24 public meeting. Commit to executing and making available to the public engineering and related studies that establish the suitability and safety of the 1234 Alexander Street site for high-rise condo construction **before waiving the requirements of HRS 201H.**
 - Thoroughly Investigate underground stream and water issues by Hawaii licensed engineering firm(s); publish results available to the entire surrounding community.
 - Provide written assurance that the depth of pile driving, construction, and drainage issues (1) will result in construction that withstands HI earthquakes and hurricanes; (2) will not create safety and/or damage issues for neighboring buildings and infrastructure, e.g., underground cooling towers, fences, lanais, and trees; and (3) will not create noise, debris, and lighting problems for all neighbors—residents, preschool, senior day care, hospital, and church.
4. **ADDRESS THE REALITY AND LIMITATIONS OF A VERY SMALL FOOTPRINT PROPERTY.** Constructing a 180-unit building on a 23,899 sq. ft. parcel with an irregular shape must address at least the following:
 - Parking issues will mean 200-plus cars (two cars for some units and guest cars) moving through a lighted parking structure, which will create noise and lighting issues for neighbors.
 - Street traffic on Bingham, Alexander, Beretania, and surrounding streets is already congested and will get a lot worse when 200-plus cars are added to these streets. There will be serious access/egress, health and safety issues for 1234 residents, all neighbors, Kapiolani Hospital, and for preschool and elderly services provided by Central Union Church.
 - Privacy for all. Exemptions from existing laws mean that the proposed living units and parking stalls will be 22 feet from neighboring sleeping quarters. This impact on privacy for neighbors and the residents of a new building is unacceptable.
 - Infrastructure needs will require increased State and C&C funding for: nearby public school access (classrooms and teachers); wider streets; improved street lighting; and increased demand for utilities (electricity, water, and sewer services).

Respectfully submitted,

Colleen and Eugene Sathre
1740 S Beretania Street



HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL

KE KANIHELA O KE KALANA O HONOLULU

530 S. KING ST. STE. 202, HONOLULU, HI 96813

July 8, 2025

TO: Chair Mackler and members of the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation Board of Directors

FROM: Tommy Waters, Chair and Presiding Officer

RE: Opposition to Act 294 (2025)

Dear Chair Mackler and members of the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation Board of Directors:

As you are likely aware, Act 294 (2025), which Governor Green signed into law on July 3, 2025, stipulates that when reviewing affordable housing projects under HRS § 201H-38, county legislative bodies are prohibited from imposing stricter conditions than the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation (HHFDC), stricter area median income requirements, or a reduction in fee waivers that will increase the cost of a project. Essentially, Act 294 purports to limit the Honolulu City Council to an up-or-down vote with no ability to modify the 201H project's exemptions and conditions.

We have actively opposed these amendments to HRS § 201H-38, which would undermine the important role of the counties to ensure responsible and safe development, eliminate the value of public input, tie the hands of counties that choose to address affordability and community impacts, and may ultimately result in disapproval of 201H projects, thereby defeating the primary purpose of HRS § 201H-38 to create more affordable housing.

Act 294 appears to assume that the HHFDC fulfills the same role as our county legislative bodies, and that the Honolulu City Council's efforts are simply a duplication of the HHFDC. With the effectiveness of Act 294, the onus is now on the HHFDC to ensure that the 201H process is delivering the best possible affordable housing projects for each affected community.

We respectfully request that the HHFDC take its responsibility to ensure responsible development and sustainable communities seriously, and give the same level of attention and care as that previously provided by the Honolulu City Council to implement tailored solutions that address unique local housing challenges, infrastructure limitations, environmental concerns, critical design elements, and public health and safety. In this spirit, we are calling on the HHFDC Board to amend its For Action report and draft resolution for the Laulima 201H project to incorporate all of these

considerations so that a deserving 201H project can proceed to create more affordable housing in the Kapolei area on O'ahu.

The HHFDC is charged with overseeing affordable housing financing and development across Hawai'i, however it does not have experience or expertise in implementing land use, zoning, planning, and development standards in the various counties. This kuleana (responsibility) is entrusted to the counties for good reason – county planning staff have extensive knowledge of the specific circumstances and needs of an area.

Historically, the HHFDC has not played a role in determining the quality and safety of proposed projects, only ensuring that these projects meet the minimum legal requirements. Simply meeting the bare minimum removes all nuance and context from this critical process. It is our continued belief that our residents deserve our best efforts to deliver the best possible affordable housing projects.

At its meeting on July 10, 2025, the Board is considering the approval of the developer, project proposal, and certain exemptions for the Laulima 201H project, which involves the development of 750 dwelling units in four phases. All units will be rented to households earning 120 percent or below of the area median income (AMI) for Honolulu, with 250 units rented to households earning 60 percent or below of the AMI, and 500 units rented to households earning 120 percent of the AMI. The rental units will remain affordable at these AMI levels in perpetuity.

The For Action report and draft resolution for the Laulima project includes a full waiver (for 750 dwelling units) of various City application fees, infrastructure and public works fees and charges, park dedication ordinance requirements, and impact fees for traffic and roadway improvements in Ewa. Requested exemptions also include certain exemptions from compliance with the City's Land Use Ordinance requirements.

Some of these full waivers conflict with City policy Resolution 20-262, FD1, which generally provides that with respect to affordable rental units, wastewater system facility charges and park dedication requirements may only be waived for that portion of the charges and requirements attributed to affordable units rented to households earning 80 percent or below of the AMI. These two types of fees and charges are substantial, and will often run in the millions of dollars. If the Council approves an exemption and foregoes the fees and charges, the money to provide those services will have to come from somewhere else.

It is questionable whether the HHFDC, as a State agency, has the legal authority to dictate what county fees are waived. The counties are responsible for developing and maintaining the infrastructure to support 201H projects, and for delivering essential services to these projects.

Moreover, the Honolulu Department of Planning and Permitting submitted to the HHFDC recommended transportation and traffic conditions, but those conditions have not been incorporated in the HHFDC's draft resolution. Indeed, the HHFDC previously indicated that conditions of approval are more appropriately addressed by the counties.

Solving Hawai'i's housing challenges will require collaborative efforts from the community, government, and developers. We respectfully urge you to work collaboratively with the counties to find solutions that respect local authority, value public input, and meaningfully address our housing crisis.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tommy Waters", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Tommy Waters
Chair of the Honolulu City Council

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Esther Kia'aina", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Esther Kia'aina
Chair of the Committee on Zoning & Planning

July 9, 2025



Hawai'i Housing Finance & Development Corporation
Executive Director Minikami, Chair Mackler, and Members of the Board
677 Queen Street, Suite 300
Honolulu, HI 96813

Subject: Testimony in Support – Aloha 'Āina Affordable Housing Project, Land Area 3 (LA-3)

Aloha Chair Mackler, Executive Director Minikami, and Members of the Board,

My name is Kiran Polk, and I am the Executive Director and CEO of the Kapolei Chamber of Commerce. The Kapolei Chamber of Commerce advocates for businesses and economic growth in the West O'ahu region, including Waipahu, Kapolei, 'Ewa Beach, Honokai Hale, Ko Olina, Nānakūli, Wai'anae, and Mākaha. The Chamber works on behalf of its members and the business community to improve the regional and state economic climate and help West O'ahu businesses thrive. We are a member-driven, member-supported organization representing the interests of all types of businesses: small, medium, or large, for-profit, or non-profit businesses, or sole proprietorships.

On behalf of the Kapolei Chamber, mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in **strong support** of the Aloha 'Āina affordable housing development proposed for Land Area 3 (LA-3), as part of the Lualima Masterplan.

As the voice of West O'ahu's business community, we are committed to supporting housing solutions that strengthen our region and provide opportunities for working families. The Aloha 'Āina project will deliver 750 urgently needed affordable homes as we face a severe housing crisis impacting both residents and employers.

Affordable housing is essential to economic stability. This project helps ensure that local workers—especially in essential sectors—can live near their jobs, reducing commute times and increasing quality of life. It will also generate valuable construction jobs and economic activity, supporting skilled local labor.

Our business community, from small shops to large employers, stands behind thoughtful development that supports smart growth and a resilient West O'ahu economy. Projects like Aloha 'Āina help move our community—and our state—forward.

We respectfully urge your support for this project. Mahalo for your time and leadership.

Sincerely,

Kiran Polk
Executive Director & CEO
Kapolei Chamber of Commerce