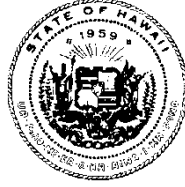


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR



DEAN MINAKAMI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM
HAWAII HOUSING FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
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Statement of
DEAN MINAKAMI

Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation
Before the

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

February 07, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Room 430

In consideration of
H.B. 419
RELATING TO HOUSING.

Chair Evslin, Vice Chair Miyake, and members of the Committee.

HHFDC **supports** HB 419, which decreases the time period for the legislative body of a county to approve, approve with modification, or disapprove housing developments exempt from certain requirements pursuant to section 201H-38, HRS, from forty-five days to thirty days.

There is an immediate need for more affordable housing. Decreasing the timeframe for county reviews expedites the delivery of affordable housing.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



Opposition for HB419/SB93

Aloha e Representatives, Chair, Vice Chair:

We are testifying on behalf of Locals In My Backyard (LIMBY) Hawai'i. LIMBY Hawai'i is a hui of concerned kama'āina and kānaka working to help develop solutions to our state's housing crisis.

We are concerned that NIMBYism has driven up costs and driven our friends and families out by opposing all development. We are equally concerned that the apparent answer to this, YIMBYism, insists that anything resembling true affordability is impossible so instead they promote building housing that gets bought by overseas investors. ***We know we won't solve our housing woes without building more, but we won't solve them by simply building more.***

The true solution is to create a housing market for locals: one that houses locals first, is tied to local wages, and is managed in trust. We detail real solutions to our housing woes on our website and through our newsletter.

The future for kama'āina and kānaka will be LIMBY or Las Vegas.

This bill does nothing to keep locals here. Instead under the guise of solving our affordability problems it limits opportunity for democratic participation.

Very few housing projects break into the public consciousness prior to the County Councils. Thus the period of time they spend there, is the period of time in which the public has an opportunity to weigh in. It should be emphasized that these projects often come with a raft of exemptions—exemptions which the taxpayer funds. This includes upzoning which municipalities around the globe sell, recognizing their inherent value to the developer.

There is little reason to assume that 15 days poses an overly costly burden on the developer. To the extent it does carry a cost, that cost is outweighed by the public's genuine interest in having time to inform themselves on the nature of the project and to give their two cents.

Makana Hicks-Goo,
Organizer on behalf of LIMBY Hawaii

Feb. 7, 2025, 9 a.m.
Hawaii State Capitol
Conference Room 430 and Videoconference

To: House Committee on Housing
Rep. Luke Evslin, Chair
Rep. Tyson Miyake, Vice-Chair

From: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii
Ted Kefalas, Director of Strategic Campaigns

RE: HB419 — RELATING TO HOUSING

Aloha Chair Evslin, Vice-Chair Miyake and other members of the Committee,

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii **supports** [HB419](#), which would decrease the time Hawaii's county councils have to approve, approve with modification, or disapprove a 201H affordable housing project already approved by the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corp. from 45 days to 30 days.

The Economic Research Organization at the University of Hawai'i has found that Hawaii's housing regulations are the strictest in the country, and "local political pressure" in Hawaii on housing developments is in the top 5% of communities surveyed.¹ Likewise, UHERO researchers estimated that regulations comprise 58% of the cost of new condominium construction.²

This suggests that reducing the power of Hawaii's county councils over state-approved affordable housing projects could lower carrying costs, which would benefit builders and residents alike.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Ted Kefalas
Director of Strategic Campaigns
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

¹ Rachel Inafuku, Justin Tyndall and Carl Bonham, "[Measuring the Burden of Housing Regulation in Hawaii](#)," The Economic Research Organization at the University of Hawai'i, April 14, 2022, p. 6.

² Justin Tyndall and Emi Kim, "[Why are Condominiums so Expensive in Hawai'i?](#)" The Economic Research Organization at the University of Hawai'i, May 2024, p. 11.

HB-419

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 8:56:57 PM

Testimony for HSG on 2/7/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Seth Kamemoto	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The current timeline, 45-days, is already much too short, and I really can't see reducing the time by 15 days making or breaking any proposed project. What it will do is make it essentially impossible for a county council to vote without holding a special meeting, since it's common for Councils to meet monthly, and these resolutions usually go through a committee first, so submitting a 201H resolution a few days before a General Meeting would ensure that 30 days would expire before the next meeting, and a few days notice isn't enough time to prepare a resolution for a general vote.

HB-419

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 3:53:43 PM

Testimony for HSG on 2/7/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maureen Brock	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I opposed HB419.

HB-419

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 9:13:07 PM

Testimony for HSG on 2/7/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacob Wiencek	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Committee Members,

Hawaii has an affordability crisis driving working- and middle-class families out. Driving that affordability crisis is an extreme lack of affordable housing. Reduce regulatory barriers and speed up timelines to get housing built to reduce costs. I urge this Committee to **SUPPORT** this bill!

HB-419

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 8:59:38 AM

Testimony for HSG on 2/7/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christine Otto Zaa	HI Good Neighbor	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Representatives,

I strongly oppose HB419.

The 45 day approval process for the county councils is already a truncated timeframe that barely allows for public awareness and discourse. A more fair timeline would be 60 or 90 days.

While a convenient scapegoat, the county councils and community are not to blame for our housing crisis. The blame is on unrestricted speculation, greed and outside demand. If we want to solve our housing crisis, we need to work together to tackle that.

Please don't silence community voice in the name of progress. We go backwards in the democratic process if you do.

Thank you,

Christine Otto Zaa

HI Good Neighbor

HB-419

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 11:51:33 AM

Testimony for HSG on 2/7/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Linda Legrande	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Modifications should be allowed if additional relevant information is gained. This is a bad bill.

Thank you, Linda Legrande