

BILL019(25)
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 131

ZONING (ZON)

ZONING (ZON) Meeting

Meeting Date: Mar 6, 2025 @ 09:00 AM

Support: 8

Oppose: 0

I wish to comment: 0

Name: Brian Fujiwara	Email: brian808@hawaii.rr.com	Zip: 96817
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Mar 3, 2025 @ 11:37 AM
Name: Geena Thielen	Email: geena@ccs-hawaii.com	Zip: 96734
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Mar 4, 2025 @ 08:57 PM
Name: Ted Kefalas	Email: tkefalas@grassrootinstitute.org	Zip: 96813
Representing: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii	Position: Support	Submitted: Mar 5, 2025 @ 06:37 AM
Name: Mike Lau	Email: mikedadino@gmail.com	Zip: 96822
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Mar 5, 2025 @ 07:39 AM
<p>Testimony:</p> <p>Bill 19 will allow owners, architects and builders to make necessary, minor changes to a project during construction which seemingly always come up. These changes could still be tracked without losing valuable time, effort and resources that is now required going thru the Building Department's revisions process for any changes.</p>		
Name: Lee Tokuhara	Email: LSTokuhara@drhorton.com	Zip: 96813
Representing: D.R. Horton Hawaii	Position: Support	Submitted: Mar 5, 2025 @ 02:39 PM
Name: Roseann Freitas	Email: ssakamoto@imanaka-asato.com	Zip: 96789
Representing: BIA Hawaii	Position: Support	Submitted: Mar 5, 2025 @ 05:29 PM
Name: Jon Kam	Email: jonk@gentryhawaii.com	Zip: 96813
Representing: Gentry Homes, Ltd.	Position: Support	Submitted: Mar 5, 2025 @ 05:35 PM
Name:	Email:	Zip:

Jon Kam	jonk@gentryhawaii.com	96813
Representing: Gentry Homes, Ltd.	Position: Support	Submitted: Mar 5, 2025 @ 08:57 PM

March 3, 2025

TO: Office of the City Clerk
Information Section
530 South King Street, Room 100
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: BILL 19 (2025), CD1 – RELATING TO THE BUILDING CODE

Committee on Zoning
Voting Members

Subject: Support for Bill 19 (2025) Relating to the Building Code.

Dear Chair Kia'aina, Vice Chair Dos Santos-Tam, and members of the Committee on Zoning,

I am writing to express my strong **SUPPORT** for Bill 19 (2025) Relating to the Building Code. As an Architect involved in many projects especially Bill 7 affordable housing, I have first-hand experience on projects that have minor changes during construction and Bill 19 will streamline this process of resubmitting amended drawings for approval.

Thank you for considering my input and I humbly request your support for Bill 19 (2025).

Sincerely,



Brian Fujiwara, AIA
BKF & Associates, LLC

**COMPLETE
CONSTRUCTION
SERVICES
CORP.**

GENERAL CONTRACTING
& DEVELOPMENT
P.O. Box 757
Kailua, HI 96734
PH (808) 263-4900
FX (808) 263-5966
E-mail greg@ccs-hawaii.com
www.ccs-hawaii.com
Lic# BC-23115

Honolulu City Council
Committee on Zoning
City Council Chamber
Thursday March 6, 2025
9:00 AM

RE: Bill 19 Relating to the Building Code

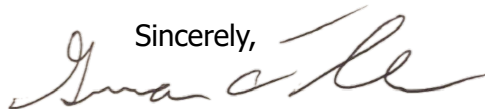
Chair Kia'aina, Vice Chair Dos Santos-Tam, and members of the Committee,

I am writing in **STRONG SUPPORT** of Bill 19 Relating to the Building Code. I have been a licensed General Contractor in the State of Hawaii since 1996. I have been building in Hawaii for over 30 years. In that time I have witnessed a steady deterioration of the building permit process and it's associated functions including project close out. Most significantly this has include in the last 4 years the implementation of the "zero tolerance policy". The cornerstone of this policy was that any change from the DPP approved plans, no matter how insignificant, was a violation of the Building Code. In that entire time, I have never seen a project built entirely to the original plan. It is the nature of Construction that change is a part of the process.

I debated whether my testimony should focus on this problem from a macro or micro level. Ultimately I decided on a single specific example as being the best illustration, however I would ask that you realize this is just the tip of the iceberg. Attached to my testimony you will find a drawing with 3 variations of a single electrical room on our 25-unit Bill 7 project. The original design had swinging doors which the plan checker refused to allow for fear something might block them. The approved design was what the DPP plan checker approved, but the DPP electrical inspector refused to accept. The final design was what we ended up with based on the requirements the inspector put forward. All of this would have been fine, except the inspector required us to get an amended permit. Our building was completed and ready for occupancy as of early September 2024, but we didn't get a Certificate of Occupancy until 12/26/24.

The cornerstone of DPP's logic for this seriously flawed process is the provision of the building code that Bill 19 would correct. Please move this important piece of legislation forward.

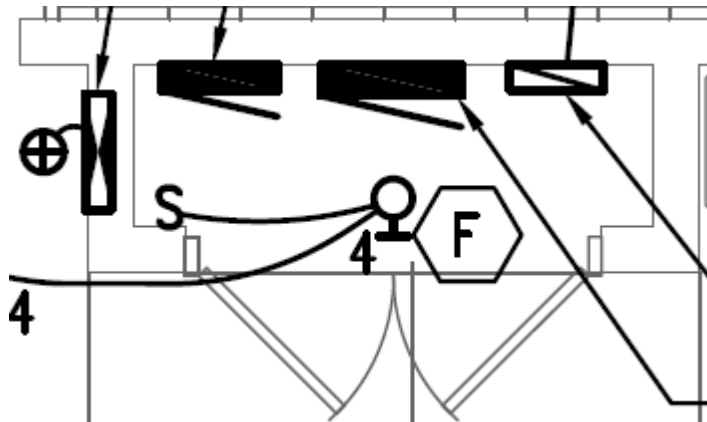
Sincerely,



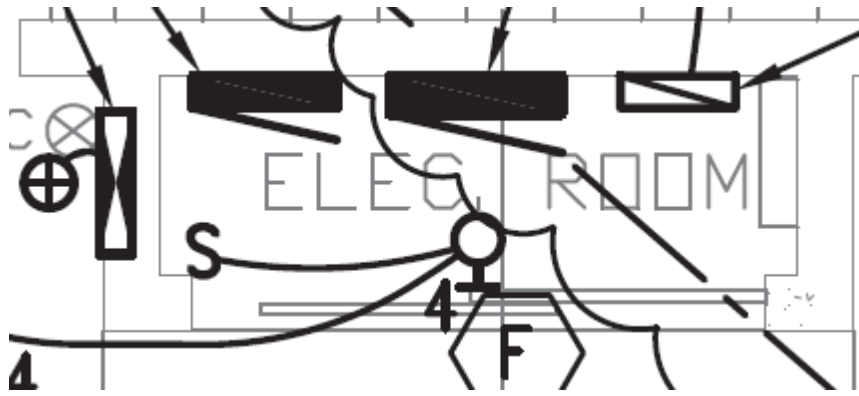
Geena Thielen
President/RME

1226 Electrical Room Doors

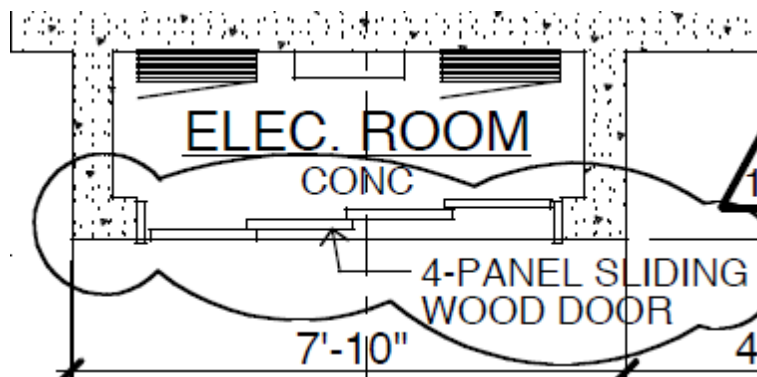
Original Design



Approved Design



Field Change based on Inspectors comments



March 6, 2025, 9 a.m.

Honolulu Hale

To: Honolulu City Council Committee on Zoning

Esther Kia'āina, Chair

Tyler Dos Santos-Tam, Vice Chair

From: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

Ted Kefalas, Director of Strategic Campaigns

RE: Bill 19 (2025) — RELATING TO THE BUILDING CODE

Aloha Chair Kia'āina, Vice-Chair Dos Santos-Tam and other members of the Committee,

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii **supports** [Bill 19 \(2025\)](#), which would specify the types of changes to construction plans that require the plans be resubmitted to the Honolulu Department of Planning and Permitting.

Currently, the city code requires that “any changes” made to an approved plan must be resubmitted to the department for further review. Bill 19 (2025) would replace the word “any” with “substantial” and would specify that “substantial changes” are only edits that change the square footage of the project for the purpose of complying with zoning rules, the occupancy of a space that could affect fire prevention, the number of dwelling or sleeping units or the number of plumbing fixture units.

Creating this narrower standard of what needs review from the department would help streamline the permitting system for everyone. Builders would no longer have to resubmit plans for minor changes and city staff would be able to focus their efforts on cutting down the permitting backlog.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Ted Kefalas

Director of Strategic Campaigns

Grassroot Institute of Hawaii



March 5, 2025

The Honorable Esther Kiaaina, Chair
The Honorable Tyler Dos Santos-Tam, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Zoning
Honolulu City Council
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813-3077

RE: **Bill 19 – Relating to the Building Code**
Hearing Date: March 6, 2025, 9:00 am

Aloha Chair Kiaaina, Vice Chair Dos Santos-Tam and Members of the Committee

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of D.R. Horton Hawaii, in **STRONG SUPPORT** of Bill 19 – Relating to the Building Code. D.R. Horton Hawaii is one of Hawaii's largest homebuilders and has been providing affordable housing and first-time buyer homes for Hawaii's families throughout Oahu and across the state for more than fifty years.

Bill 19 seeks to amend the Building Code to improve the amendment process for construction documents. This measure is a critical step toward streamlining the construction approval process while ensuring compliance with life safety and regulatory standards. Furthermore, the proposed changes could have a positive impact on the Department of Permitting and Planning, as its already overburdened staff would not have to review minor changes.

Amendments to construction documents are sometimes needed to address or react to changing factors within the construction industry, material supply chain, and owner/market conditions. The types of amendments can vary widely. The current lengthy process for amending construction documents presents significant challenges for owners, builders and project stakeholders that could lead to unnecessary delays, increased costs, and administrative inefficiencies. Bill 19 introduces reasonable modifications to the building permit process to more efficiently facilitate needed changes that may arise during the construction process by defining what is a substantial change. Ultimately, this should help to reduce administrative backlogs while ensuring that substantial changes continue to comply with building codes.

By refining the construction document amendment process, this bill fosters a more efficient construction environment without compromising life safety or compliance with building regulations. This improvement is particularly crucial in addressing Honolulu's urgent housing and infrastructure needs. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at LSTokuhara@drhorton.com.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Lee Tokuhara, Vice President
Government Affairs and Community Relations
D.R. Horton Hawaii

130 Merchant Street, Suite 112 · Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 ·
808.521.5661 www.drhorton.com/hawaii



**HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE ON ZONING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
MARCH 6, 2025
9:00 AM**

Subject: Bill 19, RELATING TO THE BUILDING CODE

Chair Kiaaina, Vice Chair Dos Santos Tam, and members of the Council:

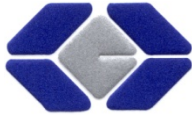
My name is Roseann Freitas, CEO of the Building Industry Association of Hawaii (BIA-Hawaii). Chartered in 1955, the Building Industry Association of Hawaii is a professional trade organization affiliated with the National Association of Home Builders, representing the building industry and its associates. BIA-Hawaii takes a leadership role in unifying and promoting the interests of the industry to enhance the quality of life for the people of Hawaii. Our members build the communities we all call home.

BIA-Hawaii is in strong support of Bill 19, Relating to the Building Code. The purpose of this bill is to amend the building code of the City & County of Honolulu, and seeks to address and rectify an existing issue with the amendment process for construction documents.

Currently, the process for amending construction documents presents unnecessary delays and administrative burdens that impact builder project stakeholders. These challenges result in increased costs, extended project timelines, and additional regulatory hurdles that ultimately affect the delivery of much-needed housing and infrastructure. By streamlining the process, Bill 19 (2025) will facilitate a more efficient construction document system without compromising safety or regulatory compliance.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide our comments on this matter, and look forward to working with the Council on this and other housing issues for our City.

THE GENTRY COMPANIES



March 6, 2025

Esther Kiaāina, Chair
Tyler Dos Santos-Tam, Vice Chair
Committee on Zoning
530 South King Street, Suite # 100
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: **Bill 19 (2025) RELATING TO THE BUILDING CODE**

Dear Chair Kiaāina, Vice Chair Dos Santos-Tam, and Committee Members,

My name is Jon Kam, and I am the Vice President of Construction for Gentry Homes. We have been building homes in Hawaii for over 55 years and we STRONGLY SUPPORT this measure.

The purpose of this bill is to amend the City's Building Code by seeking to clarify the types of changes made during construction that would require the resubmittal of plans for approval as an amended set of construction documents. In our experience, we find that changes to approved construction plans are inevitable in any project. Minor and non-substantive changes are depicted in the as-built set of plans submitted to the City upon completion of the project. This system has worked well for decades.

If we were required to amend and resubmit construction plans every time even a minor change is made, the result would be disastrous. Such a requirement, which we understand is already being implemented, would have a substantial impact on the timing of our projects on all levels. Consequently, it would place undue stress on builders, subcontractors, and homeowners awaiting their new homes. It would also inevitably increase costs, thereby affecting not only homebuilders, but the industry at large. Bill 19 (2025) would facilitate a more streamlined process without compromising regulatory or safety compliance.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide our thoughts on this bill and respectfully urge the committee to support this measure. Mahalo.

Sincerely,

THE GENTRY COMPANIES

GENTRY HOMES, LTD.

Jon Kam
Vice President of Construction

THE GENTRY COMPANIES



March 6, 2025

Esther Kia'āina, Chair
Tyler Dos Santos-Tam, Vice Chair
Committee on Zoning
530 South King Street, Suite # 100
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

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We appreciate the opportunity to provide our thoughts on this bill and respectfully urge the committee to support this measure. Mahalo.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jon Kam', written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jon Kam
Vice President of Construction