

RES25-069
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 178

COUNCIL

COUNCIL Meeting

Meeting Date: Mar 19, 2025 @ 10:00 AM

Support: 1

Oppose: 0

I wish to comment: 0

Name: Walter Thoemmes	Email: romakaul@ksbe.edu	Zip: 96813
Representing: Kamehameha Schools	Position: Support	Submitted: Mar 18, 2025 @ 09:33 PM



Kamehameha Schools®

Honolulu City Council

Time: 10:00 a.m.

Date: Wednesday, March 19, 2025

Room: City Council Chamber

TESTIMONY

by Walter Thoemmes, Managing Director,
Planning, Industry and Development, 'Āina Pauahi

RE: Resolution 25-069, CD1, Authorizing exemptions from certain requirements relating to Waiakoa Affordable and Market Rate Housing Project in Honolulu, O‘ahu.

E ka Luna Ho‘omalua Waters, ka Hope Luna Ho‘omalua Weyer, a me nā lālā o 'Aha Kūkā, aloha mai.

Kamehameha Schools **SUPPORTS** Resolution 25-069, CD1, which would authorize exemptions under Chapter 201H-38, HRS, thereby allowing the Waiakoa Affordable and Market Rate Housing Project to proceed on our ‘āina in Kaka‘ako.

Kamehameha Schools recognizes that through the pono stewardship of ‘Āina Pauahi, we can help build resilient communities and economies, preserve abundant natural and cultural landscapes, and create diverse learning and career pathways—ultimately fostering environments where our kaiāulu can thrive. Affordable homes play a crucial role in these supportive environments, providing Hawai‘i keiki and ‘ohana with stable, quality housing. Coupled with access to education, healthcare, social services, and commercial opportunities, housing strengthens socioeconomic equity and empowers our kaiāulu to succeed in their educational and career journeys.

Through community engagement, research, and analysis, we have carefully evaluated the best use of Kamehameha Schools’ ‘āina in Kaka‘ako. We believe the proposed Waiakoa Affordable and Market Rate Housing Project not only supports our mission but also addresses the critical housing and economic needs of Kaka‘ako and its surrounding communities. This project will provide 1,032 much-needed dwelling units, including 620 affordable and moderate-priced for-sale homes at 140% AMI and below, down to 120% AMI, creating more opportunities for kama‘āina homeownership.

Located near the future rail and Kaka‘ako bus stations, Waiakoa will offer residents exceptional transit options, including additional parking and long- and short-term bicycle parking. Additionally, the envisioned retail spaces will enhance the neighborhood by providing essential services and fostering a true mixed-use, livable community.

Our development partners, Koa Partners and Castle & Cooke Hawai‘i, share our vision for increasing affordable and workforce housing. With their proven track record in delivering similar communities, we are confident in their ability to bring this project to fruition.

For these reasons, we humbly request your support in adopting Resolution 25-069, CD1. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Founded in 1887 through the vision of Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop, Kamehameha Schools is a private, educational, charitable trust dedicated to improving the capability and well-being of Native Hawaiian people through education. KS envisions a thriving lāhui, where learners—grounded in Christian and Hawaiian values—become ‘ōiwi leaders who inspire and uplift their communities locally and globally.