

BILL035(25)
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 246

BUDGET (BUD)

BUDGET (BUD) Meeting

Meeting Date: Apr 29, 2025 @ 09:00 AM

Support: 6

Oppose: 0

I wish to comment: 0

Name: Vassilis Syrmos	Email: syrmos@hawaii.edu	Zip: 96822
Representing: University of Hawaii	Position: Support	Submitted: Apr 25, 2025 @ 02:22 PM
Name: Tony Mizuno	Email: tmizuno@asbhawaii.com	Zip: 96817
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Apr 26, 2025 @ 03:15 PM
Testimony: I strongly support the passage of Bill 35. The ability to utilize the City's properties for community purposes will have a substantial positive impact on our City and community.		
Name: Eliza Talbot	Email: eliza8482@gmail.com	Zip: 96734
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Apr 28, 2025 @ 05:23 AM
Testimony: Aloha Councilmembers, Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Bill 35. I currently serve as the Chair of the Economic Revitalization Commission for the City and County of Honolulu. In our recent presentations to the Council regarding the Commission's 2025 priorities, this was identified as an important part of our strategic planning for the future of Honolulu. The current draft of the bill has the potential to authorize the City to boost economic growth for local entrepreneurs and businesses by authorizing agencies to lease City lands for economic development opportunities. Economic development fosters an improved quality of life by enhancing the abilities of individuals, businesses, and communities to leverage their talents and skills, thereby driving innovation, creating jobs, and attracting private investment. The proposed revisions to Chapter 38 aim to modernize how the City and County utilizes its property assets to maximize efficiency and support economic development and community growth. By allowing greater flexibility in leasing processes and expanding eligibility criteria for direct support, these revisions will enable City agencies, including the Office of Economic Revitalization (OER), to create hubs for entrepreneurship, innovation, and development. This will enhance the City's ability to strategically deploy its property assets in service of economic revitalization, equitable growth, and sustainable community development. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.		
Name:	Email:	Zip:

Kiran Polk	kiranpolk@gmail.com	96707
Representing: Kapolei Chamber of Commerce	Position: Support	Submitted: Apr 28, 2025 @ 08:57 AM
Name: OLIN Lagon	Email: olin.lagon@gmail.com	Zip: 96819
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Apr 28, 2025 @ 10:21 PM
Name: Amanda Shaw	Email: amanda.shaw@oahurcd.org	Zip: 96759
Representing: O'ahu Resource Conservation and Development Council (ORCD)	Position: Support	Submitted: Apr 29, 2025 @ 07:55 AM



UNIVERSITY of HAWAI'I®

Ke Kulanui o Hawai'i

**TESTIMONY ON BILL 35
RELATING TO LEASE AND RENTAL OF CITY REAL PROPERTY**

Presented Before the City Council Committee on Budget

City and County of Honolulu

Tuesday, April 29, 2025 at 9:00 A.M.

BY

VASSILIS L. SYRMOS

VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I SYSTEM

Dear Chair Dos Santos Tam, Vice Chair Nishimoto, and members of the Committee,

The University of Hawai'i (UH) supports Bill 35 to update the City leasing process for City building, spaces, and land. Specifically, UH supports the continued inclusion of government to government direct leasing and the addition of direct leasing for economic and community development purposes.

UH has been in conversation with City officials and the Office of Economic Revitalization for over a year to update and utilize the Harbor Village retail space. Planning has included multiple site visits as well as funding proposals to the United States Senate. Initial funding would be used for the planning and design of an innovation space run by the University in collaboration with the OER. The concept would bring advanced manufacturing and 3D printing into a vital, but underutilized Chinatown area. Bringing University experts, students, entrepreneurs, and community into a maker space that could help the revitalization of this area which is close to downtown Honolulu, River Walk, Honolulu Harbor, and other small businesses.

The University looks forward to this opportunity to bring our ingenuity, innovation, and entrepreneurial opportunities beyond our campuses. Updates to the Chapter 38 leasing process in the City as proposed under Bill 35 provides the mechanism for not just an innovation space but future partnerships and economic endeavors with the City.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony and to the committee for considering Bill 35.

April 29, 2025

Honolulu City Council
830 S. King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813



Committee on Budget

April 29, 2025, 9:00am, in the City Council Chamber or via video conference

Dear Chair Dos Santos-Tam, Vice Chair Nishimoto, and Members of the Committee on Budget:

RE: Bill 35 (2025) RELATING TO LEASE AND RENTAL OF CITY REAL PROPERTY

My name is Kiran Polk, and I am the Executive Director & CEO of the Kapolei Chamber of Commerce. The Kapolei Chamber of Commerce is an advocate for businesses in the Kapolei region including Waipahu, Kapolei, 'Ewa Beach, 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 business: small, medium or large, for profit or non-profit businesses or sole proprietorship.

The Kapolei Chamber of Commerce **strongly supports Bill 35 (2025)**, which updates the City's leasing process for City-owned buildings, spaces, and land. We specifically support the proposed changes because they will create opportunities for the City to support important projects such as startup incubators, innovation hubs, coworking spaces, and nonprofit-driven community enterprises.

Our small businesses face many challenges, including securing the resources necessary to sustain, grow, and expand. In West O'ahu, there is a significant shortage of coworking and innovation spaces—despite the region being the fastest growing area in the state. Small businesses need access to affordable office space closer to home that aligns with their financial capacities.

In 2021, the Kapolei Chamber established a Business Revitalization Task Force, which has since evolved into the Kapolei Chamber's Economic Development Committee. One of the Committee's top priorities is to establish a West O'ahu Innovation and Entrepreneur Center. However, one of the major obstacles we have encountered is the difficulty of identifying leasable space that meets the unique dynamics required for a coworking model. Bill 35 would open more opportunities to address these needs by modernizing the City's leasing policies.

1001 Kamokila Boulevard, Campbell Building Suite 250, Kapolei, Hawaii 96707

Decades ago, the City and County of Honolulu set forth a vision to establish Kapolei as a "Second City" and drive residential and economic growth toward West O'ahu. Today, West O'ahu's population approaches 200,000 residents, encompassing the Wai'anae Coast, 'Ewa, and Waipahu. In Kapolei and 'Ewa alone, households are projected to exceed 56,000 by 2035. Over the next 30 years, the population in these communities is expected to grow by 40 percent, with housing increasing by 52 percent.

Bill 35 presents a critical opportunity to fulfill the long-awaited and much-needed expansion of coworking, innovation, and incubation spaces on the West Side, ultimately helping to bring the West O'ahu Innovation and Entrepreneur Center to life.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit our strong support for this measure.

Respectfully,

Kiran Polk
Executive Director & CEO

1001 Kamokila Boulevard, Campbell Building Suite 250, Kapolei, Hawaii 96707

Olin Kealoha Lagon

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Honolulu City Council Members
530 S King St # 202, Honolulu, HI 96813

April 28, 2025

Aloha mai e nā Honorable Council Members,

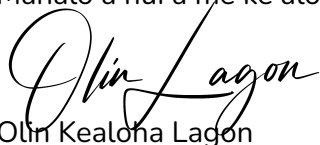
Bill 35 (RELATING TO LEASE AND RENTAL OF CITY REAL PROPERTY) is an akamai, long-overdue change that will allow Honolulu to use its city-owned properties more strategically to benefit our local economy and communities. We need a system that also values job creation, small business support, innovation, and community revitalization. Bill 35 makes that possible. This bill creates room for real collaboration between the City and local entrepreneurs, nonprofits, and small businesses. It encourages creative ideas, supports inclusive economic growth, and helps make sure underused city properties serve our community.

I've seen firsthand how government-owned properties in Hawai'i can be used strategically to support emerging companies and create high-paying jobs that strengthen our economy. I co-founded ChipIn, the first online crowdfunding platform. During our early stages, we benefited from below-market rent at the Mānoa Innovation Center. That support helped us grow to over \$100 million in transactions while keeping our engineering team based in Hawai'i. Today, the energy company I co-founded operates out of the Entrepreneur's Sandbox, a similar government owned property. We've exported locally developed energy technology across the continental U.S. and Canada...just this week, we signed a new utility partner in Colorado. Most of our team is still based right here in Hawai'i.

Bill 35 also sets clear rules for offering reduced or nominal leases for projects that have big long-term value, like incubators, co-working spaces, and community enterprises that would otherwise get priced out. That's exactly the kind of bold, flexible thinking we need to grow jobs and build a more resilient local economy.

This bill is about unlocking potential. It's about making sure public land serves public good. I strongly urge you to pass Bill 35.

Mahalo a nui a me ke aloha pumehana,



Olin Kealoha Lagon

Vice Chair, Economic Revitalization Commission & Serial Social Entrepreneur



April 28, 2025

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The Honorable Chair Dos Santos-Tam, Vice Chair Nishimoto, and members
Committee on Budget
Honolulu City Council
530 South King Street, Room 202
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Re: Bill 35 (2025) Relating to Lease and Rental of City Real Property

Dear Chair Dos-Santos Tam and Councilmembers:

The O'ahu Resource Conservation and Development Council (ORCD) supports Bill 35 (2025), which enhances the City's capacity to manage its real property strategically and equitably through a modern, transparent, and well-defined leasing framework. This bill strengthens the City's ability to collaborate effectively with community partners for the public good.

O'ahu Resource Conservation and Development Council (ORCD) is a farmer service organization with a 25-year track record of successful partnerships with farms, ranches and agricultural stakeholders to advance sustainable agriculture and strengthen the stewardship of Hawaii's working lands. Many of our partners would benefit from clearer pathways to accessing city land through nonprofit exceptions vital to enabling smoother collaboration between the City and community partners. This could support efforts in community gardening, urban agriculture, agroforestry, local food distribution, cultural food practices, and food systems education. These partnerships are key to supporting our local food and agriculture system, building climate-resilient communities and boosting our economy.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Amanda Shaw
Director of Food Systems
amanda.shaw@oahurcd.org
808 429 5310