BILL049(25)
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 357

COUNCIL

COUNCIL Meeting

Meeting Date: Jul 9, 2025 @ 10:00 AM

Support: 2

Oppose: 2

I wish to comment: 0

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Linda Howe	lindamhowe@gmail.com	96744
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Oppose	Jul 3, 2025 @ 05:54 PM

Testimony:

My opposition to this proposed change is based entirely on my position that the proposed "twenty thousand dollar" increase in the owner-occupant tax exemption is TOO Little....representing less than a manini two (2) percent of a 'median value' home's $3,850 annual real property tax bill.

Way too little.

And, what about the forever-discussed-never-implemented relief for owners who rent long-term to residents?? The $1million threshold triggering much higher Residential A tax rates has NEVER been adjusted for inflation, costing renters (via landlords) way too much!

Come on, all you elected officials. Fix this unfair taxation!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Jacob Wiencek	jacob.m.wiencek@pm.me	96815
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Jul 7, 2025 @ 10:08 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Councilmembers,

Hardworking people in this city, of all demographic brackets and socioeconomic status, struggle to make ends meet. Taxes are too high, regulatory burdens too onerous, permitting processes too byzantine and public service not up to par. While the Council has made progress addressing these concerns, more needs to be done. The property tax relief for older homeowners proposed by Chair Waters and Councilmember Okimoto is crucial to addressing our affordability crisis.

I strongly urge the Council to SUPPORT this bill!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Natalie Iwasa	iwasajunk@mail.com	96825
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Oppose	Jul 8, 2025 @ 05:17 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Ted Kefalas	tkefalas@grassrootinstitute.org	96813

Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii	Support	Jul 8, 2025 @ 07:05 AM

TO: Members of the Honolulu City Council

FROM: Natalie Iwasa, CPA, CFE
808-395-3233

DATE: Wednesday, July 9, 2025

SUBJECT: Bill 49, Real Property Taxes, Home Exemption - **OPPOSED**

Aloha Chair Waters and Councilmembers,

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on Bill 49, which would increase the home exemption for taxpayers 65 or older by $20,000.

Instead of increasing exemptions and putting more of a burden on other taxpayers, please remove those that are unfair. Here's an example of a "charitable" exemption.

TMK 390570310000 is a 1.62 acre property leased by a homeowners' association. It is advertised as a "private club" that offers "a place to park your boat, a clubhouse and a swimming pool. Enjoy hosting events at the club or enjoy it at your leisure. Enjoy a swim in the pool or sign up for the yoga and tai chi classes."

Most homes in that association are well over a million. The association pays $300 per year in real property taxes. **Other taxpayers are subsidizing their exemption that results in a "tax benefit" of almost $63,000** for this year alone.

This is simply outrageous. There are many other properties that are paying only $300 that should be paying the full amount. **This is unfair and results in the inequitable real property tax system we have**.

Please vote "NO" on Bill 49 and support removal of unfair exemptions.

GRASSROOT INSTITUTE OF HAWAII

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Removing barriers to Hawaii's prosperity

July 9, 2025, 10 a.m.
Honolulu Hale

To: Honolulu City Council
Tommy Waters, Chair
Andria Tupola, Vice Chair

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

RE: Bill 49 (2025) — RELATING TO PROPERTY TAXATION

Aloha Chair Waters, Vice Chair Tupola and other members of the Council,

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii **supports** Bill 49 (2025), which would increase the real property tax homeowner exemption for those 65 years old and older from $160,000 to $180,000 beginning in fiscal 2028.

Increasing the homeowner exemption by $20,000 would save each homeowner $70 at the current residential tax rate of $3.50 per $1,000 in assessed value.[1]

The exemption was last increased in 2023, for tax years beginning with fiscal 2024.[2] Passing Bill 49 (2025) now would head off possible increases in property values that could occur in the next two years.

Because many older folks rely on fixed incomes, increasing the amount of property tax relief they receive can reduce the "tax shock" of significant increases in property values.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Ted Kefalas
Director of Strategic Campaigns
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

[1] "Real Property Tax Rates for Tax Year July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025," City and County of Honolulu, accessed July 3, 2025.
[2] Ordinance 23-33, Honolulu Records Collection, accessed Feb. 21, 2025.