BILL049(25)
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 395

COUNCIL

COUNCIL Meeting

Meeting Date: Aug 6, 2025 @ 10:00 AM

Support: 8

Oppose: 0

I wish to comment: 0

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Jacob Wiencek	jacob.m.wiencek@pm.me	96815
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Aug 1, 2025 @ 05:07 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Councilmembers,

I am pleased to see Bill 49 continue to advance through the legislative process. With so many families struggling under our crushing cost-of-living crisis in Honolulu, I am glad to Council Chair Waters and Councilmember Okimoto taking action to reduce the properly tax burden on our older residents. This bill pairs nicely with Bill 50, also introduced by both members, that provides a more general property tax relief. We've got to make it easier and cheaper for families to stay in their homes here and I support any relief to get us to that objective.

I strongly urge the Council to SUPPORT this bill!

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Ted Kefalas	tkefalas@grassrootinstitute.org	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii	Support	Aug 5, 2025 @ 08:11 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Idor Harris	residentmanager@honolulutoweraoao.com	96817
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Honolulu Tower AOAO	Support	Aug 5, 2025 @ 09:31 AM

Testimony:

Honolulu Tower is a 396 unit condominium located at Maunakea and Beretania Streets. We are more than 55% owner occupied. Many of our owners are more than 65 years old.

At the August 4, 2025 meeting of the Board of Directors of the Association of Apartment Owners of Honolulu Tower, the board voted to support bill 49 and asks you to move this bill forward.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Idor Harris, Resident Manager

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Cody Sula	hncsula@gmail.com	96707
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Hawaii Ironworkers Stabilization Fund	Support	Aug 5, 2025 @ 10:18 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Ross Isokane	isokane@gmail.com	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Aug 5, 2025 @ 03:51 PM

Testimony:

I'm in support! This is a very thoughtful bill that will help residents that live here on our island with the increasingly unaffordable cost of living.

Although, realizing this bill will result in lost revenue for the C&C (which may be a good outcome if it helps residents), perhaps to maintain the C&C's critical services, we should consider the Empty Homes Tax in Bill 46 (2024) that has been designed/tweaked to primarily impact nonresident investors that keep much-needed housing inventory out of the local housing market for their own profit.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	waianaenb569@gmail.com	96792
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Aug 5, 2025 @ 10:42 PM

Testimony:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, SUPPORT BILL 49 RELATING TO PROPERTY TAXATION.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Dwayne Bautista	stabfundlocal625@outlook.com	96707
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Iron Workers Local 625 Stabilization Fund	Support	Aug 6, 2025 @ 07:15 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Dwayne Bautista	stabfundlocal625@outlook.com	96707
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Iron Workers Local 625 Stabilization Fund	Support	Aug 6, 2025 @ 07:23 AM

GRASSROOT INSTITUTE OF HAWAII

1050 Bishop St. #508
Honolulu, HI 96813
808-864-1776
info@grassrootinstitute.org

Removing barriers to Hawaii's prosperity

Aug. 6, 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 the 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.

Iron Workers Stabilization Fund

T. George Paris
Managing Director

August 6, 2025
10:00 am

Honolulu City Council
Honolulu Hale Council Chamber

Re: Support for Bill 49-Relating to Real Property Tax

Aloha Chair Waters and Members of the Honolulu City Council,

On behalf of the Hawaii Ironworkers Stabilization Fund, I am writing to express our strong support for Bill 49, which proposes to amend Section 8-10.3 of the Revised Ordinances of Honolulu 2021, specifically increasing the real property tax home exemption for senior citizens and retirees from $160,000 to **$300,000**

This measure is critically important for our kupuna and long-time working-class residents who are living on fixed incomes. Hawaii's high cost of living, particularly the burden of property taxes, places immense pressure on these individuals and those who continue to work, often threatening their ability to remain in the homes they have worked hard for and lived in for decades. **Senior citizens have diligently paid their taxes for decades, contributing to the very infrastructure and services that benefit us all.** After decades of paying into the system, our kupuna have worked for this support to help them maintain their homes and dignity.

Keeping our seniors rooted in their communities preserves the culture of our neighborhoods and ensures that our most experienced generations can continue to contribute to Hawaii's unique spirit and add experience to those learning our trades. We believe that supporting our senior citizens and retirees by easing their financial load is not just a matter of compassion, but a strategic investment in the stability and well-being of our entire community.

T. George Paris

Managing Director

94-497 UKEE STREET WAIPAHU, HAWAII 96797 (808) 677-0375

To: The Honorable Chair and Members of the Committee on Budget, Honolulu City Council **Honolulu, Hawaii**

From: Dwayne Bautista, Lobbyist Ironworkers Stabilization Fund

Date: August , 2025

RE: Testimony in Strong Support of Bill 50 (2025), Proposed CD1

Honorable Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Dwayne Bautista; we represent the Ironworkers Stabilization Fund as a lobbyist. I am writing to submit this formal testimony in **strong support** of Bill 50 (2025), Proposed CD1.

The residents of **Honolulu, Hawaii,** are currently navigating significant economic pressures. The escalating cost of living has placed considerable strain on household budgets, especially for working families. Bill 50 is a direct mechanism to provide substantial relief and help them stay in their homes.

A Vital Investment in Families

This bill is a vital investment in our communities. As amended in Proposed **CD1**, it now seeks to increase the real property tax exemption for families with children **from the current $140,000 to $250,000**. This proposed **$110,000 increase** in their property exemption provides direct and significant financial relief that is essential for families struggling with rising costs.

Supporting Our Local Workforce

This exemption increase provides a direct benefit to the hardworking members of our trade unions, including the ironworkers we represent. It is crucial to view this relief **not as a handout, but as an earned and deserved investment** in the stability of the local workforce that powers our economy. For many of our members, the dream of **homeownership in Hawaii** feels increasingly out of reach. The tax savings generated by this larger exemption are crucial funds that can be put toward a mortgage, daily necessities, or savings for the future. By making homeownership more

affordable, we can help ensure our skilled local workforce can build a future here, rather than being forced to **relocate to the mainland**.

The relief provided by Bill 50, Proposed CD1, is fundamental to addressing the out-migration of our local residents. Its passage is a matter of profound social responsibility and represents one of the most effective ways this Council can support working families.

Therefore, we respectfully urge the Committee to provide a favorable recommendation and pass Bill 50, Proposed CD1, without delay.

Mahalo for your time and dedicated service to our community.

Sincerely,

Dwayne Bautista Lobbyist, Ironworkers Stabilization Fund

To: The Honorable Chair and Members of the Committee on Budget, Honolulu City Council City and County of Honolulu

From: Dwayne Bautista, Lobbyist Ironworkers Stabilization Fund

Date: August 5, 2025

RE: Testimony in Strong Support of Bill 49 (2025)

Honorable Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Dwayne Bautista; we represent the Ironworkers Stabilization

Fund as a lobbyist. I am writing to submit this formal testimony in strong support of Bill 49 (2025).

The residents of the City and County of Honolulu are currently navigating significant economic pressures. The escalating cost of living has placed considerable strain on household budgets. Bill 49 is a direct mechanism to keep money in the households of our seniors who need it most, providing immediate breathing room for them to survive in these tough times.

This bill, which proposes to increase the real property tax exemption for seniors from the current $180,000 to $300,000, is a crucial and necessary lifeline. This benefit is especially critical for our retired ironworkers and the many other retired members of Hawaii's trade unions, who dedicated their careers to building our city and now depend on fixed retirement incomes to survive. **It is crucial to view this relief not as a handout, but as an earned and deserved investment in the stability of the local workforce that powers our economy.** For these retirees, and for all our kpuna on fixed incomes, this $120,000 increase in their exemption provides tangible savings in the face of relentlessly rising prices. The money saved translates directly into funds for non-negotiable monthly expenses like life-sustaining medication, electricity, and gas for a doctor's appointment. It ensures they do not have to choose between a gallon of milk and a prescription refill. This ordinance is about providing our seniors with the financial stability to survive.

By making it more financially tenable for seniors, including our own retirees and those from all labor unions—to remain in their homes, this bill will help keep our communities and multi-generational families intact. The passage of Bill 49 transcends mere fiscal policy; it is a matter of profound social responsibility and immediate necessity.

Therefore, we respectfully urge the Committee to provide a favorable recommendation and pass Bill 49 without delay.

Mahalo for your time and dedicated service to our community.

Sincerely,

Dwayne Bautista Lobbyist, Ironworkers Stabilization Fund

To: The Honorable Chair and Members of the Committee on Budget, Honolulu City Council **Honolulu, Hawaii**

From: Dwayne Bautista, Lobbyist Ironworkers Stabilization Fund

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Therefore, we respectfully urge the Committee to provide a favorable recommendation and pass Bill 49, Proposed CD1, without delay.

Mahalo for your time and dedicated service to our community.

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Dwayne Bautista Lobbyist, Ironworkers Stabilization Fund

To: The Honorable Chair and Members of the Committee on Budget, Honolulu City Council City and County of Honolulu

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