BILL050(25)
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 396

COUNCIL

COUNCIL Meeting

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

Support: 5

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 @ 05:10 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Councilmembers,

I am pleased to see Bill 50 continue to advance through our legislative process, along with its counterpart Bill 49. Hard pressed working- and middle-class families are struggling under the crushing cost-of-living crisis, which is largely driven by unaffordable housing in Honolulu. We need to provide relief however we can, wherever we can. This bill provides that relief for those struggling to make ends meet here.

I strongly urge this 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 @ 08:10 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Idor Harris	residentmanager@honolulutoweraoao.com	96817
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Honolulu Tower AOAO	Support	Aug 5, 2025 @ 09:32 AM

Testimony:

Honolulu Tower is a 396 unit condominium located at Maunakea and Beretania Streets. We are more than 55% owner occupied.

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 50 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 @ 10:19 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:

Ross Isokane	isokane@gmail.com	96813
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Aug 5, 2025 @ 03:57 PM

Testimony:

I'm in support (similar to my testimony on Bill 49, due to the positive intent of trying to relieve cost of living for residents, with the added suggestion that we consider the Empty Homes Tax, as a way to offset this bill's lost revenue impact, given that bill has been designed/tweaked to primarily impact nonresident investors).

As I was listening to the questions asked by Councilmembers to BFS during the last Budget Committee hearing, I couldn't help but think that the Councilmembers and their teams would benefit from being provided better data or dashboards (that could be built, for example, using Power BI) that they could use to model out different scenarios and see the corresponding hypothetical impact to tax revenues. It sure seems like the Council struggles with a deficit in much-needed information when trying to make such important decisions on these property tax-related matters.

As an outsider, I keep hearing everyone talk about the need for a permitted interaction group, but wouldn't it be a lot more efficient to just empower the Councilmembers with the data/technology they'd need to get these answers themselves?

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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 50 (2025) — RELATING TO PROPERTY TAXATION

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

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii **supports** Bill 50 (2025), which would increase the real property tax homeowner exemption for those 64 years old and under from $120,000 to $140,000 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 50 (2025) would head off possible increases in property values that could occur in the next two years.

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 July 3, 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 50-Relating to Real Property Tax

On behalf of the Hawaii Ironworkers Stabilization Fund, I am writing to express our strong support for **Bill 50**, which proposes to amend Section 8-10.3 of the Revised Ordinances of Honolulu 2021. This vital amendment seeks to increase the real property tax home exemption from $120,000 to **$250,000** for all homeowners in Honolulu.

This measure is critically important for **struggling workers** and all residents striving to maintain homeownership in Hawaii. Our state's exceptionally high cost of living, with property taxes being a significant component, places immense financial pressure on families. This burden often threatens their ability to afford to live and stay in the communities they call home.

We believe that increasing the property tax exemption will help retain our **skilled labor** in our islands and a commitment to ensuring that Hawaii remains a place where its people can afford to live and make a living.

T. George Paris

Managing Director

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