

BILL010(26)
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 30

COUNCIL

COUNCIL Meeting

Meeting Date: Jan 28, 2026 @ 10:00 AM

Support: 4

Oppose: 0

I wish to comment: 1

Name: Nam Vu	Email: nam@hubcoworkinghi.com	Zip: 96814
Representing: Hub Coworking Hawaii	Position: Support	Submitted: Jan 26, 2026 @ 09:38 AM
Name: Kiran Polk	Email: kiranpolk@gmail.com	Zip: 96707
Representing: Kapolei Chamber of Commerce	Position: Support	Submitted: Jan 27, 2026 @ 03:03 PM
Name: Eliza Talbot	Email: eliza8482@gmail.com	Zip: 96734
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jan 27, 2026 @ 04:20 PM
Testimony: Aloha Councilmembers, Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Bill 10. 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 issue 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 at more affordable rates to nonprofits and trade organizations to enable community and 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:

Natalie Iwasa	iwasajunk@mail.com	96825
Representing: Self	Position: I wish to comment	Submitted: Jan 27, 2026 @ 10:46 PM
Name: George Yarbrough	Email: georgeyarbrough@gmail.com	Zip: 96813
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jan 28, 2026 @ 09:38 AM

1/28/2026 City Council Testimony

Aloha Chair Dos Santos-Tam and members of the Budget Committee,

My name is Nam Vu, and I am testifying on behalf of Hub Coworking Hawai'i in **strong support of Bill 10.**

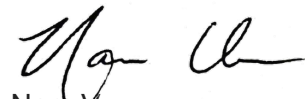
Hub Coworking Hawai'i's mission is to create spaces that empower people to do well and do good for Hawai'i. Since 2017, we have supported thousands of local entrepreneurs, small businesses, and nonprofit organizations by providing more than \$300,000 in free meeting space, event sponsorships, and coworking memberships.

Through this work, Hub has become an incubator for dozens of small companies and community-driven initiatives. These efforts translate directly into job creation, local investment, and sustained economic activity, with positive ripple effects throughout our neighborhoods. This is what can happen when public policy enables responsible investment and activates underutilized assets for public benefit.

This bill provides exactly that kind of enabling framework. By allowing City-owned properties to be used intentionally for community and economic development, it creates opportunities for revitalization, entrepreneurship, and long-term value creation, particularly in areas that need it most.

This is a win-win for Honolulu. It ensures City assets are not sitting idle, but are instead serving the community, strengthening our local economy, and supporting the people and organizations doing meaningful work on the ground.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify. We respectfully urge your support for this measure.



Nam Vu

Co-Founder, Hub Coworking Hawaii

January 28, 2026

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



RE: Bill 10 (2026) RELATING TO LEASE AND RENTAL OF CITY REAL PROPERTY

Dear Chair Waters, Vice Chair Tupola, and Councilmembers:

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 is in **support of Bill 10 (2026)**, which amends ROH Chapter 38 to address the lease and rental of City real property within the Chinatown Special District. By amending the City's ordinance for Chinatown, much needed updates to the City's leasing process for City-owned buildings, spaces, and land will be put into place for Chinatown's Special District. We see this as progress in the right direction as we have similar interests in West O'ahu. Making these adjustments creates opportunities for the City, to support important projects such as startup incubators, innovation hubs, coworking spaces, and nonprofit-driven community enterprises, all of which are also aligned with what we need in West O'ahu.

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 10 would be a step in the right direction to potentially open more opportunities to address these needs by modernizing the City's leasing policies.

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

Respectfully,

Kiran Polk
Executive Director & CEO

TO: Members of the Honolulu City Council

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

DATE: Wednesday, January 28, 2026

SUBJECT: Bill 10, Lease and Rental of City Property - **COMMENTS
and Requested Amendments**

Aloha Chair Waters and Councilmembers,

Thank you for allowing testimony on Bill 10, which would mainly add nonprofit organizations and child care operators to the list of entities to which the city may lease properties in the Chinatown special district.

The definition of "Nonprofit Organization" is basically the same as that used by the IRS for charitable organizations. In order to be eligible for exemption as a public charity private foundation under IRC Sec. 501(c)(3), organizations must distribute any remaining assets for charitable purposes, not simply "nonprofit purposes." **Please amend the bill to include this restriction.**

The date of the current Internal Revenue Code is 1986, not 1954. **Please amend the bill accordingly.**

Please note I have not fully considered the other aspects of this bill and make no comment on them at this time.

Support Testimony for Bill 10

Dear Chair Waters, Vice Chair Tupola, and members of the committee,

My name is George Yarbrough, I live in Honolulu, and I am testifying today in **support of Bill 10**.

I work as an economic developer, serving as a fellow with the Economic Recovery Corps—a program of the International Economic Development Council, the premier economic development organization in the United States. I work alongside 62 fellows nationwide developing meaningful strategies that create economic opportunities for communities that we live in. I'm also an Omidyar Fellow, which grounds my work in a strong Hawaii community lens.

This actionable legislation that makes it easier for the private sector to partner with the city on long-term economic development. Without proper policy frameworks, willing investors and operators walk away because the economics don't work.

I've lived this. As the cofounder of Hub Coworking Hawaii, I've experienced this directly in Honolulu. We made substantial tenant improvements—buildout, infrastructure, equipment—that required adequate lease terms to justify. With the support from the state in 2018 we finally were able to get it off the ground. The Hub has become an incubator for dozens of small companies, community movements, creating jobs and economic activity with positive spillover effects throughout the community. That's what happens when policy enables investment.

Bill 10 is that enabling legislation to wonderful opportunities for Chinatown and our broader community.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

George Yarbrough