

BILL040(26)
Testimony

MISC. COMM. 274

COUNCIL

COUNCIL Meeting

Meeting Date: Jul 8, 2026 @ 10:00 AM

Support: 21

Oppose: 0

I wish to comment: 2

Name: Ryan Yamaguchi	Email: ryanyamaguchi12@gmail.com	Zip: 96813
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jul 2, 2026 @ 08:06 AM
Testimony: Aloha Councilmembers, My name is Ryan Yamaguchi and I am a resident at Ulana Ward Village. While I am in strong support of the spirit of Bill 40 and its intent to provide fair and equitable real property tax relief for myself and my neighbors, I have the following concerns with the current Committee Draft that I humbly request the Council work to address in future readings/hearings: As opposed to some other immediate remedy, the relief currently offered through this bill will be in the form of a remission that will not be granted until after payment of our second tax installment by February 2027. Ulana residents are in need of something more immediate that corrects our assessments such as a retroactive home exemption that will immediately adjust the 2026 - 2027 taxes owed. A remission would still require us to pay upfront these high tax bills, which will significantly strain or break our tight budgets. Furthermore, as nearly all buyers financed their purchases, escrow is facilitating our payments of real property taxes. Each month, we pay them not only the monthly principal and interest on our mortgages, but also an additional escrow payment to cover the cost of real property taxes and insurance, which they pay on our behalf using this escrow balance. If the high tax bills come in unabated, escrow will pay out from our now inadequately built-up escrow balances (which were calculated for paying lower expected tax liabilities), and then after noticing the balance shortage, will automatically adjust future monthly escrow payments hundreds of dollars higher to make-up for the shortfall. This remission form does not protect us from these knock off effects of our inexplicably high assessments and Residential A tax rates. The Committee Draft only reflects a remission calculated between the difference paid under Residential and Residential A tax rates. What about the \$120,000 portion of our assessment (\$160,000 for seniors 65 or older) that would have been exempted from property taxes had we received home exemptions? As currently written, Ulana units assessed under \$1 million, but still materially higher than their appraised values, will receive no relief since they were never taxed at the Residential A rate to begin with. All unit owners should at least get the benefit from the \$120,000 or \$160,000 portion of their assessments exempted, just like any other homeowner in Honolulu is entitled to. I respectfully request your continued support for Bill 40 to help not only my neighbors and I at Ulana today, but all local families participating in these programs tomorrow, in their pursuit and sustainment of homeownership. I also ask that you continue dialogue with BFS and RPAD to address these concerns and produce a revised bill that sufficiently provides the relief we so urgently need. Mahalo for your time and consideration Ryan Yamaguchi, Ulana Ward Village Resident		
Name:	Email:	Zip:

Jarod Ishimi	jarod.ishimi@gmail.com	96813
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jul 2, 2026 @ 08:01 PM
Name: Kisei Tanaka	Email: kisei.tanaka@gmail.com	Zip: 96813
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jul 2, 2026 @ 09:52 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Councilmembers,

My name is Kisei Tanaka and I am a resident at Ulana Ward Village. While I strongly support the spirit of Bill 40 and its intent to provide fair and equitable real property tax relief for my neighbors and me, I have several concerns with the current Committee Draft that I respectfully ask the Council to address in future readings and hearings.

First, the relief currently offered through this bill would come in the form of a remission that would not be granted until after payment of our second tax installment in February 2027. Ulana residents need a more immediate remedy that corrects our assessments now, such as a retroactive home exemption that would immediately adjust the 2026–2027 taxes owed. A remission would still require us to pay these high tax bills upfront, which will significantly strain already tight household budgets.

Additionally, nearly all buyers financed their purchases, and escrow is facilitating our real property tax payments. Each month, we pay not only principal and interest on our mortgages, but also an additional escrow amount to cover real property taxes and insurance. If the high tax bills come in unchanged, escrow will pay them from balances that were built around lower expected tax liabilities. Once the shortage is identified, future monthly escrow payments may be automatically adjusted hundreds of dollars higher to make up the difference. A later remission does not protect us from these knock-on effects caused by unexpectedly high assessments and Residential A tax rates.

Second, the current Committee Draft appears to provide remission only for the difference paid under the Residential and Residential A tax rates. It does not address the \$120,000 portion of our assessment, or \$160,000 for seniors 65 and older, that would have been exempt from property taxes had we received the home exemption. As currently written, Ulana units assessed under \$1 million, but still materially higher than their purchase prices and appraised values, would receive no relief because they were not taxed at the Residential A rate. All eligible owner-occupants should at least receive the benefit of the home exemption, just like any other homeowner in Honolulu.

I respectfully request your continued support for Bill 40 to help not only my neighbors and me at Ulana today, but also future local families participating in these programs, in their pursuit and sustainment of homeownership. I also ask that you continue dialogue with BFS and RPAD to address these concerns and produce a revised bill that sufficiently provides

the relief we urgently need.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Kisei Tanaka

Ulana Ward Village Resident

Name:

Eli Tsukayama

Email:

eli.tsukayama@gmail.com

Zip:

96813

Representing:

Self

Position:

Support

Submitted:

Jul 2, 2026 @ 10:32 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Councilmembers,

My name is Eli Tsukayama and I am a resident at Ulana Ward Village. While I am in strong support of the spirit of Bill 40 and its intent to provide fair and equitable real property tax relief for myself and my neighbors, I have the following concerns with the current Committee Draft that I humbly request the Council work to address in future readings/hearings:

□ As opposed to some other immediate remedy, the relief currently offered through this bill will be in the form of a remission that will not be granted until after payment of our second tax installment by February 2027. Ulana residents are in need of something more immediate that corrects our assessments such as a retroactive home exemption that will immediately adjust the 2026 - 2027 taxes owed. A remission would still require us to pay upfront these high tax bills, which will significantly strain or break our tight budgets. Furthermore, as nearly all buyers financed their purchases, escrow is facilitating our payments of real property taxes. Each month, we pay them not only the monthly principal and interest on our mortgages, but also an additional escrow payment to cover the cost of real property taxes and insurance, which they pay on our behalf using this escrow balance. If the high tax bills come in unabated, escrow will pay out from our now inadequately built-up escrow balances (which were calculated for paying lower expected tax liabilities), and then after noticing the balance shortage, will automatically adjust future monthly escrow payments hundreds of dollars higher to make-up for the shortfall. This remission form does not protect us from these knock off effects of our inexplicably high assessments and Residential A tax rates.

□ The Committee Draft only reflects a remission calculated between the difference paid under Residential and Residential A tax rates. What about the \$120,000 portion of our assessment (\$160,000 for seniors 65 or older) that would have been exempted from property taxes had we received home exemptions? As currently written, Ulana units assessed under \$1 million, but still materially higher than their appraised values, will receive no relief since they were never taxed at the Residential A rate to begin with. All unit owners should at least get the benefit from the \$120,000 or \$160,000 portion of their assessments exempted, just like any other homeowner in Honolulu is entitled to.

I respectfully request your continued support for Bill 40 to help not only my neighbors and I at Ulana today, but all local families participating in these programs tomorrow, in their pursuit and sustenance of homeownership. I also ask that

you continue dialogue with BFS and RPAD to address these concerns and produce a revised bill that sufficiently provides the relief we so urgently need.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Eli Tsukayama, Ulana Ward Village Resident

Name: Michelle K	Email: michellek303@yahoo.com	Zip: 96813
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jul 6, 2026 @ 08:54 AM

Testimony:

Aloha Councilmembers,

My name is Michelle K. and I am a resident at Ulana Ward Village. While I am in STRONG SUPPORT of the spirit of Bill 40 and its intent to provide fair and equitable real property tax relief for myself and my neighbors, I have the following concerns with the current Committee Draft that I humbly request the Council work to address in future readings/hearings:

- As opposed to some other immediate remedy, the relief currently offered through this bill will be in the form of a remission that will not be granted until after payment of our second tax installment by February 2027. Ulana residents are in need of something more immediate that corrects our assessments such as a retroactive home exemption that will immediately adjust the 2026 - 2027 taxes owed. A remission would still require us to pay upfront these high tax bills, which will significantly strain or break our tight budgets. Furthermore, as nearly all buyers financed their purchases, escrow is facilitating our payments of real property taxes. Each month, we pay them not only the monthly principal and interest on our mortgages, but also an additional escrow payment to cover the cost of real property taxes and insurance, which they pay on our behalf using this escrow balance. If the high tax bills come in unabated, escrow will pay out from our now inadequately built-up escrow balances (which were calculated for paying lower expected tax liabilities), and then after noticing the balance shortage, will automatically adjust future monthly escrow payments hundreds of dollars higher to make-up for the shortfall. This remission form does not protect us from these knock off effects of our inexplicably high assessments and Residential A tax rates.
- The Committee Draft only reflects a remission calculated between the difference paid under Residential and Residential A tax rates. What about the \$120,000 portion of our assessment (\$160,000 for seniors 65 or older) that would have been exempted from property taxes had we received home exemptions? As is currently written, Ulana units assessed under \$1 million, but still materially higher than their appraised values, will receive no relief since they were never taxed at the Residential rate to begin with. All unit owners should at least get the benefit from the \$120,000 or \$160,000 portion of their assessments exempted, just like any other homeowner in Honolulu is entitled to.

I respectfully request your continued support for Bill 40 to help not only my neighbors and me at Ulana today, but all local families participating in these programs tomorrow, in their pursuit and sustainment of homeownership. I also ask that you continue dialogue with BFS and RPAD to address these concerns and produce a revised bill that sufficiently provides the relief we so urgently need.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Michelle K.

Ulana Ward Village Resident

Name: May Fan	Email: nina2beach@yahoo.com	Zip: 96817
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jul 6, 2026 @ 09:00 AM

Testimony:

Aloha City Councilmembers,

I am writing in STRONG SUPPORT for Bill 40. Please ensure homeowners receive the \$120,000 or \$160,000 home exemption immediately on top of granting Residential status to every affordable housing unit. It is not their fault that local homeowners missed the home exemption filing deadline due to poor timing outside of their control. Passage of this bill will support owners of future City- and State-approved affordable housing units so that they too will not be disadvantaged by a closing date after the September 30th home exemption application deadline. Thank you for your kind consideration!

Mahalo,

May Fan

Name: Michael Fan	Email: mike26fan@outlook.com	Zip: 96817
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jul 6, 2026 @ 09:04 AM

Testimony:

Aloha City Councilmembers,

I am writing in STRONG SUPPORT for Bill 40. Please ensure homeowners receive the \$120,000 or \$160,000 home exemption immediately on top of granting RESIDENTIAL status to every affordable housing unit. It is not their fault that local homeowners

missed the home exemption filing deadline due to poor timing outside of their control. Passage of this bill will support owners of future City- and State-approved affordable housing units so that they too will not be disadvantaged by a closing date after the

September 30th home exemption application deadline. Thank you for your kind consideration!

Mahalo,

Michael Fan

Name: Robert Dorsey	Email: vintrk52@aol.com	Zip: 80218
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jul 6, 2026 @ 10:29 AM
Name: Jared Miyashiro	Email: jtmiya@gmail.com	Zip: 96813
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jul 6, 2026 @ 02:48 PM
Name: Jason and Cheryl Kajitani	Email: cpkajitani@gmail.com	Zip: 96813
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jul 6, 2026 @ 06:50 PM
Name: Lisa Michelle Furukawa	Email: pinklisamichelle@gmail.com	Zip: 96813
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jul 6, 2026 @ 07:10 PM
Name: Suzanne Young	Email: anakama@wik.com	Zip: 96813
Representing: Honolulu Board of Realtors	Position: I wish to comment	Submitted: Jul 6, 2026 @ 07:25 PM
Name: Charlotte Lu	Email: 40ulana@gmail.com	Zip: 96813
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jul 6, 2026 @ 07:29 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Councilmembers,

My name is Charlotte Lu, and I am a resident of Ulana Ward Village. I support the intent of Bill 40 and appreciate the Council's efforts to provide property tax relief for Ulana homeowners. I respectfully ask that a few concerns be considered as the bill moves forward.

First, the proposed remission timing is late. Waiting until after the second tax installment in February 2027 means homeowners still have to pay the full increased tax bills upfront. Many of us have mortgage escrow accounts that were set up based on much lower expected taxes. These higher bills could create escrow shortages and lead to significantly higher monthly payments before any relief is received. A retroactive home exemption or a similar adjustment would provide more immediate help.

Second, the current draft only addresses the difference between Residential and Residential A tax rates. It does not include the homeowner exemption that other owner-occupants receive—\$120,000 for most homeowners and \$160,000 for seniors. Ulana residents should also receive this benefit so that all homeowners are treated fairly, including those whose assessments are below \$1 million but are still much higher than their appraised values.

Thank you for your continued support of Bill 40 and finding a solution to make the affordable housing projects work for local families.

Mahalo,
Charlotte Lu

Name: Denis Philippov	Email: dyoz80@gmail.com	Zip: 96813
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jul 6, 2026 @ 08:18 PM

Testimony:
Aloha Councilmembers,

My name is Denis Philippov and I am a resident at Ulana Ward Village. While I am in strong support of the spirit of Bill 40 and its intent to provide fair and equitable real property tax relief for myself and my neighbors, I have the following concerns with the current Committee Draft that I humbly request the Council work to address in future readings/hearings:

- As opposed to some other immediate remedy, the relief currently offered through this bill will be in the form of a remission that will not be granted until after payment of our second tax installment by February 2027. Ulana residents are in need of something more immediate that corrects our assessments such as a retroactive home exemption that will immediately adjust the 2026 - 2027 taxes owed. A remission would still require us to pay upfront these high tax bills, which will significantly strain or break our tight budgets. Furthermore, as nearly all buyers financed their purchases, escrow is facilitating our payments of real property taxes. Each month, we pay them not only the monthly principal and interest on our mortgages, but also an additional escrow payment to cover the cost of real property taxes and insurance, which they

pay on our behalf using this escrow balance. If the high tax bills come in unabated, escrow will pay out from our now inadequately built-up escrow balances (which were calculated for paying lower expected tax liabilities), and then after noticing the balance shortage, will automatically adjust future monthly escrow payments hundreds of dollars higher to make-up for the shortfall. This remission form does not protect us from these knock off effects of our inexplicably high assessments and Residential A tax rates.

- The Committee Draft only reflects a remission calculated between the difference paid under Residential and Residential A tax rates. What about the \$120,000 portion of our assessment (\$160,000 for seniors 65 or older) that would have been exempted from property taxes had we received home exemptions? As currently written, Ulana units assessed under \$1 million, but still materially higher than their appraised values, will receive no relief since they were never taxed at the Residential A rate to begin with. All unit owners should at least get the benefit from the \$120,000 or \$160,000 portion of their assessments exempted, just like any other homeowner in Honolulu is entitled to.

I respectfully request your continued support for Bill 40 to help not only my neighbors and I at Ulana today, but all local families participating in these programs tomorrow, in their pursuit and sustainment of homeownership. I also ask that you continue dialogue with BFS and RPAD to address these concerns and produce a revised bill that sufficiently provides the relief we so urgently need.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Denis Philippov, Ulana Ward Village Resident

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Kera Akiyama	kera.akiyama@gmail.com	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Jul 6, 2026 @ 09:20 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Councilmembers,

My name is Kera Akiyama and I am a resident at Ulana Ward Village. While I am in strong support of the spirit of Bill 40 and its intent to provide fair and equitable real property tax relief for myself and my neighbors, I have the following concerns with the current Committee Draft that I humbly request the Council work to address in future readings/hearings: As opposed to some other immediate remedy, the relief currently offered through this bill will be in the form of a remission that will not be granted until after payment of our second tax installment by February 2027. Ulana residents are in need of something more immediate that corrects our assessments such as a retroactive home exemption that will immediately adjust the 2026 - 2027 taxes owed. A remission would still require us to pay upfront these high tax bills, which will significantly strain or break our tight budgets. Furthermore, as nearly all buyers financed their purchases, escrow is facilitating our payments of real property taxes. Each month, we pay them not only the monthly principal and interest on our mortgages, but also an additional escrow payment to cover the cost of real property taxes and insurance, which they

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The Committee Draft only reflects a remission calculated between the difference paid under Residential and Residential A tax rates. What about the \$120,000 portion of our assessment (\$160,000 for seniors 65 or older) that would have been exempted from property taxes had we received home exemptions? As currently written, Ulana units assessed under \$1 million, but still materially higher than their appraised values, will receive no relief since they were never taxed at the Residential A rate to begin with. All unit owners should at least get the benefit from the \$120,000 or \$160,000 portion of their assessments exempted, just like any other homeowner in Honolulu is entitled to.

I respectfully request your continued support for Bill 40 to help not only my neighbors and I at Ulana today, but all local families participating in these programs tomorrow, in their pursuit and sustainment of homeownership. I also ask that you continue dialogue with BFS and RPAD to address these concerns and produce a revised bill that sufficiently provides the relief we so urgently need.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Kera Akiyama, Ulana Ward Village Resident

Name: Luke Taylor	Email: taylorluke2018@gmail.com	Zip: 96813
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jul 6, 2026 @ 09:20 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Councilmembers,

My name is Luke Taylor and I am a resident at Ulana Ward Village. While I am in strong support of the spirit of Bill 40 and its intent to provide fair and equitable real property tax relief for myself and my neighbors, I have the following concerns with the current Committee Draft that I humbly request the Council work to address in future readings/hearings:

As opposed to some other immediate remedy, the relief currently offered through this bill will be in the form of a remission that will not be granted until after payment of our second tax installment by February 2027. Ulana residents are in need of something more immediate that corrects our assessments such as a retroactive home exemption that will immediately adjust the 2026 - 2027 taxes owed. A remission would still require us to pay upfront these high tax bills, which will significantly strain or break our tight budgets. Furthermore, as nearly all buyers financed their purchases, escrow is facilitating our payments of real property taxes. Each month, we pay them not only the monthly principal and interest on our mortgages, but also an additional escrow payment to cover the cost of real property taxes and insurance, which they

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The Committee Draft only reflects a remission calculated between the difference paid under Residential and Residential A tax rates. What about the \$120,000 portion of our assessment (\$160,000 for seniors 65 or older) that would have been exempted from property taxes had we received home exemptions? As currently written, Ulana units assessed under \$1 million, but still materially higher than their appraised values, will receive no relief since they were never taxed at the Residential A rate to begin with. All unit owners should at least get the benefit from the \$120,000 or \$160,000 portion of their assessments exempted, just like any other homeowner in Honolulu is entitled to.

I respectfully request your continued support for Bill 40 to help not only my neighbors and I at Ulana today, but all local families participating in these programs tomorrow, in their pursuit and sustainment of homeownership. I also ask that you continue dialogue with BFS and RPAD to address these concerns and produce a revised bill that sufficiently provides the relief we so urgently need.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Luke Taylor, Ulana Ward Village Resident

Name: Natalie Iwasa	Email: iwasajunk@mail.com	Zip: 96825
Representing: Self	Position: I wish to comment	Submitted: Jul 7, 2026 @ 08:41 AM

Name: Jessica Jeong	Email: jessicajpennington@gmail.com	Zip: 96813
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jul 7, 2026 @ 08:47 AM

Testimony:

Aloha Councilmembers,

My name is Jessica and I am a resident at Ulana Ward Village. While I am in strong support of the spirit of Bill 40 and its intent to provide fair and equitable real property tax relief for myself and my neighbors, I have the following concerns with the current Committee Draft that I humbly request the Council work to address in future readings/hearings:

As opposed to some other immediate remedy, the relief currently offered through this bill will be in the form of a

remission that will not be granted until after payment of our second tax installment by February 2027. Ulana residents are in need of something more immediate that corrects our assessments such as a retroactive home exemption that will immediately adjust the 2026 - 2027 taxes owed. A remission would still require us to pay upfront these high tax bills, which will significantly strain or break our tight budgets. Furthermore, as nearly all buyers financed their purchases, escrow is facilitating our payments of real property taxes. Each month, we pay them not only the monthly principal and interest on our mortgages, but also an additional escrow payment to cover the cost of real property taxes and insurance, which they pay on our behalf using this escrow balance. If the high tax bills come in unabated, escrow will pay out from our now inadequately built-up escrow balances (which were calculated for paying lower expected tax liabilities), and then after noticing the balance shortage, will automatically adjust future monthly escrow payments hundreds of dollars higher to make-up for the shortfall. This remission form does not protect us from these knock off effects of our inexplicably high assessments and Residential A tax rates.

The Committee Draft only reflects a remission calculated between the difference paid under Residential and Residential A tax rates. What about the \$120,000 portion of our assessment (\$160,000 for seniors 65 or older) that would have been exempted from property taxes had we received home exemptions? As currently written, Ulana units assessed under \$1 million, but still materially higher than their appraised values, will receive no relief since they were never taxed at the Residential A rate to begin with. All unit owners should at least get the benefit from the \$120,000 or \$160,000 portion of their assessments exempted, just like any other homeowner in Honolulu is entitled to.

I respectfully request your continued support for Bill 40 to help not only my neighbors and I at Ulana today, but all local families participating in these programs tomorrow, in their pursuit and sustainment of homeownership. I also ask that you continue dialogue with BFS and RPAD to address these concerns and produce a revised bill that sufficiently provides the relief we so urgently need.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Jessica Jeong, Ulana Ward Village Resident

Name: Jon Ching	Email: jching8110@gmail.com	Zip: 96813
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jul 7, 2026 @ 10:41 AM

Testimony:
Aloha Councilmembers,

My name is Jon Ching, and I am a resident at Ulana Ward Village. While I am in strong support of the spirit of Bill 40 and its intent to provide fair and equitable real property tax relief for myself and my neighbors, I have the following concerns with the current Committee Draft that I humbly request the Council work to address in future readings/hearings:

- As opposed to some other immediate remedy, the relief currently offered through this bill will be in the form of a remission that will not be granted until after payment of our second tax installment by February 2027. Ulana residents are in need of something more immediate that corrects our assessments such as a retroactive home exemption that will immediately adjust the 2026 - 2027 taxes owed. A remission would still require us to pay upfront these high tax bills, which will significantly strain or break our tight budgets. Furthermore, as nearly all buyers financed their purchases, escrow is facilitating our payments of real property taxes. Each month, we pay them not only the monthly principal and interest on our mortgages, but also an additional escrow payment to cover the cost of real property taxes and insurance, which they pay on our behalf using this escrow balance. If the high tax bills come in unabated, escrow will pay out from our now inadequately built-up escrow balances (which were calculated for paying lower expected tax liabilities), and then after noticing the balance shortage, will automatically adjust future monthly escrow payments hundreds of dollars higher to make-up for the shortfall. This remission form does not protect us from these knock off effects of our inexplicably high assessments and Residential A tax rates.
- The Committee Draft only reflects a remission calculated between the difference paid under Residential and Residential A tax rates. What about the \$120,000 portion of our assessment (\$160,000 for seniors 65 or older) that would have been exempted from property taxes had we received home exemptions? As currently written, Ulana units assessed under \$1 million, but still materially higher than their appraised values, will receive no relief since they were never taxed at the Residential A rate to begin with. All unit owners should at least get the benefit from the \$120,000 or \$160,000 portion of their assessments exempted, just like any other homeowner in Honolulu is entitled to.

I respectfully request your continued support for Bill 40 to help not only my neighbors and I at Ulana today, but all local families participating in these programs tomorrow, in their pursuit and sustainment of homeownership. I also ask that you continue dialogue with BFS and RPAD to address these concerns and produce a revised bill that sufficiently provides the relief we so urgently need.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Jon Ching, Ulana Ward Village Resident

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Ted Kefalas	tkefalas@grassrootinstitute.org	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii	Support	Jul 7, 2026 @ 11:18 AM
Name:	Email:	Zip:
Alison Beste	alisonbeste@gmail.com	96813
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Jul 7, 2026 @ 03:03 PM
Name:	Email:	Zip:

Kevin Liu	liukevin@hawaii.edu	96813
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jul 7, 2026 @ 05:18 PM
Name: Michael Nashiro	Email: mikey808@gmail.com	Zip: 96813
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Jul 7, 2026 @ 07:33 PM

Testimony:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Councilmembers,

My name is Mike Nashiro, and I am writing in strong support of Bill 40.

I recently purchased a reserved affordable housing unit at Ulana Ward Village in Kaka’ako. This unit is part of a State-regulated program under the Hawai’i Community Development Authority (HCDA), which includes strict requirements on pricing, income eligibility, asset limits, and owner-occupancy through recorded restrictive covenants. I have lived in Honolulu my entire life, including previously in the Nu’uanu area, and this purchase represents an important step toward being able to remain in the community I call home.

My unit was priced in the \$600,000 range under these restrictions, which is already a significant financial commitment for many local residents. Despite this, my property is currently subject to the higher Residential A tax classification. Because the building was completed and my purchase closed after the September 30 home exemption deadline, I was unable to qualify for the homeowner exemption during my first year—even though I immediately occupied the unit as my primary residence.

This results in thousands of dollars in additional property taxes during the first year of ownership. For many affordable housing owners, including myself, the financial margins are tight. We carefully plan and budget to make homeownership possible, and an unexpected tax burden of this magnitude has a real impact.

This situation is not the result of oversight by the homeowner. The timing of affordable housing purchases is driven by factors outside a buyer’s control, including lottery selection, construction schedules, and coordinated closing timelines. In my case, it simply was not possible to meet the exemption deadline. As a result, homeowners who comply with all affordable housing requirements are unintentionally penalized during their first year of ownership.

Bill 40 addresses this gap in a targeted and reasonable way. It does not create a broad or permanent exemption. Instead, it provides a one-year home exemption for the initial purchaser of a regulated affordable housing unit who occupies the property as their principal residence, ensuring that these homeowners are treated consistently with the intent of the affordable housing program.

I understand the importance of maintaining a fair and stable property tax system. However, this bill addresses a narrow circumstance affecting a limited number of homeowners. The fiscal impact to the City is modest, while the benefit to qualifying affordable housing owners is substantial during one of the most financially challenging periods of homeownership.

Most importantly, Bill 40 aligns the City's property tax policy with the purpose of the State's affordable housing programs. These programs are intended to help local residents achieve and sustain homeownership. This measure helps ensure that affordable housing remains affordable not only at the time of purchase, but throughout that critical first year of ownership.

I respectfully urge you to support Bill 40.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Mike Nashiro

Ulana Ward Village Resident

Aloha Councilmembers,

This is Jarod and Jase Ishimi and we are residents at Ulana Ward Village. While we are in strong support of the spirit of Bill 40 and its intent to provide fair and equitable real property tax relief for myself and my neighbors, we have the following concerns with the current Committee Draft that we humbly request the Council work to address in future readings/hearings:

- As opposed to some other immediate remedy, the relief currently offered through this bill will be in the form of a remission that will not be granted until after payment of our second tax installment by February 2027. Ulana residents are in need of something more immediate that corrects our assessments such as a retroactive home exemption that will immediately adjust the 2026 - 2027 taxes owed. A remission would still require us to pay upfront these high tax bills, which will significantly strain or break our tight budgets. Furthermore, as nearly all buyers financed their purchases, escrow is facilitating our payments of real property taxes. Each month, we pay them not only the monthly principal and interest on our mortgages, but also an additional escrow payment to cover the cost of real property taxes and insurance, which they pay on our behalf using this escrow balance. If the high tax bills come in unabated, escrow will pay out from our now inadequately built-up escrow balances (which were calculated for paying lower expected tax liabilities), and then after noticing the balance shortage, will automatically adjust future monthly escrow payments hundreds of dollars higher to make-up for the shortfall. This remission form does not protect us from these knock off effects of our inexplicably high assessments and Residential A tax rates.
- The Committee Draft only reflects a remission calculated between the difference paid under Residential and Residential A tax rates. What about the \$120,000 portion of our assessment (\$160,000 for seniors 65 or older) that would have been exempted from property taxes had we received home exemptions? As currently written, Ulana units assessed under \$1 million, but still materially higher than their appraised values, will receive no relief since they were never taxed at the Residential A rate to begin with. All unit owners should at least get the benefit from the \$120,000 or \$160,000 portion of their assessments exempted, just like any other homeowner in Honolulu is entitled to.

We respectfully request your continued support for Bill 40 to help not only my neighbors and us at Ulana today, but all local families participating in these programs tomorrow, in their pursuit and sustainment of homeownership. We also ask that you continue dialogue with BFS and RPAD to address these concerns and produce a revised bill that sufficiently provides the relief we so urgently need.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Jarod and Jase Ishimi, Ulana Ward Village Resident

Members of the Honolulu Council,

Referencing bill 040(26):

My daughter, a long-time Hawaii resident and social worker, was finally able to purchase a small unit in Ward Village thanks to good luck in a lottery, qualifying for an affordable unit, and some assistance from family members. That program was laudable in view of the market challenges of her city.

The idea that the affordability goals of that program would be compromised by valuations based on top-tier adjacent homes purchased by wealthier buyers seems incompatible. I hope Council members will consider the intent of the affordable housing program while evaluating this bill.

Respectfully, Robert Dorsey

Aloha Councilmembers,

My name is Jared Miyashiro, and I am a lifelong resident of Honolulu and a first-time homeowner at Ulana Ward Village. While I am in strong support of the spirit of Bill 40 and its intent to provide fair and equitable real property tax relief for myself and my neighbors, I have the following concerns with the current Committee Draft that I humbly request the Council work to address in future readings/hearings:

- As opposed to some other immediate remedy, the relief currently offered through this bill will be in the form of a remission that will not be granted until after payment of our second tax installment by February 2027. Ulana residents are in need of something more immediate that corrects our assessments such as a retroactive home exemption that will immediately adjust the 2026 - 2027 taxes owed. A remission would still require us to pay upfront these high tax bills, which will significantly strain or break our tight budgets. Furthermore, as nearly all buyers financed their purchases, escrow is facilitating our payments of real property taxes. Each month, we pay them not only the monthly principal and interest on our mortgages, but also an additional escrow payment to cover the cost of real property taxes and insurance, which they pay on our behalf using this escrow balance. If the high tax bills come in unabated, escrow will pay out from our now inadequately built-up escrow balances (which were calculated for paying lower expected tax liabilities), and then after noticing the balance shortage, will automatically adjust future monthly escrow payments hundreds of dollars higher to make-up for the shortfall. This remission form does not protect us from these knock off effects of our inexplicably high assessments and Residential A tax rates.
- The Committee Draft only reflects a remission calculated between the difference paid under Residential and Residential A tax rates. What about the \$120,000 portion of our assessment (\$160,000 for seniors 65 or older) that would have been exempted from property taxes had we received home exemptions? As currently written, Ulana units assessed under \$1 million, but still materially higher than their appraised values, will receive no relief since they were never taxed at the Residential A rate to begin with. All unit owners should at least get the benefit from the \$120,000 or \$160,000 portion of their assessments exempted, just like any other homeowner in Honolulu is entitled to.

I respectfully request your continued support for Bill 40 to help not only my neighbors and I at Ulana today, but all local families participating in these programs tomorrow, in their pursuit and sustainment of homeownership. I also ask that you continue dialogue with BFS and RPAD to address these concerns and produce a revised bill that sufficiently provides the relief we so urgently need.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Jared Miyashiro, Ulana Ward Village Resident

Aloha Councilmembers,

This is Jason and Cheryl Kajitani, and we are a resident of Ulana Ward Village. I sincerely appreciate your efforts and support of Bill 40 and its intent to provide fair and equitable real property tax relief for my neighbors and me. As an affordable housing homeowner, I respectfully ask that the Council consider the following concerns as future versions of the bill are discussed.

Ulana Ward Village was developed under the Hawaii Community Development Authority (HCDA) Affordable Housing Program. Our homes are subject to legally binding restrictions that significantly limit their fair market value. Unlike unrestricted market-rate condominiums, our units cannot be sold at open market prices. The HCDA imposes resale price limits, income eligibility requirements for future buyers, and other deed restrictions that substantially reduce the marketability and value of our homes.

Despite these restrictions, our properties have been assessed at values that appear to reflect unrestricted market-rate condominiums in the surrounding area. This results in property tax assessments that exceed the actual market value of our homes as restricted by law. Simply put, we are being taxed on value that we cannot legally realize.

In addition, Ulana homeowners qualified for these homes because we met income eligibility requirements established by the HCDA. The affordable housing program was created to provide sustainable homeownership opportunities for local families with moderate incomes. Requiring homeowners to pay property taxes based on inflated assessments places an undue financial burden on families the program was specifically designed to assist and undermines the purpose of affordable housing.

As opposed to some other immediate remedy, the relief currently offered through this bill will be in the form of a remission that will not be granted until after payment of our second tax installment by February 2027. Ulana residents need a more immediate solution that corrects our assessments, such as a retroactive home exemption that would immediately adjust the 2026–2027 taxes owed.

A remission would still require us to pay these significantly higher tax bills upfront, placing substantial financial strain on already limited household budgets. Because nearly all Ulana homeowners financed the purchase of their homes, our real property taxes are paid through mortgage escrow accounts. Each month, we pay our mortgage principal and interest along with escrow payments intended to cover estimated property taxes and insurance. If the current tax assessments remain in place, escrow accounts will become underfunded, requiring mortgage servicers to increase our monthly escrow payments by hundreds of dollars to recover the shortage. Even if a remission is eventually issued, it does not prevent these immediate financial consequences or the hardship they impose on income-qualified homeowners.

Additionally, the current Committee Draft only provides a remission equal to the difference between the Residential and Residential A tax rates. It does not address the \$120,000 home exemption (\$160,000 for homeowners age 65 or older) that owner-occupants throughout Honolulu are entitled to receive. As written, many Ulana units assessed below \$1 million—but still significantly above their legally restricted market values—would receive little or no meaningful relief because they were never subject to the Residential A tax rate. These homeowners remain disadvantaged despite paying taxes on assessments that exceed the value of what they are legally permitted to sell.

I respectfully request that the Council continue supporting Bill 40 while also working with the Department of Budget and Fiscal Services and the Real Property Assessment Division to develop a more equitable solution. Specifically, I ask the Council to:

- Ensure that property assessments for HCDA affordable housing units reflect their legally restricted fair market values.
- Provide immediate relief through a retroactive homeowner exemption or another mechanism that reduces taxes before homeowners are required to pay inflated tax bills.
- Extend relief to all eligible Ulana homeowners, including those assessed below the Residential A threshold but whose properties remain significantly over assessed due to HCDA restrictions.
- Continue reviewing policies affecting affordable housing developments so that homeowners are not taxed based on values they cannot legally realize.

I respectfully request your continued support for Bill 40—not only to help my neighbors and me today, but also to preserve affordable homeownership opportunities for future local families. Fair property taxation should recognize the legal restrictions placed on HCDA affordable housing and should not impose tax burdens based on unrestricted market values that homeowners can never receive.

Mahalo for your time, your service, and your thoughtful consideration of these concerns.

Sincerely,

Cheryl and Jason Kajitani
Ulana Ward Village Resident

Aloha Councilmembers,

My name is Lisa and I am writing in strong support of Bill 40.

I recently purchased a reserved workforce housing unit at the Ulana Ward Village project in Kakaako. This unit is part of a program regulated by the Hawaii Community Development Authority (HCDA), which imposes strict requirements on pricing, income and asset eligibility, and required owner-occupancy throughout my regulated term.

Despite the Declaration of Restrictive Covenants requiring me to occupy my unit as my primary residence, I was not allowed to file for a home exemption because the building's October completion date and my later closing date fell after the September 30th deadline.

I purchased my unit for \$282,000.00 with these restrictive covenants in place, a price that is already a stretch for many local residents, let alone a first-time homeowner such as myself. Despite being a regulated workforce housing unit with smaller square footages, simple furnishings and finishings, low-cost amenities, and surrounded by several construction sites causing constant traffic and noise disruptions, my unit is currently assessed hundreds of thousands of dollars above my bank's 2025 appraised value. With a high mortgage payment, association fees, and Honolulu's ever growing living expenses, this unexpectedly high tax burden has only further strained my already tight household budget.

While I have sought relief through the tax appeal process, I have been met with limited, sporadic communication, vague feedback, and a meager settlement offer from the tax office. Hearing dates for the Board of Review are backlogged past October, though I have been warned my case could get pushed even further out to the Board's March 2027 hearing cycle. This backlog has been weaponized against myself and my neighbors at Ulana, as we are forced to either accept these settlements now or pay taxes on the original assessment amount until some unknown date when our cases can finally be heard.

Bill 40 will provide immediate, urgently-needed relief to my neighbors and I in the form of a home exemption that is entitled to all Honolulu residents, but was withheld from us simply due to a timing issue that was out of our control. Passage of this bill will also support owners of future City- and State-approved affordable housing units so that they too will not be disadvantaged by a closing date after the September 30th home exemption application deadline.

I respectfully request this committee's support for Bill 40 to help not only my neighbors and I at Ulana, but all future local families participating in these programs, in their pursuit and sustainment

of homeownership. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Lisa Michelle Furukawa, Ulana Ward Village Resident



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Testimony by Suzanne Young, CEO
Honolulu Board of REALTORS®

Bill 40 (2026), CD1
Relating to Real Property Taxation

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

City Council Chamber
Wednesday, July 8, 2026
10:00 A.M.

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Bill 40 (2026), CD1. On behalf of our more than 6,800 members, the Honolulu Board of REALTORS® (HBR) and its City Affairs Committee offer comments on Bill 40 (2026) CD1, Relating to Real Property Taxation.

HBR appreciate this measure which addresses the issue of real property tax assessments and home exemptions for new owner-occupants. While HBR strongly supports the intent of this measure to ease the financial strain on local working families, we wish to recognize that we should address the real property tax framework holistically.

The underlying issue facing new homeowners is the September 30 filing deadline for the homeowner exemption. Buyers often have little control over construction schedules, certificates of occupancy, or when a sale is recorded, and a rigid deadline can leave bona fide owner-occupants paying higher taxes for a year simply because their closing occurred too late to file in time.

This problem is especially acute when a homebuyer purchases a unit from a non-owner-occupant and occupies it as a primary residence after the deadline has passed. In those cases, the buyer can be left subject to the higher tax classification until the exemption takes effect which can sometimes be over one year.

HBR encourages the Council to consider broader, neutral real property tax reforms, such as a rolling or prorated exemption system or multiple filing deadlines, so the tax code better reflects actual occupancy. HBR also supports convening a working group and stands ready to collaborate with the City and stakeholders on fair, equitable, and administrable housing tax policy solutions that balance fiscal needs with taxpayers' circumstances.

Thank you for allowing us to submit testimony in support.

TO: Members of the Honolulu City Council

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

DATE: Wednesday, July 8, 2026

SUBJECT: Bill 40, CD1, Temporary Real Property Tax Exemption - **COMMENTS**

Aloha Chair Waters and Councilmembers,

Thank you for allowing testimony on Bill 40, CD1, which creates a retroactive homeowner exemption for certain purchasers of condominiums. The amended bill allows for remission of the higher Residential A tax and simplifies the bill.

While I appreciate the recognition that the Residential A tax can be a heavy burden for new homeowners, it does nothing for purchasers of affordable single-family homes nor for renters whose landlord must pay the higher tax.

It should be noted Director Kawano estimated cost of the remission in lost revenue for the current fiscal year is about \$650,000. Future years are likely to be the same or higher. That lost revenue will have to be “absorbed” in the current year but covered by other taxpayers going forward. This puts yet another burden on other taxpayers and residents who do not fall in this narrowly-crafted exemption.

Please just remove the Residential A classification altogether. To replace that revenue, remove or at least reduce exemptions for “charitable” nonprofit organization that are by no stretch of the imagination charitable, e.g., labor unions, business leagues, etc.

Also note that the retroactive effective date on this bill is not good fiscal policy.

July 8, 2026, 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 40 (2026), CD1 — RELATING TO REAL PROPERTY TAXATION

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

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii **supports** [Bill 40 \(2026\), CD1](#), which would allow buyers who purchase condo units designated as affordable housing by the state or city to immediately receive the homeowner exemption.

This bill addresses a discrepancy that arises when a homebuilder constructs an affordable housing project but does not immediately sell all of the units. The eventual owners of such units can sometimes find themselves paying property taxes in the Residential A tax class, which carries a much higher rate than the Residential class.

Even if the condo unit is in the Residential class, the homebuyer cannot immediately receive the homeowner exemption if the unit is purchased after the September 31 deadline to file for the exemption, which would stick the new owners with higher tax bills for the duration of the tax year.

Residents who qualify for affordable housing tend to have lower incomes by definition. Reducing their tax bills by granting them immediate access to the Residential tax class rate and the homeowner exemption would reduce the financial strain associated with the purchase of a new home.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Ted Kefalas

Director of Strategic Campaigns

Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

Aloha Councilmembers,

My name is Alison Beste and I am a resident at Ulana Ward Village. While I am in strong support of the spirit of Bill 40 and its intent to provide fair and equitable real property tax relief for myself and my neighbors, I have the following concerns with the current Committee Draft that I humbly request the Council work to address in future readings/hearings:

- As opposed to some other immediate remedy, the relief currently offered through this bill will be in the form of a remission that will not be granted until after payment of our second tax installment by February 2027. Ulana residents are in need of something more immediate that corrects our assessments such as a retroactive home exemption that will immediately adjust the 2026 - 2027 taxes owed. A remission would still require us to pay upfront these high tax bills, which will significantly strain or break our tight budgets. Furthermore, as nearly all buyers financed their purchases, escrow is facilitating our payments of real property taxes. Each month, we pay them not only the monthly principal and interest on our mortgages, but also an additional escrow payment to cover the cost of real property taxes and insurance, which they pay on our behalf using this escrow balance. If the high tax bills come in unabated, escrow will pay out from our now inadequately built-up escrow balances (which were calculated for paying lower expected tax liabilities), and then after noticing the balance shortage, will automatically adjust future monthly escrow payments hundreds of dollars higher to make-up for the shortfall. This remission form does not protect us from these knock off effects of our inexplicably high assessments and Residential A tax rates.
- The Committee Draft only reflects a remission calculated between the difference paid under Residential and Residential A tax rates. What about the \$120,000 portion of our assessment (\$160,000 for seniors 65 or older) that would have been exempted from property taxes had we received home exemptions? As currently written, Ulana units assessed under \$1 million, but still materially higher than their appraised values, will receive no relief since they were never taxed at the Residential A rate to begin with. All unit owners should at least get the benefit from the \$120,000 or \$160,000 portion of their assessments exempted, just like any other homeowner in Honolulu is entitled to.

I respectfully request your continued support for Bill 40 to help not only my neighbors and me at Ulana today, but all local families participating in these programs tomorrow, in their pursuit and sustainment of homeownership. I also ask that you continue dialogue with BFS and RPAD to address these concerns and produce a revised bill that sufficiently provides the relief we so urgently need.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Alison Beste, Ulana Ward Village Resident

Aloha Councilmembers,

My name is Kevin Liu and I am a resident at Ulana Ward Village. While I am in strong support of the spirit of Bill 40 and its intent to provide fair and equitable real property tax relief for myself and my neighbors, I have the following concerns with the current Committee Draft that I humbly request the Council work to address in future readings/hearings:

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I respectfully request your continued support for Bill 40 to help not only my neighbors and I at Ulana today, but all local families participating in these programs tomorrow, in their pursuit and sustainment of homeownership. I also ask that you continue dialogue with BFS and RPAD to address these concerns and produce a revised bill that sufficiently provides the relief we so urgently need.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Kevin Liu, Ulana Ward Village Resident