

BILL018(26)

Testimony

MISC. COMM. 426

*HOUSING, HOMELESSNESS & PARKS (HHP)

***HOUSING, HOMELESSNESS & PARKS (HHP) Meeting**

Meeting Date: Oct 20, 2026 @ 02:30 PM

Support: 9

Oppose: 2

I wish to comment: 4

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Spencer Lee	spencer@jlalamoana.com	96816
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
JL Capital	Support	Oct 15, 2026 @ 04:15 PM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Roxanne Bolden	systemsadvocacy@alohailhawaii.org	96782
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Aloha Independent Living Hawaii	I wish to comment	Oct 16, 2026 @ 09:38 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Geena Thielen	geena@ccs-hawaii.com	96734
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	Support	Oct 16, 2026 @ 10:13 AM

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Jonathan Huynh	jhweather123@yahoo.com	96792
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	I wish to comment	Oct 16, 2026 @ 10:39 PM

Testimony:

Aloha,

I am submitting these comments on Bill 18 (2026), CD2. While I support the expansion of the Bill 7 program to address our housing shortage, there are several conflicts in the draft that undermine the bill's intent and create accessibility risks.

First, the proposed change to off-street parking from "None" to "encouraged to provide" is problematic. In practice, this language functions as a soft mandate during permitting. It exposes developers to discretionary demands for parking, which adds significant construction costs. If the goal is to maximize affordable housing supply, the standard should remain a clean "None" to prevent those costs from consuming funding needed for units.

Second, Section 32-3.2 regarding elevators cites Section 1007.2.1 of the building code. This appears to be an error. Under the International Building Code, the accessible means of egress requirement for elevators is found in Section 1009.2.1.

Third, the bill sets bicycle parking to "None." This contradicts the bill's transit-oriented goals. If we are building dense housing near transit and removing car parking requirements, we must require the infrastructure that supports biking. Without a bicycle parking mandate, the "car-lite" lifestyle the bill seeks to encourage discourages biking as a viable option for residents.

Finally, the 5.0 FAR density bonus is restricted to the Primary Urban Center Development Plan area. This penalizes identical

projects in other high-demand areas near transit, such as Kapolei or Moanalua, where the City also claims it wants to direct growth. The density bonus should be available wherever transit-oriented development is occurring to ensure equitable opportunities island-wide.

I respectfully recommend these sections be amended to address these issues.

Mahalo,
Jonathan Huynh

Name: Brian Fujiwara	Email: brian808@hawaii.rr.com	Zip: 96817
Representing: BKF & Associates LLC	Position: Support	Submitted: Oct 17, 2026 @ 08:38 AM
Name: Martin Nguyen	Email: martin@centre-urban.com	Zip: 96815
Representing: Centre Urban Real Estate	Position: Support	Submitted: Oct 19, 2026 @ 10:29 AM
Name: Sherry Menor	Email: smenor@cochawaii.org	Zip: 96813
Representing: Chamber of Commerce Hawaii	Position: Support	Submitted: Oct 19, 2026 @ 11:01 AM
Name: Ted Kefalas	Email: tkefalas@grassrootinstitute.org	Zip: 96813
Representing: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii	Position: Support	Submitted: Oct 19, 2026 @ 11:51 AM
Name: Tania Choi	Email: tania852@gmail.com	Zip: 96817
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Oct 19, 2026 @ 01:04 PM

Testimony:
October 19, 2026
RE: Bill 18 (2026), CD1, Proposed CD2 – Relating to Affordable Housing

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Tania Choi. I work in commercial real estate finance at Central Pacific Bank; however, I am submitting this testimony solely in my individual capacity. The views expressed are my own. I have extensive experience in affordable housing finance, including evaluating the financial viability of proposed housing developments. I strongly support Bill 18 with the following amendments and the continued improvement of Honolulu's Chapter 32 Affordable Rental Housing Program.

Honolulu urgently needs more affordable rental housing, but allowing a project to be built is only part of the equation. A project must also be financially feasible and supported by a regulatory framework that gives developers, lenders, and investors enough certainty to commit long-term capital. Bill 18's proposed changes to density, height, lot size, and parking standards can help improve project economics.

Affordable housing developments do not move quickly. Developers often invest substantial time and money in site acquisition, design, engineering, permitting, and other predevelopment work years before construction begins. Lenders and investors must consider whether the rules supporting a project will remain stable throughout permitting, construction, and lease-up. A program with a short remaining life creates uncertainty and makes it more difficult to build a dependable financing and development pipeline. From that perspective, I respectfully recommend the following:

- 1. Extend the Chapter 32 sunset date to at least 2040. The existing June 1, 2030 repeal date does not provide enough time to establish a reliable pipeline, particularly given current permitting and construction timelines. A longer horizon would also give additional developers and financing partners greater confidence to invest the time and resources necessary to participate in the program.
- 2. Make the amendments effective upon approval, or as soon thereafter as practicable. Given Honolulu's immediate housing needs, the benefits of these reforms should be available without an 180-day delay. Each additional month of delay further reduces the program's usable life under the existing 2030 sunset. If an implementation period is necessary, it should be limited to the shortest period reasonably required.

Bill 18 is an important step toward making more affordable rental housing financially viable on Oahu. I respectfully urge the Committee to advance the measure while addressing these two issues. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully submitted,

Tania Choi
Affordable Housing Finance Professional

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Sam Kim	skim@hrcc-hawaii.com	96817
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:

Hawaii Regional Council of Carpenters	Oppose	Oct 19, 2026 @ 03:05 PM
Name: Tony Wong Cam	Email: tony@cardinal-pacific.com	Zip: 96813
Representing: Cardinal Pacific Residential	Position: Support	Submitted: Oct 19, 2026 @ 03:25 PM
Name: Nathaniel Kinney	Email: nkinney@prp-hawaii.com	Zip: 96814
Representing: Pacific Resource Partnership	Position: Oppose	Submitted: Oct 19, 2026 @ 04:46 PM
Name: Stefanie Sakamoto	Email: ssakamoto@imanaka-asato.com	Zip: 96789
Representing: BIA Hawaii	Position: Support	Submitted: Oct 20, 2026 @ 07:24 AM
Name: Dylan Armstrong	Email: dylan.p.armstrong@gmail.com	Zip: 96822
Representing: Self	Position: I wish to comment	Submitted: Oct 20, 2026 @ 10:08 AM
Testimony: Aloha Chair Tupola, Vice Chair Tulba, and Members of the Committee on Housing, Homelessness, and Parks I support the intent of Bill 18 (2026). Bill 7 has already been linked to multiple new housing developments; Bill 18 intends to improve Bill 7's performance as an affordable housing instigator. Over several years, I have provided the council substantive testimony in hearing and feedback in conversation and meeting on ways in which to improve the cityscape--for economic development, for walkability, for alleviated traffic congestion, and for the solubility of Skyline, which faces a dire shortfall in operating funds, which are exacerbated by construction delays. Much of this has had to do with street frontage and density. This measure allows for increased density. Density is a useful tool, but only when delivered in the right way. Without eliminating parking podium architecture in the Transit-Oriented Development districts, as well as on-site parking minimums and without driving down developer costs by instituting parking maximums for new projects, Skyline will never receive the ridership needed to survive. Existing drivers are unlikely to forfeit their cars. You can only do what Seattle did in the 2010s: shift all new users towards transit and alternative modes of transportation, keeping traffic congestion flat or		

near so. That is a proven possibility. Everything else hasn't happened in America in recent memory.

I was surprised to see the opposition of the Pacific Resources Partnership (PRP) and the Carpenter's Union (CU). Having gleaned from their testimony that there are concerns about professional standards for contracting staff on Bill 18. I strongly support labor and win-win policy, both. Zero sum policy is unlikely to succeed. So, if PRP and the CU object to the current bill, my question would be: could an amendment to the current draft resolve these concerns?

Would increasing the rate of union labor utilization on Bill 7 construction projects, Project Labor Agreement requirements, or other incentives possibility mitigation for the concerns?

Mahalo nui loa,
Dylan P. Armstrong, Urban Planner and Advocate
individual capacity.

Name:	Email:	Zip:
Charles Lee	success881@hawaiiantel.net	96822
Representing:	Position:	Submitted:
Self	I wish to comment	Oct 20, 2026 @ 10:22 AM

Testimony:
TESTIMONY ON BILL 18 (2026), CD2 — RELATING TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Aloha Chair Tupola and Councilmembers,

I support the need for affordable housing, especially for local working families, seniors, and residents struggling with the high cost of living. However, affordable housing must also be safe, genuinely affordable, responsibly managed, and compatible with the communities in which it is built.

My concerns with Bill 18 include increased building heights and density, reduced parking requirements, neighborhood impacts, fire and life safety, and whether the affordability requirements truly serve those most in need. I urge the Council to require clear safety reviews, meaningful enforcement, transparent reporting, and measurable results.

Most importantly, I strongly oppose extending the sunset date beyond June 1, 2030. Chapter 32 was established as a temporary program. Before considering any further extension, the City must demonstrate through verified data what the program has accomplished and whether its exceptional development rules remain necessary.

Let us address Honolulu's housing shortage responsibly, with public safety, neighborhood protection, and accountability as essential requirements.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT
Bill 18 (2026), CD1, Proposed CD2 — Relating to Affordable Housing

To: Honolulu City Council – Housing, Homelessness & Parks; Chair, Vice Chair; and Members

From: Spencer Lee, Senior Vice President of Operations, JL Capital

Re: Bill 18 (2026), CD1, Proposed CD2 – ATUP6 – STRONG SUPPORT

Aloha Chair Tupola, Vice Chair Tulba, and Committee Members,

JL Capital strongly supports the Proposed CD2 of Bill 18 and respectfully urges its passage without amendment.

The CD2 gets three things right that determine whether affordable rental projects actually get built:

1. **Height of 75 feet or the underlying zoning height, whichever is greater, except for special districts (notwithstanding Punchbowl special district).** Above 75 feet, a building becomes a high-rise under the Building Code, and construction costs increase substantially. Seventy-five feet is the practical ceiling for feasible mid-rise affordable rentals, and it is the number the Department of Planning and Permitting itself recommended in its June 23, 2026 testimony. Outside the urban core, the 60-foot standard max is retained, respecting community concerns.
2. **FAR of 5.0 within the Primary Urban Center.** This ensures the added height translates into actual homes on the same lot. DPP also testified in favor of an FAR of 5.0 at the last committee hearing on 8/25/2026.
3. **Unit density based on lot square footage divided by 130, or 120 within 2,000 feet of a high-service bus stop.** This rewards building where transit already exists and residents need fewer cars.

These provisions are targeted where they belong: the urban core, where zoning already supports density.

The need is not in dispute. UHERO's 2026 Housing Factbook reports that 57.7% of O'ahu renters are rent-burdened, only 278 multi-family developments were permitted island-wide in the past five years, and the Chapter 32 program has produced just 189 completed units against a goal of 500 per year, because unfeasible projects don't get built. The CD2 fixes that.

We urge the Council to pass Bill 18, CD2. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Spencer Lee

Senior Vice President of Operations, JL Capital



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We work together with the community and consumers to improve the quality of life through individual choices and access to services.

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Testimony of Aloha Independent Living Hawai'i

Bill 18 (2026), CD1 — Relating to Affordable Housing

Committee on Housing, Homelessness & Parks

Tuesday, October 20, 2026, 2:30 p.m. — City and County of Honolulu

Position: Comments

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Bill 18 (2026), CD1.

Aloha Independent Living Hawai'i (AILH) is a federally designated Center for Independent Living serving people with disabilities statewide, across all disabilities and ages. We support the production of affordable rental housing on O'ahu. We submit these comments so that the housing this program produces is housing disabled residents can enter, live in, and leave safely.

AILH submitted comments on September 22, 2026. Since then, Chair Tupola has submitted a new Proposed CD2 dated October 14, 2026 (OCS2026-0643). Two drafts are now before the Committee: the CD2 approved on August 25, 2026 (OCS2026-0533), and the October 14 Proposed CD2. These comments address both and identify where the October 14 draft differs.

One Improvement

We note one improvement in the October 14 draft. The means of egress, exterior glass, and fire and smoke alarm standards in Section 32-3.2 are no longer limited to buildings of 60 feet or less. We thank the Committee for that change.

Fire Exit Stairwell Width

The October 14 draft keeps the minimum fire exit stairwell width at 36 inches rather than the 44 inches previously proposed, and applies that



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standard to projects up to 75 feet in height. We respectfully urge the Committee to require 44 inches.

A 36-inch stairwell is the entire egress path. Assisted evacuation of a resident who cannot use stairs unaided occupies that path completely, whether by evacuation chair or by carry. Other occupants cannot pass. The Department of Planning and Permitting raised a related concern in Department Communication 556 (2026), advising that a larger, taller building with more occupants may take longer to escape.

The October 14 draft sets the maximum lot area at 30,000 square feet. Outside the listed special districts, it permits a height of 75 feet or the height of the underlying zoning district, whichever is greater. There is no numeric ceiling. Egress width should not narrow as buildings grow taller.

Elevators and the Building Code Citation

Section 32-3.2 provides that elevators are not required unless mandated by Section 1007.2.1 of the building code. The August 25 draft and the October 14 draft both carry that provision forward word for word.

That citation no longer locates the requirement it was written to reference. Under ROH Section 16-1.1, the City has adopted the Hawai'i State Building Code, which adopts with modifications the International Building Code, 2018 Edition. In that code, the accessible means of egress elevator requirement is Section 1009.2.1. Section 1007 governs exit and exit access doorway configuration and does not address elevators.

We respectfully recommend that the Committee correct the citation before this bill advances. We further request that the Committee ask the Department of Planning and Permitting to state on the record how Section 1009.2.1 applies to an affordable rental housing project at the 75-foot height limit. The answer determines whether these buildings will have elevators, and it is not yet in the record before this Committee.



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Fair Housing Act Coverage

Section 32-3.2 requires that the design of the building and facilities comply with the federal Fair Housing Act.

Under 42 U.S.C. Section 3604(f)(7), a building of four or more units with one or more elevators is covered in full, and every dwelling unit must meet the Act's design and construction requirements. A building without an elevator is covered only on the ground floor. The elevator decision therefore determines how much of each building federal accessibility law reaches. At the building envelope these drafts permit, that is the difference between one accessible floor and an accessible building.

The Act sets a floor, not a ceiling. Under 42 U.S.C. Section 3604(f)(8), nothing in the Act limits a State or local law that requires greater access than federal law requires. The Council has express authority to require an elevator in these projects and can resolve this question without waiting for an interpretation of the building code.

Reserved Accessible Parking

The development standards table sets off-street parking at "None." The October 14 draft provides only that projects are encouraged to provide off-street parking to the extent reasonably feasible.

Requirements for accessible stalls are calculated as a proportion of the parking a project provides. Where no parking is required, no accessible stall is required. Neither draft requires a reserved accessible space.

We do not ask the Committee to impose general parking minimums. We ask that one reserved accessible parking space, and an accessible route from that space to the building entrance, be required in any project that provides off-street parking or a passenger loading area.

Efficiency Dwelling Units



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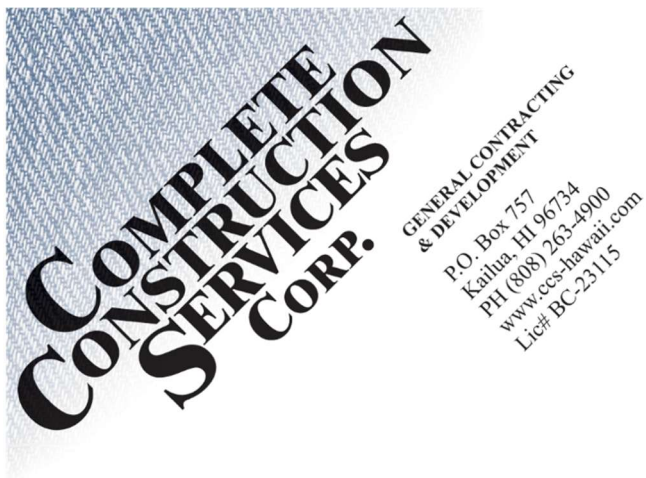
The October 14 draft creates an efficiency dwelling unit with a minimum of 170 square feet of habitable space, notwithstanding any provision of Chapter 16A or 18. We ask the Committee to confirm that a 170-square-foot unit can meet the maneuvering clearances required for Fair Housing Act Type B units under ANSI A117.1.

AILH supports this program. O‘ahu needs these units. We ask that the Committee build them so that disabled residents are not excluded from them by design.

Mahalo for your consideration.

Roxanne Bolden

Executive Director



October 20, 2026

Honolulu City Council, Committee on Housing, Homelessness and Parks

Re: Bill 18 Relating to Affordable Housing

Dear Chair Tupola, Vice Chair Tulba and Members of the Committee,

I am testifying in **STRONG SUPPORT** ON Bill 18 Relating to Affordable Housing. My comments specifically address the proposed CD2-ATUP6 version of the Bill.

Our team has been the most prolific of all the Bill 7 Developers with 5 successfully completed projects that have CO's and are currently housing Oahu residents in over 200 units. We have an additional 4 buildings under construction with another 145 units of affordable housing that will be ready for occupancy from late 2026 to early 2027. I believe I speak with a strong voice of experience when I offer my support for Bill 18.

To be clear, this is by no means a perfect Bill from the Developers' perspective. It requires us to give up height increases outside of the Primary Urban Core, it requires us to give up exemptions from building codes offered under the original Bill 7 and it imposes new requirements such as the 24-hour building management oversight. While I would love to gain the advantages Bill 18 offers without these losses, I fully understand and accept them as a necessity to move forward with the important structural changes contained in this Bill.

Throughout the Bill 18 evolution I have counseled caution on the risk of possibly harming rather than helping the City's affordable housing goals. I believe that caution has paid off in this latest draft that strikes an appropriate balance between the needs of Developers and community stakeholders. I believe this Bill allows the original Bill 7 concept to expand and do so in a way that is in keeping with the City's goals for housing and community planning. For these reasons, I respectfully request this committee vote in support of this bill at this time.

Sincerely,
Geena Thielen
President/RME

TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF BILL 18 (2026), CD2 RELATING TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Dear Chair, Vice Chair and Voting Members of the Honolulu City Council Committee on Housing, Homelessness & Parks:

I am submitting this testimony in **strong support of Bill 18 (2026), CD2**, and I respectfully urge the Council to pass this measure.

As an architect that have worked directly on several affordable housing projects in Honolulu, including projects at **1568 Pensacola Street and 765 Amana Street**. That experience has given me a firsthand understanding of what it takes to move an affordable housing project from an idea on paper to completed homes for Hawai'i residents.

The reality is simple: **we cannot solve Honolulu's affordable housing shortage if we make it unnecessarily difficult or expensive to build affordable housing.**

Every additional regulatory constraint, every unnecessary delay, and every requirement that reduces the efficiency of a project can affect the number of homes that can ultimately be delivered. These impacts are particularly significant for affordable housing, where project financing is already highly constrained and development costs must be carefully managed.

I see these challenges firsthand. Site constraints, building requirements, parking, density, infrastructure, construction costs, financing, and the approval process are not separate issues. They are interconnected. Changes in one area can determine whether a project can provide additional units, remain financially feasible, or proceed at all.

That is why legislation such as Bill 18 is important.

We need to focus our regulations on achieving the outcome Honolulu urgently needs: more affordable homes that can actually be built.

Affordable housing policy should encourage responsible development and good design, but it should also recognize the economic and practical realities of construction. A project that is technically permissible but financially infeasible does not house anyone. A project that takes so long to approve that financing no longer works does not house anyone. And a project constrained to the point where significantly fewer units can be delivered does not meet the magnitude of the need we face.

My experience has taught me that **well-designed affordable housing and efficient regulations are not opposing goals**. We can achieve both. In fact, a practical regulatory framework gives architects and project teams greater ability to design housing that is functional, attractive, durable, and appropriate for its community while making efficient use of limited land and resources.

Honolulu's housing challenges require action that recognizes what happens at the project level. We need policies that help qualified teams deliver housing rather than policies that inadvertently add cost, delay, or uncertainty to projects that are intended to serve residents who need affordable homes.

Bill 18 (2026), CD2 is an important step in that direction. I believe the Council should take this opportunity to support a framework that facilitates the production of affordable housing and helps turn housing proposals into completed projects.

I strongly urge the Council to pass Bill 18 (2026), CD2.

As an architect who has participated in the actual delivery of affordable housing in Honolulu, I respectfully ask you to consider the practical consequences of this legislation and the difference it can make in our ability to produce the housing our community needs.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued efforts to address Honolulu's affordable housing crisis.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Fujiwara, AIA
BKF & Associates LLC

October 19, 2026

The Honorable Andria Tupola
Committee on Housing, Homelessness & Parks
Honolulu City Council
530 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: IN SUPPORT WITH COMMENTS ON PROPOSED CD2 - ATUP6 TO BILL 18 (2026), CD1 - RELATING TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Aloha Chair Tupola, Vice Chair Tulba, and Committee Members,

I am submitting this testimony **IN SUPPORT** of the Proposed CD2 - ATUP6 to Bill 18 (2026), CD1, relating to affordable rental housing under ROH Chapter 32 - commonly known as “Bill 7” - with several targeted comments for the Committee’s consideration.

Our firm is currently working on two kama‘āina workforce housing projects being developed under ROH Chapter 32 that would result in the creation of at least 72 workforce housing units. We continue to pursue additional opportunities in areas with a high concentration of jobs and access to public transit, where we believe additional workforce housing is most needed.

The ATUP6 draft reflects substantial progress from the versions considered earlier this year and represents a thoughtful effort to balance housing production, neighborhood considerations, and the practical administration of Chapter 32. We particularly support the following provisions of ATUP6:

- Reintroducing Chapter 32 eligibility in business zoning districts within defined Transit-Oriented Development Areas;
- Recognizing adopted Neighborhood TOD Plans as part of the definition of a Transit-Oriented Development Area;
- Increasing FAR to 5.0 within the Primary Urban Center Development Plan area;
- Increasing allowable unit density and retaining the additional density benefit near high-service transit;
- Maintaining no mandatory off-street residential parking requirement;
- Improving loading, refuse, maneuvering, and corner-lot standards for constrained urban sites;
- Better distinguishing smaller Chapter 32 infill projects from larger structures for purposes of certain Building Code and life-safety standards; and
- Providing a clearer transition mechanism for projects already under DPP review when the new ordinance becomes effective.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

In addition to the revisions in the Proposed CD2 – ATUP6, we respectfully request that the Committee consider several targeted amendments.

1. MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHT

We respectfully request additional consideration of the proposed maximum building height provisions. Our preference remains the height framework contemplated in the prior MW3, which more directly aligned allowable height with existing underlying zoning and focused additional housing opportunities within the Primary Urban Center and transit-oriented areas.

If the prior MW3 language is not a feasible option at this time, we believe the cleanest policy is to avoid creating a separate Chapter 32 height ceiling where a Special District already establishes an appropriate maximum height. The City's Special District regulations are themselves the product of detailed planning processes intended to establish the appropriate built form for each neighborhood. Rather than layering a new 60-foot ceiling over those standards through a “whichever is less” provision, Chapter 32 should generally defer to the height already permitted by the applicable Special District.

This is particularly important in Waikīkī. Waikīkī has historically been among the most intensely developed residential neighborhoods in Hawai‘i and remains one of the State's densest urban communities. It is characterized by high-rise residential buildings, hotels, substantial employment density, extensive public transit, walkability, and existing urban infrastructure. Against that context, it does not make sound housing policy to impose a new 60-foot Chapter 32 ceiling on one of the densest neighborhoods in the State, particularly where the Waikīkī Special District itself may already permit substantially greater height on a particular site.

Under ATUP6 as written, a Chapter 32 project outside a Special District may utilize 75’ or the underlying zoning height, whichever is greater, while a project within Waikīkī would be limited to 60’ or the otherwise permitted height, whichever is less. This could result in the City's densest and most transit-rich neighborhood receiving more restrictive affordable housing treatment than substantially less urban areas. We do not believe that is the intended policy outcome.

Accordingly, we respectfully recommend removing the “whichever is less” limitation and allowing the applicable Special District standards to govern:

Maximum building height – *For zoning lots located within a special district established in §§ 21-9.30 through 21-9.90-6, the maximum height is 60 feet or the maximum height permitted by the underlying zoning district, whichever is less; provided that for zoning lots within the Punchbowl special district, the maximum height is 60 feet or the maximum height permitted by the underlying zoning district, whichever is greater.*

This approach creates cleaner and more consistent land-use policy. Chapter 32 would continue to establish the affordable housing pathway, while the City's existing Special District regulations would determine the appropriate neighborhood-specific building height. It would also avoid creating an artificial conflict between Chapter 32 and Special District standards that have already been adopted. If a Special District permits greater height, there is little policy justification for Chapter 32 - a program specifically intended to facilitate affordable rental housing - to impose a separate and lower ceiling.

2. MAXIMUM LOT AREA

We also respectfully request that the Committee reconsider the proposed 30,000-square-foot maximum lot area. Earlier drafts of Bill 18 proposed increasing the existing 20,000-square-foot limitation to 40,000 square feet. We believe the 40,000-square-foot threshold remains the preferable policy and respectfully request that it be restored. If 40,000 square feet is not acceptable to the Committee, we recommend a compromise maximum lot area of at least 35,000 square feet.

A 35,000- or 40,000-square-foot threshold would allow the program to accommodate somewhat larger or irregularly configured urban sites and assemblages without fundamentally changing Chapter 32's role as a small- and mid-sized infill housing program. Keeping the threshold at 30,000 square feet may unnecessarily exclude otherwise appropriate housing sites based on lot area alone, even where the resulting building must comply with all of the other limitations established by the ordinance.

CONCLUSION

Chapter 32 has demonstrated that targeted regulatory flexibility can help create workforce rental housing in Honolulu without requiring the level of public subsidy generally associated with more deeply affordable housing projects. Bill 18 provides an important opportunity to take the lessons learned from the first generation of Chapter 32 projects and create a stronger, more predictable framework for future housing production.

ATUP6 represents substantial progress toward that goal. We particularly appreciate the renewed emphasis on transit-oriented development, greater unit density, improved site-planning standards, and a more thoughtful relationship between Chapter 32 and the City's Building Code requirements.

We respectfully urge the Committee to advance Proposed CD2 - ATUP6, while considering the following targeted amendments:

1. **Allow the applicable Special District height standards to govern without imposing an additional 60-foot Chapter 32 ceiling through the “whichever is less” language; and**
2. **Increase the maximum lot area from 30,000 square feet to 40,000 square feet, or at least 35,000 square feet as a compromise.**

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony and for the continued collaboration among the City Council, DHLM, DPP, and housing stakeholders in improving this important workforce housing program. If there are any questions or concerns, please reach me at martin@centre-urban.com to discuss.

Sincerely,



Martin M. Q. Nguyen, MRED
Managing Principal

Centre Urban Real Estate Hawaii, LLC



October 19, 2026

Testimony to Honolulu City Council Housing, Homelessness & Parks Committee (BUD)

Hearing: Tuesday, October 20, 2026, 2:30 p.m., Committee on Housing, Homelessness & Parks (HHP),
City Council Chamber (Agenda 745, Item 5)

RE: Bill 18 (2026), CD1, Relating to Affordable Housing (amendments to ROH Chapter 32, the "Bill 7" affordable rental housing program) (SUPPORT)

Aloha Chair Tupola, Vice Chair Tulba, and Committee Members:

Chamber of Commerce Hawaii **supports** Bill 18 (2026), CD1, and asks the Committee to advance it this session.

Chapter 32 has become one of the City's most productive tools for building rental housing that working families can afford. Bill 18 keeps that tool workable by updating its development standards so more sites pencil out.

What we support in the Proposed CD2

1. **Housing in business districts near transit.** The Proposed CD2 restores affordable rental housing as a permitted use in the business zoning districts within the transit-oriented development area. Putting workforce housing near jobs and Skyline stations shortens commutes and helps employers recruit and keep staff. We encourage the Committee to consider extending this beyond the TOD area over time.
2. **Height and density that make projects feasible.** Allowing 75 feet (or the underlying zoning height, whichever is greater) outside special districts, and raising the floor area ratio from 4.0 to 5.0 in the Primary Urban Center, gives builders the scale they need to spread land and construction costs across more units.
3. **Parking flexibility.** Encouraging, rather than mandating, off-street parking based on site conditions and transit access avoids adding expensive stalls that drive up rents.
4. **Practical building standards.** Keeping the current 36-inch fire stair width for qualifying buildings avoids a cost increase without changing the program's safety framework.



5. **Protection for projects already in the pipeline.** The 180-day effective date, the protection of permits already issued, and the option for applicants under review to elect the new rules give builders and lenders the certainty they need.

We note that the Proposed CD2 sets the maximum lot area at 30,000 square feet, down from the 40,000 square feet in CD1. We would welcome the larger figure, because bigger lots allow more units per project.

Alignment with the 2030 Blueprint for Hawaii

The **2030 Blueprint for Hawaii**¹ is a data-driven economic action plan to strengthen Hawaii's competitiveness, create jobs, and support local businesses.

High housing costs are a top constraint for local employers. Bill 18 advances the Blueprint's housing, workforce retention, and competitiveness goals by making more Chapter 32 rental projects feasible near jobs and transit, so workers can afford to live and stay in Hawai'i.

We respectfully urge the Committee on Housing, Homelessness & Parks to pass Bill 18 (2026), CD1, in the form of the Proposed CD2, at its October 20 meeting.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

¹ <https://www.cochawaii.org/2030-blueprint/>

Oct. 20, 2026, 2:30 p.m.

Honolulu Hale

To: Honolulu City Council Committee on Housing, Homelessness and Parks

Andria Tupola, Chair

Augie Tulba, Vice Chair

From: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

Ted Kefalas, Director of Strategic Campaigns

RE: Bill 18 (2026), CD1 — RELATING TO AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING

Aloha Chair Tupola, Vice Chair Tulba and other members of the Committee,

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii **supports** [Bill 18 \(2026\), CD1](#), which proposes changes to the Bill 7 affordable housing program.

Specifically, the draft of the bill approved by the Committee on Aug. 26 would increase the 20,000-square-foot maximum lot area to 40,000 square feet; repeal maximum square footage rules for different unit configurations; allow projects built in the Primary Urban Center Development Plan area to have a floor-area ratio of up to 5.0; and change the calculation for the maximum number of units that can be built in a Bill 7 project, with even more units allowed in projects near high-service bus stops.

Regarding height limits, the current draft would clarify that Bill 7 projects can be built to the height allowed by the underlying zoning district or 75 feet, whichever is taller. For projects in a special district, heights would be limited to 60 feet or the height of the underlying zoning district, whichever is less.

Currently, Honolulu's Bill 7 program offers homebuilders relaxed zoning rules, property tax breaks, fee waivers and other financial incentives in exchange for building multiple housing units, at least 80% of which are required to be rented for at least 15 years at rents that would be affordable to residents making 100% or less of the area median income.¹

¹ [§ 32-1.1 Definitions.](#), Revised Ordinances of Honolulu, accessed Oct. 31, 2025.

The Bill 7 program has been an important tool for city homebuilders interested in producing affordable housing, and the expansions proposed in Bill 18 (2026) would add much-needed flexibility. After all, a 2024 update to the Hawaii housing planning study estimated that Honolulu needs 27,710 new units built between 2023 and 2027 to keep up with demand.²

Bill 18 (2026) also aligns with the city's 2025-2028 Strategic Housing Plan, which sets a goal to "Identify opportunities for maximizing urban land use through adjustments to density standards in the Land Use Ordinance," and states that "Enhancing predictability for developers is also critical, with a focus on methods to streamline and standardize processes."³

Likewise, this bill supports the housing goals laid out in the city's Primary Urban Center Development Plan.

Policy H-1.3 in that plan aims to "Encourage a greater variety of housing types, including low or middle-density multifamily housing, ADUs and ohana units, mid-rise apartment buildings and shared housing models," and policy H-2.1 aims to "Expand the supply of income-restricted affordable housing through requirements, incentives and public-private partnerships."⁴

Furthermore, the bill would advance policy H-1.1 of the Primary Urban Center Development Plan, which is to "Enable and incentivize residential infill development in transit-accessible planned growth areas."⁵

Finally, it would address a weakness of the Bill 7 program identified by the University of Hawai'i Economic Research Organization: its lack of transit-oriented or rail-corridor-specific development standards.⁶

Grassroot also makes the following comments on Chair Tupola's proposed CD2 amendment and requests additional language.

First, Grassroot believes the height limit currently in the bill must be changed to recognize that some special districts throughout the island allow for buildings taller than 60 feet.

Chair Tupola's proposed CD2 would specify that buildings are allowed to be 60 feet or the height limit allowed by the special district, whichever is less. Buildings in the Punchbowl Special District, however, could be 60 feet or the height limit of the district, whichever is greater. For parcels in the transit-oriented development district and all normal zoning districts in which Bill 7 projects are permitted, the height limit would be 75 feet or the height limit of the district, whichever is greater.

² ["Hawaii Housing Planning Study 2024,"](#) prepared by SMS Research and Marketing Services, Inc., FSR Consulting LLC and Ward Research, Inc. for the Hawai'i Housing Finance and Development Corporation, Table 39A, p. 124.

³ ["Strategic Housing Plan 2025-2028,"](#) Prepared by the Mayor's Office of Housing with CommunityScale, January 2025, p. 70.

⁴ ["Primary Urban Development Center Development Plan,"](#) Honolulu Department of Planning and Permitting, April 2025, p. 158.

⁵ Ibid, p. 158.

⁶ Trey Gordner, Edith Prager and Rafael Ceilio Munoz, ["Draft report: Assessing Honolulu's 'Bill 7' Infill/Workforce Housing Program,"](#) University of Hawai'i Economic Research Organization, p. 16.

Grassroot appreciates the 75-foot height limit for most zoning lots but recommends the language underlined below be added to the proposed special district rules:

For zoning lots located within a special district established in §§ 21-9.30 through 21-9.90-6, the maximum height is 60 feet or the maximum height permitted by the underlying zoning district, whichever is less; provided that for zoning lots within the Punchbowl special district, the Chinatown special district, the Hawaii Capital Special District, and the Waikiki Special District, the maximum height is 60 feet or the maximum height permitted by the underlying zoning district, whichever is greater.

This language would address the fact that these three special districts allow buildings taller than 60 feet by right. Forcing Bill 7 projects in these areas to comply with a lower height requirement would be a waste of potential density that Honolulu's housing market needs.

Second, Grassroot appreciates that section three of earlier drafts of the bill would be reinserted. The proposed wording would allow Bill 7 projects to be built in business zones within the transit-oriented development special district. Grassroot would prefer this rule be expanded to all business zones in the Primary Urban Center Development Area, but this language is an improvement over the current draft.

This amendment is critical to facilitating the construction of mixed-use, walkable areas for the eventual residents of these homes. Policy GD-1.1 of the Primary Urban Center Development Plan is to "Create mixed-use TOD neighborhoods with meaningful character and a sense of place." Its policy GD-2.1 is likewise to "Support mixed-use infill development and increased bus service along key underutilized commercial corridors."⁷

Third, Grassroot objects to the inclusion of off-street parking requirements for Bill 7 projects, as written in the current draft. Chair Tupola's proposed CD2 amendment, however, would modify the existing language by stating that homebuilders are "encouraged to provide off-street parking."

In general, Grassroot recommends extending the sunset date of the Bill 7 program beyond 2030. Because of delays in obtaining financing and permits, a four year window could doom many beneficial projects. Making this program permanent would be best, but extending the sunset date to 2040 would at least give homebuilders more certainty to plan for future projects.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Ted Kefalas
Director of Strategic Campaigns
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

⁷ ["Primary Urban Development Center Development Plan,"](#) Honolulu Department of Planning and Permitting, April 2025, p. 18.



HAWAII REGIONAL COUNCIL OF CARPENTERS

October 20, 2026

TO: The Honorable Andria Tupola, Chair
The Honorable Augie Tulba, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Housing, Homelessness & Parks

**RE: TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO BILL 18 (2026), CD1, PROPOSED CD2,
RELATING TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING, WITH FURTHER COMMENTS.**

Aloha Chair Tupola, Vice Chair Tulba, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawai'i Regional Council of Carpenters (HRCC), representing 6,000 union carpenters and tradespeople across the islands, submits this testimony in opposition to Bill 18 (2026), CD1, and the proposed CD2, with further comments. HRCC respectfully requests that the Committee amend the measure so that affordable rental housing projects using the expanded program are built under the City's Community Workforce Agreement (CWA), established under ROH Chapter 2, Article 42.

HRCC supports the underlying goals of Bill 18. The Bill 7/Chapter 32 program has helped bring new affordable rentals to local families and workers, and we want it to grow and improve in the areas that are working. Growth, however, only helps residents if projects move predictably from approval to construction to occupancy. The CWA is a proven tool for that last step.

The proposed CD2 changes the scale of the program. Chapter 32 was designed for small infill projects: apartment-zoned parcels of 20,000 square feet or less and buildings of 60 feet or less. The proposed CD2 would extend the program to larger lots, taller buildings, and additional zoning districts. Larger and taller buildings mean bigger crews, more trades on site at once, and longer construction schedules.

The program's main problem is delivery, not development standards. The City's March 2026 analysis of Chapter 32 found that the program's operational model is underperforming, with median permit processing times of 518 to 1,000 days against the 90-day deadline in ROH Section 32-1.5. When a project finally receives its permit, it cannot afford further delay in the field.

The CWA addresses construction-phase delay directly. Before work begins, the agreement settles workforce availability, registered apprenticeship utilization, prevailing wages, labor-management coordination, and dispute resolution. This reduces delays caused by labor shortages, workforce instability, payroll fraud, and contractor noncompliance. It also trains the next generation of local tradespeople through registered apprenticeship, many of whom are the same working families these rentals are meant to serve.

STATE HEADQUARTERS & BUSINESS OFFICES

OAHU: 1311 Houghtailing Street, Honolulu Hawaii 96817-2712 • Ph. (808) 847-5761 Fax (808) 440-9188
HILO OFFICE: 525 Kilauea Avenue, Room 205, Hilo, Hawaii 96720-3050 • Ph. (808) 935-8575 Fax (808) 935-8576
KONA OFFICE: 75-126 Lunapule Road, Kailua-Kona, Hawaii 96740-2106 • Ph. (808) 329-7355 Fax (808) 326-9376
MAUI OFFICE: 330 Hookahi Street, Wailuku, Maui 96793-1449 • Ph. (808) 242-6891 Fax (808) 242-5961
KAUAI OFFICE: Kuhio Medical Ctr Bldg., 3-3295 Kuhio Hwy, Suite 201, Lihue, Kauai 96766-1040 • Ph. (808) 245-8511 Fax (808) 245-8911

The City is already investing in these projects. Chapter 32 projects receive fee waivers, real property tax exemptions, relief from parking and zoning standards, and grant incentives. Where the City provides this level of public support, it has a clear interest in ensuring the projects are built on schedule, by a stable local workforce, under fair labor standards.

Without the suggested amendment below, HRCC will respectfully remain in strong opposition to this measure.

HRCC respectfully asks the Committee to add the following new section to ROH Chapter 32 in the CD2:

“§ 32-1. __ Community workforce agreement.

(a) Any affordable rental housing project under this chapter that (1) is located on a zoning lot exceeding 20,000 square feet; (2) exceeds 60 feet in height; or (3) is located in a zoning district in which affordable rental housing projects were not permitted under this chapter before the effective date of this ordinance, shall be constructed under the community workforce agreement established pursuant to ROH Chapter 2, Article 42.

(b) Before commencing construction, the applicant shall require each contractor and subcontractor performing construction work on the project to execute the agreement to be bound attached to the community workforce agreement.

(c) The department of planning and permitting shall not issue a building permit for a project subject to subsection (a) until the applicant submits written certification of compliance with subsection (b).

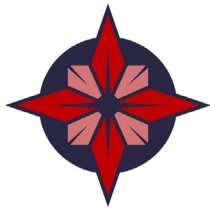
Because Article 42 currently governs City construction projects, HRCC also asks the Committee to make any conforming amendments to Article 42 needed to extend the agreement to projects covered by this section. HRCC is glad to work with the Committee, the Department of Housing and Land Management, and Corporation Counsel on the final language.”

HRCC respectfully asks the Committee to adopt this amendment in the CD2. With it, Bill 18 can expand the program while ensuring that the larger projects it enables reach occupancy on schedule.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

Sam Kim
Government Relations
Hawai‘i Regional Council of Carpenters



October 19th, 2026

The Honorable Andria Tupola
Committee on Housing, Homelessness & Parks
Honolulu City Council
530 South King Street Honolulu, HI 96813

**RE: IN SUPPORT WITH COMMENTS ON PROPOSED CD2 – ATUP7 TO BILL 18 (2026),
CD1 - RELATING TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Aloha Chair Tupola, Vice Chair Tulba, and Committee Members,

I am submitting this testimony **IN SUPPORT of the Proposed CD2 – ATUP7** to Bill 18 (2026), CD1, relating to affordable rental housing under ROH Chapter 32 - commonly known as “Bill 7” - with comments for the Committee’s consideration.

Cardinal Pacific Residential is the Property Management subsidiary of Centre Urban Real Estate. Our primary growth area has been focused on Lease-Up and Property Management of ROH Chapter 32 projects. We currently manage two Bill 7 projects, 36 units and 34 units respectively, along with our 72 workforce housing units in the Development Pipeline under Centre Urban Real Estate.

We wanted to take the opportunity to share some leasing data from our management of 2051 Young Street, a 36-Unit Bill 7 Workforce Housing Project and propose a few amendments to Bill 18.

We began actively marketing our lease up in May 2026 in anticipation of the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy in July 2026. We began welcoming residents in July of 2026 and are happy to announce that as of September 1, 2026 we will have 34 of 36 units occupied. During our lease-up period, **we received approximately 500 applications** and conducted hundreds of property tours.

Among the applicants who were disqualified, a significant number exceeded the 80% AMI household-income threshold. Many of these applicants were two-person households negatively impacted by the [2026 Income Limit of \\$98,560](#). To provide some supporting evidence, we have included two representative job postings attached below

- [Entry Level Class II teacher with a Bachelor of Arts in Education – OAHU \(DOE\)](#)
 - \$54,569 – 10 Month Schedule
- [Administrative Services Assistant – OAHU \(DLNR\)](#)
 - \$66,324 Annually

Together, that's **\$120,893**, versus the stated two-person 80% AMI threshold of **\$98,560**. This illustrates how two working local residents can be priced out of a workforce housing unit even though the restricted rent remains appropriate for their household.

Secondly, we wanted to provide a timeline provided by the family that re-developed 2051 Young Street. They shared their frustration with the permitting and approval process and some of the financial challenges they faced along the way.

- In 2020, the family decided to pursue a redevelopment of their family-held property and convert their commercial building into a 36-unit Bill 7 Project
- During the pre-development and construction phase, which ran from 2021 through 2026, the family paid approximately \$268,956 in commercial real property taxes before becoming eligible to apply for the RPT exemption under ROH Chapter 32. Although the owner attempted to have the property reclassified at the residential rate during redevelopment, that request was denied. This resulted in a significant unanticipated carrying cost. Based on this experience, the family has advised other local property owners against similar redevelopment projects because of the property-tax burden incurred during construction.

Lastly, it is our mission at Cardinal Pacific Residential to provide a living experience that is positive for all residents. In our experience, while some smaller multifamily projects may not warrant or be able to afford a resident manager the current legislation does not incentivize or reward property owners that would elect to include such an amenity.

Based on our experience leasing and managing a completed Chapter 32 project, we respectfully request that the Committee consider the following three targeted amendments.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS

In addition to the revisions in the Proposed CD2 – ATUP6, we respectfully request that the Committee consider several targeted amendments.

1. Increase the RPT household income limit to 100% AMI while retaining the 80% AMI rent limit. We recommend separating the household income qualification for the RPT exemption from the maximum rent restriction. Specifically, units should be eligible for the RPT exemption when restricted to households earning up to 100% AMI, while rents would remain restricted at no more than the applicable 80% AMI rent limit. This would preserve the economic affordability of the housing while addressing an unintended problem with the existing 80% AMI household-income ceiling. Dual-occupancy working households such as the example we provided earlier in our testimony can exceed the 80% AMI income threshold while providing an 80% AMI-restricted workforce housing options for individuals and families across all industries (trade, medical, government, hospitality, and financial services).

We believe this amendment would provide much needed housing for our kama'āina workforce while preserving the affordability of below market rents at 80% AMI.

2. Maintain residential property classification during qualifying construction.

We also recommend clarifying the RPT treatment of Chapter 32 properties while qualifying construction is underway. Where a property that will become an affordable rental housing project is otherwise classified as Residential A, Hotel and Resort, or Commercial, and the property qualifies for the affordable housing construction exemption under ROH § 8-10.34, the property should be classified as Residential for the duration of that construction exemption. This would prevent qualifying affordable housing projects from being subject to a higher real property tax classification during the very period in which owners are investing capital to create new housing.

3. Allow a designated resident manager unit without an income qualification.

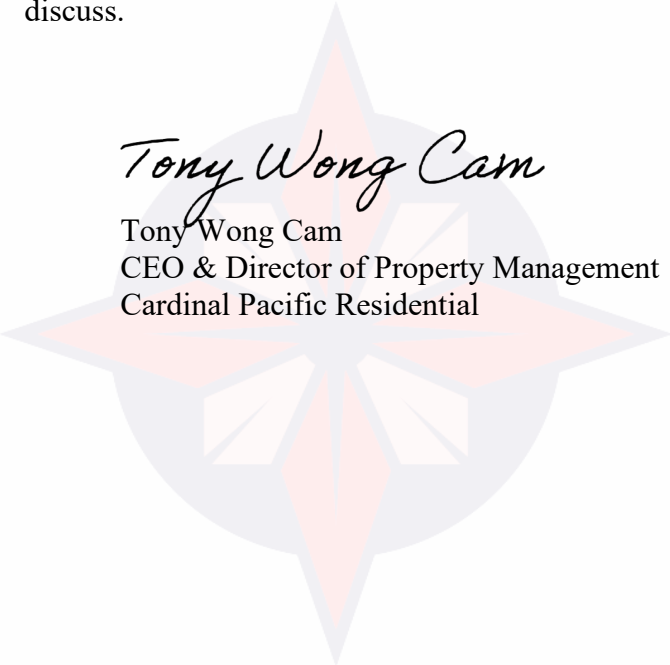
We support giving management flexibility for Chapter 32 projects and recommend expressly allowing an owner to have the option to designate one dwelling unit as a resident manager unit. For that particular unit, the income of the resident property manager or the manager's household should not be used to disqualify the unit from the Chapter 32 program or RPT exemption. While it may not be appropriate in all situations, the option to have resident manager provides an amenity to residents and neighbors alike by improving building oversight, maintenance, tenant communication, and emergency response. The ordinance should encourage - rather than inadvertently penalize - projects that provide on-site management. Nothing in this provision should require an on-site manager; it should simply create a workable mechanism when one is provided.

CONCLUSION

Chapter 32 has proven that relatively modest regulatory and financial changes can help make small- and mid-sized workforce rental housing possible without requiring the level of public subsidy typically associated with deeply affordable housing. Bill 18 is an opportunity to take what the City has learned from the first generation of Chapter 32 projects and build a stronger program for the next generation. The **Proposed CD2 – ATUP7** makes meaningful progress by increasing feasible density, directing additional housing toward transit and the urban core, improving financial incentives, incorporating appropriate life-safety standards, and providing long-term certainty through 2040. The additional RPT and operational amendments described above would complement those changes by resolving several practical issues that have become apparent through implementation of the program.

We respectfully urge the Committee to adopt the **Proposed CD2 – ATUP7**, with further amendments incorporating these targeted RPT and operational clean-up provisions, and report Bill 18 out for passage on third reading.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony and for the continued collaboration among the City Council, DHL, DPP, and the development community in improving this important workforce housing program. If there are any questions or concerns, please reach me at tony@cardinal-pacific.com to discuss.



Tony Wong Cam

Tony Wong Cam
CEO & Director of Property Management
Cardinal Pacific Residential

RE: Bill 18 (2026), CD1, Proposed CD2 (ATUP6) - Relating to Affordable Housing

Chair Tupola, Vice Chair Tulba, and Members of the Committee:

Pacific Resource Partnership (“PRP”) appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to Bill 18 (2026), CD1, including the proposed CD2 amendments relating to the City's affordable rental housing program under Chapter 32 of the Revised Ordinances of Honolulu.

PRP is a Hawai'i-based market recovery trust fund committed to building a better future for Hawai'i by supporting responsible economic development, quality job opportunities, environmental stewardship, and investments that improve the quality of life for Hawai'i's residents.

PRP recognizes O'ahu's urgent need for affordable housing and supports responsible development that expands housing opportunities, creates quality jobs, and strengthens the local economy. However, expanding development opportunities must also be accompanied by appropriate consideration of construction quality, accountability, and the long-term benefits provided to the community.

Bill 18 proposes substantial changes to the City's affordable rental housing program, commonly known as the Bill 7 program, established under Ordinance 19-8 in 2019. Originally designed to encourage smaller-scale affordable rental developments, the program would be expanded to accommodate larger lots, greater building heights, and increased residential density. Under the October 14 proposed CD2, the maximum allowable lot area would increase from 20,000 to 30,000 square feet, the existing maximum building-area restriction would be removed, and additional density would be permitted within the Primary Urban Center. The proposed amendments would also revise the formula for determining the maximum number of affordable rental units allowed on individual sites.

These changes represent a significant expansion of a program that already provides developers with regulatory flexibility and access to financial incentives, including eligibility for real property tax exemptions. While these benefits are intended to encourage affordable housing production, the additional development opportunities warrant greater consideration of whether sufficient safeguards and accountability measures accompany the program's expansion.

Although Bill 18 addresses numerous development and building standards, it does not establish additional program-specific requirements for contractor qualifications, construction labor compliance monitoring, or accountability for contractors and



subcontractors performing the work. Existing licensing and labor laws would continue to apply, but the proposed expansion is not accompanied by corresponding construction-phase oversight requirements tailored to the larger developments the program could accommodate.

Workforce development is another important consideration. The proposed amendments do not establish registered-apprenticeship participation requirements or other construction workforce training measures. Construction activity creates opportunities not only to expand housing but also to develop Hawai'i's skilled workforce and provide pathways to stable, well-paying careers. As the City considers expanding the Bill 7 program, those opportunities deserve greater consideration.

The program's performance also raises important questions. According to information presented to the Council in August 2026, only 189 rental units had been completed through six Bill 7 projects since the program's establishment, although additional projects remained in development. DPP has also identified substantial permitting challenges involving multiple review cycles and delays associated with applicants responding to review comments. While greater development flexibility may improve project feasibility, increasing allowable density and building size does not, by itself, resolve the challenges associated with delivering completed housing.

PRP believes responsible development should also create quality jobs, maintain appropriate accountability, and provide lasting benefits to Hawai'i's residents. These objectives are not mutually exclusive. The City can encourage affordable housing development while ensuring that construction practices, workforce opportunities, and public benefits receive appropriate consideration.

For these reasons, PRP opposes Bill 18 (2026), CD1, including the proposed CD2 amendments, and respectfully requests that the Committee not advance the measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Pacific Resource Partnership





**HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL
Committee on Housing, Homelessness, and Parks
HONOLULU HALE
2:30 PM**

October 20, 2026

Subject: Bill 18 - Relating to Affordable Housing

Chair Tupola, Vice Chair Tulba, and members of the Council::

My name is Roseann Freitas, CEO of the Building Industry Association of Hawaii (BIA-Hawaii). Chartered in 1955, the Building Industry Association of Hawaii is a professional trade organization affiliated with the National Association of Home Builders, representing the building industry and its associates. BIA-Hawaii takes a leadership role in unifying and promoting the interests of the industry to enhance the quality of life for the people of Hawaii. Our members build the communities we all call home.

BIA-Hawaii appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Bill 18 (2026), Proposed CD2-ATUP6, which proposes amendments to the City's affordable rental housing program.

We support efforts to increase the production of affordable housing on O'ahu and recognize the important role that the City's Bill 7 program plays in encouraging private-sector investment in affordable rental housing. As our communities continue to face significant housing challenges, it is essential that City policies provide meaningful incentives and flexibility to facilitate the development of additional housing units.

We appreciate the Council's continued efforts to refine Bill 18 and address concerns raised throughout the legislative process. The proposed CD2-ATUP6 version represents a constructive approach to updating the program while recognizing the need to balance housing production goals with appropriate development standards. A successful affordable housing program must provide clear, predictable, and practical requirements that allow projects to move forward in a financially feasible manner.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony on this matter.