

HLU Committee

From: Darren Diga <darrendiga@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 4, 2024 12:10 PM
To: HLU Committee
Subject: Written Testimony on Rent Stabilization

You don't often get email from darrendiga@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello,

My name is Darren Diga, and I have been a resident of Lahaina since 2013. I have experienced firsthand the struggles of finding affordable housing. I hope this testimony serves as evidence of my support for rent stabilization in Lahaina, as it is the only way to keep Lahaina land in the hands of Lahaina residents.

I have chosen to pursue higher education out of state, which has led me to secure a full-time job elsewhere. Even though I enjoy my current lifestyle outside Hawai'i, no other place gives me the same sense of home as Lahaina does. I wish to give my future children the same childhood I had in Hawai'i, but achieving that wish will be difficult if I cannot afford a home in Lahaina. Homes on Maui are being sold for millions, while the minimum wage in Hawai'i is currently \$14.00 an hour. In this economy, with the cost of living increasing every year, when can a regular person afford a home?

Asking for rent stabilization is challenging, but please consider the future of Lahaina and Maui. If rent continues to rise, residents will be forced to move away, and Maui's community will look very different from what it is now. We will go from knowing all our neighbors to not knowing them at all.

I am grateful for your attention to this important topic.

Sincerely,

Darren Diga

HLU Committee

From: Jon Doe <doehwn@aol.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 4, 2024 12:23 PM
To: HLU Committee
Subject: Rent stability

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Jessie Jaramillo

Lahaina maui 96761
9-4-24

Dear Maui County Housing and Land Use Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for rent stabilization measures in Lahaina, Maui. As a resident of Lahaina for 54 years, I have experienced outrageous rent costs. I believe that rent stabilization is essential to ensuring that all families have access to safe and affordable fair housing. Stable housing is not only a basic human right but also a critical determinant of mental health, economic success, and overall well-being.

I am here to support rent stabilization as a necessary step toward protecting our community, now who suppose to protect the natives? Do we protect ourselves? And when we do protect ourselves we get ignored, why all the greed? Tenants pay for landlords mortgages, treat tenants with out most respect. We, the people are just only trying to get by make a living not a killing. How can you Maui County Housing and Land Use Committee sit there and watch the children cry and people die. Maui county know what's up but chose to not hear or don't want to hear. A lot of testimonies are being submitted LahainaStrong is fighting for our rights because most of us not educated. LahainaStrong is STRONG.! Hey, by the way I still wearing donation clothes, need to travel light just in case end up on the beaches. Things not the same, way too much greed.!

Conclusion: stop over charging

Sincerely,
Jessie Jaramillo

HLU Committee

From: Momi Vee <momivee@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 4, 2024 12:36 PM
To: HLU Committee
Subject: Important Rent Stability

You don't often get email from momivee@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Aloha Maui County Housing & Land Use Committee,
Ms. Momi Ventura
Kahului, Hawai'i 96733
9/04/2024

Dear Maui County Housing and Land Use Committee,

I am writing to ask for stronger support of mandatory rent stabilization measures for Mau'i County residents. And as a resident of Hawai'i for over 61 years, I believe that rent stabilization is extremely beneficial to ensuring that all families have access to safe and affordable housing. Stability in the housing sector is not only a basic human right but also a critical component for economic success, and overall well-being of all who live on Mau'i.

I moved to Mau'i with my family in 1976 for my stepfather's employment with Intercontinental Mau'i Hotel in the newly developed area called Wailea. We moved all over Oahu and now on Mau'i, never staying in one house for over 4 years because of the ever increasing rents, changing jobs and schools. Changing schools isn't easy as a teenager and as one who loves flowers and plants, every plant had to be potted never planting anything in the ground.. To date I've personally moved over 28 times since being born into these islands and have been homeless a few times.. I'm a grandmother and am embarrassed that I didn't have secure home for my children and now my grandchildren have started the house to house moving their parents did. I don't know anyone else but people in Hawai'i who constantly move houses just to afford the rent.

I am here to Firmly Support Rent Stability for our ever growing community that includes; the work force, the lifetime residents of Mau'i and the next generations that will inevitably arrive. We love this island and will always call it home, if we were having trouble renting homes in 1976 imagine this is even Greater nowadays and in our children's children's lives.

I know that we've lost nurses and dentists from exorbitant housing rents and office rates have climbed beyond competitive rates to Crazy prices per square feet.

What will happen to our economy if we loose important people as these in the health sector.. Like Oahu is an island of waste and excess, unused buildings and houses stay empty for decades, while the homeless people number in the thousands and counting. Our children aren't safe being homeless and the school lunches are their only meal.

The economy in Hawai'i is broken and has both legs in the grave. We've lost our limbs to tourism and one-sided developments beyond our means. If Hawai'i doesn't care solely for its people and the environment we will lose our cornerstones of our country's economic future.

We need to make an effort to house the people who work. We need to gather our resources (people and businesses,) to help them make themselves responsible for building their own communities. Securing our communities with the resources and knowledge they need to thrive within their own family home first is critical. Then their community will grow stronger and we can make Our Hawai'i Nei Bountiful again.. Use what we already have - buildings and other things to create housing and land for food. Self sufficient communities are the goal and they are ready, to help themselves and others with living. ~~Once Support Rent Stabilization and we all will win in the end~~

HLU Committee

From: Wendy Pias <wendy.tagnawa@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, September 4, 2024 1:00 PM
To: HLU Committee
Subject: Written Testimony in support of Rent Stabilization
Attachments: TAGNAWA - Rent Stabilization Testimony.docx

You don't often get email from wendy.tagnawa@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To Whom It May Concern,

Please see the attached document for the written testimony in support of rent stabilization.

Best regards,
Wendy Pias
Tagnawa

September 4, 2024

Dear Maui County Housing and Land Use Committee,

We are writing to express our strong support for mandatory rent stabilization measures in Hawai'i. As residents of Hawai'i, we believe that rent stabilization is essential to ensuring that all families have access to safe and affordable housing. Stable housing is not only a basic human right but also a critical determinant of mental health, economic success, and overall well-being.

Tagnawa is a non-profit organization that provides support for the Filipino survivors of the Maui wildfires. Rent has increased significantly since the fires and has already driven out a number of residents in search of socioeconomic stability (i.e., employment) and affordable housing. Having lost everything, many of the survivors who have remained on island have been scattered throughout Maui — many of which are living with extended family, acquaintances, or strangers. For those who were able to utilize their insurance, these survivors are placed into a one-year housing contract where the absurd renting rate has been noted to reach \$30,000 per month for a family of six.

In our conversations with Filipino survivors, we noted a common concern regarding the uncertainty of their future housing conditions. Several Filipino fire survivors are immigrant families who work in the labor and hospitality industry and live within multigenerational households. Compounded by the growing issue of low wages, the struggle to support a household — with the loss of one's home (and possible employment) due to the fires, only further induces strain on the survivors' mental and physical well-being.

For the sake of our community's future, we urge you to support rent stabilization. By stabilizing rent, we can support our local community and encourage retention numbers. The fires have exacerbated socioeconomic issues not only within Maui County but throughout the state. Left unchecked, these issues can metastasize to affect other aspects of living in Hawai'i — including the overall conditions of living. These fires have further highlighted the urgency of addressing and resolving the issue of affordable housing, low wages, and loss of our population — and by extension, our culture. Supporting rent stabilization is just one way to help our community, but it is a place from which we can start to make a better change. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Tagnawa

HLU Committee

From: Jill Bauss <Jill@mauiids.org>
Sent: Wednesday, September 4, 2024 1:18 PM
To: HLU Committee
Subject: Testimony in support of rent stabilization for Maui County, 36 year Maui resident

You don't often get email from jill@mauiids.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

Aloha,

I am writing in support of stabilizing rents for the County of Maui. As a 36-year resident of Maui and specifically Haiku, rent stabilization is a necessity. A former homeowner now renting, I house share with other working professionals. 34 years ago, a room rental was \$400., in 2024, room rentals are upwards of \$1400. Those on a budget can simply not afford paying \$2,000.+ for a monthly one bedroom rental. Add in transportation fees, food prices, and utilities, most cannot afford these fees and remain stably housed.

The working/struggling individuals and families of Maui need access to safe, affordable and stable housing. Housing is healthcare and a critical determinant of mental health, economic success and overall well-being. Those housed have access to food preparation, utilities and safety. Access to medical care is also greatly impacted by being housed.

For Maui's future and its citizens, we support rent stabilization. Maui has always had a dichotomy within its infrastructure. Those working and struggling to live on Maui are often those employed in Maui's tourism industry. In addition to rent, Maui's infrastructure also needs attention. Road maintenance, utilities, etc. are all impacted by the health and stability of its entirety.

Mahalo for your consideration,

Jill Bauss

Jill S. Bauss, MSW
Director of Client Services
Maui A.I.D.S. Foundation
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Website: <https://www.mauiids.org>

WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF RENT STABILIZATION

Janelle Miller
2635 Lioholo Place
Kihei, HI 96753

September 4, 2024

Dear Maui County Housing and Land Use Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for rent stabilization measures in Hawaii. As A Maui Resident of this community, and currently a Renter, I believe that rent stabilization is essential to ensuring that all families have access to safe and affordable housing. Stable housing is not only a basic human right but also a critical determinant of mental health, economic success and overall well-being.

I have been a resident on Maui since 1994 and have witnessed first-hand the challenges of finding affordable housing. For myself, and for my family members, my co-workers, my friends and social networks and, essentially my full community. I am here to support rent stabilization as a necessary step toward protecting our community.

In all the years that I have lived in Hawaii (and specifically on Maui), I have rented (1994-2001 and 2004-current), minus 3.5 years (2003- 2007) of investing into a townhouse condo in Kihei. Which I loved owning, but after my divorce I could not keep financing it on my own paycheck/ resources. This broke my heart, to no longer have residential "freedom and empowerment" or even an asset. I began to rent again in 2007-as a single mom through today. In 2022, my daughter moved out of state for college and I was now in charge of my rent plus her portion of shared rent. She has since moved back to Hawaii, to finish her studies – On Oahu, in another rental situation; this time even more expensive.

In 2009 we were forced to move, as the rental we were in, was in control with an out of state owner, and they had overinvested in real estate properties (they themselves were real estate agents that dipped into the availability and stockpile that was deeply entrenched in Maui at the time)..... and the crash of the economy in 2008- sent the bank to have them foreclose. This left us in a paralyzing and stressful situation to find, in and over saturated market to find another AFFORDABLE and AVAILABLE rental on Maui.

In 2021- we were forced to find another new rental, after a strong and stable 12 year residing. On Maui, and probably other islands- the COVID pandemic seemed to create this new market for new, out of state owners; who could now telework or made a lot of money through the pandemic's situation...and completely slighted our rental/owner market. The shuffle again was on! Our owner felt pressure to sell, (self disclosed) - knowing that some expensive aging/ overdue maintenance- and when many people were offering sight – unseen cash deals...it seemed too good an offer that they took it (they DID regret it tho, as they had 11 renters between the 2 building property. Who now had to find new rental situations. One was on disability and we were a single mom and daughter (us) and a family of four that lived there stably since before the kids were born (19 years prior). And, please note This was the month prior to the Maui Rental Moratorium was going to be suspended(May 2021)....and that meant 100s- 1000s of renters were going to be looking for a change as well; as they were likely to be evicted due to their pay losses from the pandemic! That owner kindly did not overcharge on the rent on all the years we resided

there, but to come into the rental market again - with so many others, and at such an increased rate and massively volatile situation was not only stressful, it was frightening. It could end in not being able to remain a State of Hawaii resident, and contributor.

I had just helped the community through COVID, (working for DOH) and had worked super hard for my community, that has come to be, time and time again, increasingly hard to live in: The housing situation has been so tough to: 1) remain on the island and 2) live close to your work.

Rental cap and protections need to exist- in order TO KEEP THE WORKING FOLKS, FAMILIES, and upcoming GENERATIONS in this state! My daughter is planning on finishing her degree, (teaching) IN STATE, and wants to remain IN STATE. And CONTRIBUTE to and raise a family here in Hawaii.... but how can ?? with the rising cost of living, inflation, housing market all askew and increasingly out of reach for local families and individuals. She was born here, Her whole family is here, and she wants to pridefully remain here. Is there even going to be the opportunity for her?? And many others that want to stay in the communities they were raised in? want to contribute back to??

Rent stabilization, would help maintain economic diversity, stabilization of cost of living; allowing working class to afford and live in our communities that they are dedicated on serving; teachers, first responders, service workers, etc.... While some argue that rent control could discourage new construction, evidence shows that well-designed policies can protect tenants without stifling development.

For the sake of our community's future (including vision, stability and provision) and for the individuals and families to live in the communities they choose to and give back to, I urge you to support rental stabilization.

Thank you for your sincere considerations and your attention to this critical and personal issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Janelle". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right from the end of the name.

Janelle Miller

HLU Committee

From: Miller, Janelle C. <Janelle.Miller@doh.hawaii.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, September 4, 2024 3:41 PM
To: HLU Committee
Subject: Testimony - Letter to Support Rent Stabilization
Attachments: Rent stabilization support letter signed version 09042024.pdf

You don't often get email from janelle.miller@doh.hawaii.gov. [Learn why this is important](#)

Please accept this letter in testimony for my support for Rent Stabilization.

Mahalo

JANELLE MILLER, Epidemiological Specialist III | *(she/her)*
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Hawai'i State Department of Health | Ka 'Oihana Olakino
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