

BFED Committee

From: County Clerk
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2026 8:26 AM
To: BFED Committee
Subject: FW: Cesar Gaxiola Testimony Bill 116
Attachments: Cesar Gaxiola-JWCC Testimony Bill 116 FEB 10 2026.pdf

From: Cesar Gaxiola <cesar@jwcameroncenter.org>
Sent: Tuesday, February 10, 2026 8:22 AM
To: County Clerk <County.Clerk@mauicounty.us>
Subject: Cesar Gaxiola Testimony Bill 116

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

Good morning Maui County Clerk,

Please see my attached testimony for this morning's Maui County Council on bill 116.

I am bringing physical copies too.

Mahalo,

Cesar Gaxiola
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Testimony On Bill 116

February 10, 2026

Aloha Chair and Councilmembers,

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on Bill 116. My name is Cesar Gaxiola, Executive Director of the J. Walter Cameron Center, and we also manage Nā Hale Kupuna, which gives us a direct, daily understanding of what our seniors are experiencing throughout this long recovery.

Bill 116 is incredibly important for our kupuna who remain displaced after the Lahaina wildfires. As discussed in committee, many kupuna have been waiting far too long for stable housing, and some have sadly passed before being able to return home. This truly highlights how urgent this work is.

I want to emphasize a major gap we see every day: Even after kupuna complete all qualifications, meeting Maui County and CDBG requirements, they must still give 30 days' notice to their landlord, private or FEMA. But the County's approval process can take more than 60 days, leaving a dangerous gap where kupuna are stuck in limbo with no confirmed housing. This creates financial strain, emotional stress, and deep uncertainty, even for those who have done everything right.

I truly want to acknowledge and thank the CDBG staff. They have been incredibly responsible, and responsive in handling our inquiries. Their dedication and professionalism give us confidence that improvements like those in Bill 116 can be implemented smoothly and effectively.

I appreciate that Bill 116 aims to streamline future lease approvals, because closing this gap is exactly what will reduce bottlenecks and prevent our kupuna from losing critical time.

At Nā Hale Kupuna and at the Cameron Center, we see how housing instability affects health, safety, and access to essential services. Anything that accelerates stable, culturally grounded housing for kupuna strengthens our entire community.

I respectfully urge the Council to move Bill 116 forward promptly once revisions are complete. With clarity, collaboration, and urgency, we can bring our kupuna back home, back to dignity, stability, and peace.

Mahalo for your leadership and your continued commitment to Maui's recovery.

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