

Housing and Land Use Committee (2025-2027) on 2025-06-24 5:00 PM - Reconvened from 6/9/2025, 6/18/2025, & 6/23/2025

Meeting Time: 06-24-25 17:00

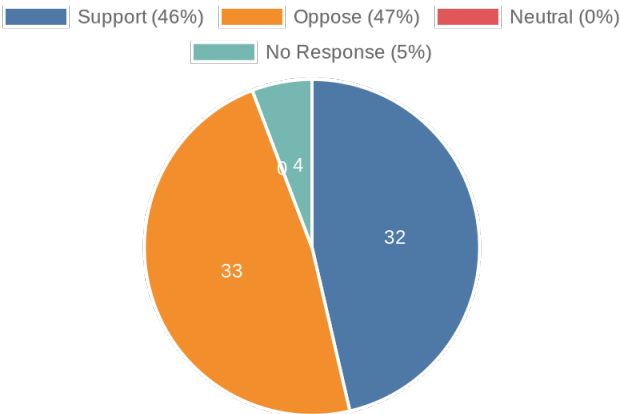
eComments Report

Meetings	Meeting Time	Agenda Items	Comments	Support	Oppose	Neutral
Housing and Land Use Committee (2025-2027) on 2025-06-24 5:00 PM - Reconvened from 6/9/2025, 6/18/2025, & 6/23/2025	06-24-25 17:00	2	69	32	33	0

Sentiments for All Meetings

The following graphs display sentiments for comments that have location data. Only locations of users who have commented will be shown.

Overall Sentiment



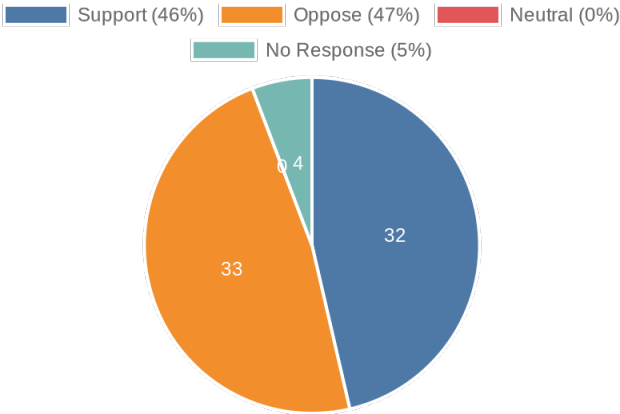
Housing and Land Use Committee (2025-2027) on 2025-06-24 5:00 PM - Reconvened from 6/9/2025, 6/18/2025, & 6/23/2025
06-24-25 17:00

Agenda Name	Comments	Support	Oppose	Neutral
A G E N D A	27	16	7	0
HLU-4 Bill 9 (2025) BILL 9 (2025), AMENDING CHAPTERS 19.12, 19.32, AND 19.37, MAUI COUNTY CODE, RELATING TO TRANSIENT VACATION RENTALS IN APARTMENT DISTRICTS (HLU-4)	42	16	26	0

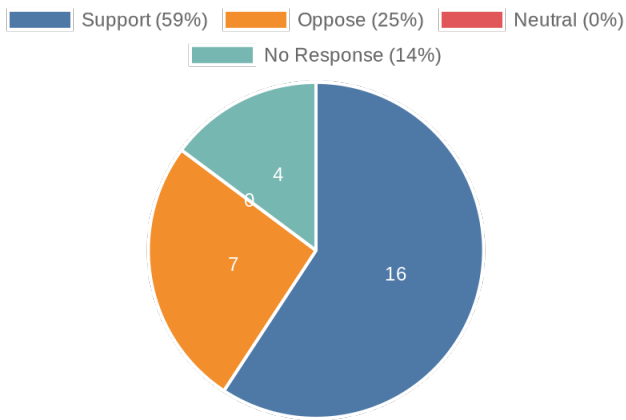
Sentiments for All Agenda Items

The following graphs display sentiments for comments that have location data. Only locations of users who have commented will be shown.

Overall Sentiment



Overall Sentiment



Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 7:16pm 06-24-25

Aloha,

Here's my testimony in Opposition to Bill 9:

Affordable Housing is in an emergency crisis situation. It cannot be fixed by taking away STRs. It all goes back to one thing. Lack of water to issue building permits. There's plenty of land and plenty of money. The problem is water. We have heard it time and time again. Can't build houses because lack of water. Let's work on fixing that and the rest will be easy.

The goal should be to figure out how to tap into that massive ocean that surrounds us and develop a way to desalinate on a large scale to supply Maui with abundant water. We should be looking at cutting edge technologies. We should be striving to be the best in the world at desalination. It can't be that hard. They want solar farms. They want wind farms. Why not evaporation farms? It could be done and it should be done as fast as possible.

Over two hundred people have provided testimony yet no one has gotten to the root problem. Water. Let's make Maui the number one desalination place on earth. Local kids could have jobs in it. They could be the innovators. They could figure it out using AI computing.

If we had abundant water we could build the homes and by building enough homes we could house the community. Building a solid supply of homes brings the price of housing down. It's supply and demand economics 101. There could be reasonable limits on future tourism numbers, STR numbers, hotel rooms, rental cars, etc after the fact. Let's figure out how we can make that big beautiful Pacific Ocean drinkable.

Do it and we all win.

Thank you!

Bill Corbin
Kihei

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 6:49pm 06-24-25

I am a transplant living on Maui and I strongly support Bill 9. Native Hawaiians have been suffering their displacement by not being able to afford to live in their own home for far too long, and this bill is a step in the right direction. People first and profit after.

Eric Chang

Location:

Submitted At: 6:44pm 06-24-25

Aloha honorable chair and committee members. When I was president of the nonprofit Hawai'i Museums Association I participated in government and community efforts to support fire-affected organizations in Lahaina for cultural resource recovery. It was work that was both heartbreaking and heartwarming, showcasing the best of community care, support, and resilience in the face of devastation. Through this work I developed better understandings about community needs and systems that challenged these needs. It is clear to me that short term rentals are a huge obstacle for housing security for local residents, including those displaced by the fires. Please support Bill 9 and efforts to create long-term, sustainable, and affordable housing for communities that need it most. Mahalo nui loa.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 6:43pm 06-24-25

Imagine if these properties were already long term rentals before the fires? Imagine how many locals would have viable options? Maui residents have been at the bottom of the housing priority list for too long. It took the decimation of our historic Lahaina Town and the deaths of our ohana for this to even be considered, so shame! Do what is right for the ohana, not the investment portfolio.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 6:33pm 06-24-25

I support Bill 9. Allow more rentals for the local community to remain in their home land.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 6:11pm 06-24-25

Listen to Stan Franco.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 6:08pm 06-24-25

Aloha Council members,

I am a 25 year old Kanaka Maoli woman, who is trying to make ends meet while also saving up for a property on the island I was born and raised in. While I understand how much our economy leans on tourism, being in the hospitality industry myself, at what point do we draw the line? Tourists come here to experience our culture, but Hawai'i is not the same without Hawaiians. I've had multiple guests come into the restaurant I work at and actually tell me that they're disappointed because they expected to see more local people on island, specifically Hawaiians.

We are being displaced and part of the problem are how many short term rentals have been allowed. In my neighborhood alone there have been 3 homes on my street that are now short term rentals or airbnb's when they

could be housing local families. Plus the amount of tourists I see stocking up at Costco tells me they're not really supporting local while they're here. So it's not fair for us having to be pushed out of our homes just because short term rental property owners are saying they "recommend small businesses" to their guests. That is simply not enough.

I'm not saying we do not need tourism, but there needs to be balance. The tourism industry is sucking our resources dry. We do not need to rely so heavily on tourism as we do now. It is not sustainable for the land as we've seen with the fires and water shortages, nor is it sustainable for our people. I urge the council to please consider how helpful this bill will be for not only our generation, but the generations to come. We need to keep our community in tact.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 5:05pm 06-24-25

Dear Council Members,

During yesterday's session, a local pastor presented a thoughtful and community-centered proposal: to develop housing on church-owned land that would serve both long-term residents and visitors. His plan outlined how income from short-term rentals (STRs) could subsidize affordable housing for local families—including providing lump sums to assist with down payments on permanent homes. It was a creative, practical solution grounded in local needs and financial realities.

Unfortunately, the council appeared to dismiss the proposal almost immediately, cautioning the speaker about being associated with STRs. This response was disappointing. Rather than evaluating the plan on its merits, it seemed to be rejected purely because it didn't align with a broader, more oppositional stance against STRs. That kind of rigid thinking limits our ability to innovate and find collaborative solutions.

There is already deep tension around this issue, much of it fueled by frustration and fear. But we must be careful not to let that turn into blanket resistance or exclusion, especially when locals themselves are proposing ideas that could directly benefit other residents. Unity will not come from division—it will come from listening, flexibility, and a shared goal of supporting Maui's long-term future.

My family has strong ties to the island. We visit several times a year and intend to retire in Maui within the next decade. Our STR in Kihei consistently sees a 96% occupancy rate, contributing to the local economy through visitor spending, taxes, and local employment. Converting our unit to a long-term rental is not feasible for us, and selling is not currently an option. If this bill passes in its current form, our property may simply sit vacant—benefiting no one.

I urge the council to approach this decision with a wider lens. Please don't allow ideology or pressure to outweigh opportunity and reason. The people of Maui deserve nuanced, community-first solutions—and that includes those proposed by locals who see value in balancing responsible tourism with housing needs.

Mahalo for your service and your consideration.

Robert Silvernagel

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 5:02pm 06-24-25

As an owner of a local business for 13 to 14 years, here on Maui, it is become very clear that our housing shortage has a big impact on our economy here on Maui. I have seen many teachers leave the island who are teaching our keiki for many years here, leave the island as they not able to afford to buy or rent a home as there's a shortage of homes here in Maui. The county mayor has a right to provide homes for each individual and each ohana here on Maui and I believe that each family deserves to have a home that's affordable to live here on Maui also.

As far as the economy, we have lost a lot of business due to the fires as many families have left Maui so our

income has come down so that affects business And the effects of revenue towards the state and my county has also lowered. We must protect the Keiki who are going to grow up here and we must protect families and allow them and support them to live and thrive on this beautiful island.

If people continue to leave the island, we will no longer have enough teachers enough grocery store, workers enough hotel, workers, enough engineers, enough mechanics everything that makes the economy and our local businesses. There will be nobody left here except for Rich outsiders, and all the homes will be vacant Mahalo Tom.C

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 4:59pm 06-24-25

As a born and raised local who is the child of a single parent lifetime renter she had hoped there would be a possibility for us to be able to purchase land together. That has become extremely unlikely with how the development of Maui is going - Bill 9 is the first step towards a path where locals have an opportunity to steward the land they are from.

It is extremely disparaging to watch the neighborhood you grew up in become gutted from the lovely local neighborhood with local families to short term rentals and out of town residents who are only here for 2 months out of the year. I've sadly watched this happen all across the island and is the reason our island is losing its culture and aloha. We have already surpassed the 50% margin of residents who are not from here and it shows day to day in every interaction I have. We are losing locals by the thousands - I have already been in the position twice where I was a few weeks from being forced to move off island. Look around the world and you will see this issue is becoming common in top tourist destinations and if this bill does not pass I would not be surprised to see strikes like they are doing in there and other major destinations.

The simple logic and moral answer is straightforward on this matter where one side is simply asking for the basic right of a human while another is demanding they maintain and continue to grow their greed. Will these people ever be satisfied? I think not when you hear their testimonies and sheepishly answer they own three, six, or a whole building. These folks are not here to contribute to the community or care for the land and sea; they are here to take and profit.

Maui will be fine without these tourists, Maui will adapt and we can look to a new economic sector of agriculture or a truly environmentally focused tourism.

If you truly love Maui, Hawai'i and the culture here then you'll understand the support for this bill is the only right answer.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 4:38pm 06-24-25

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

My name is Sherry Owen-Siekmann J, and I own a short-term rental property in Maui County. I am writing today to express my deep concern and strong opposition to the proposed legislation to phase out more than 7,000 vacation rentals.

I have been coming here since I was 14 years old with my family and later in life added my husband and children. I've worked hard to be a responsible and community-oriented owner. I recommend always local restaurants and tour guides in my welcome guide. I employ local service providers — cleaners, maintenance techs, and landscapers — many of whom have become like family over the years. My guests often leave Maui commenting in our check-in book how much they enjoyed their stay and how the island made Their family feel welcome.

Some of my guests have even said they wouldn't have come at all if they didn't have a vacation rental option.

That matters — not just to me, but to all the small businesses they supported during their stay.

Owning in this complex has not been easy. We've faced huge maintenance costs, special assessments, and massive increases in insurance after the fires. These aren't luxuries — they're costs that ensure the property remains safe, functional, and appealing. STR income helps cover those costs while supporting local workers, but the last few years that's about all it supports. I make no money on this property, but do you get to enjoy coming out here and sharing it with my family and friends and visitors?

This legislation feels rushed and one-sided. I urge the Council to work with owners like me to find a fair and

balanced path forward — one that protects local jobs, supports the economy, and holds STR owners to high standards, instead of phasing us out completely. I don't understand why the timeshare short term rentals are not included this ban.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Sherry Owen- Siekmann

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 4:10pm 06-24-25

Aloha e n_ L_ I_ o ke K_ mike Ho_ ohana __ina a me n_ Hale,

I offer this testimony with deep gratitude and kuleana to the land, to our k_puna, and to the families whose roots run generations deep in Maui's soil.

I rise today in unwavering support of Bill 9—not because it's easy, but because it is right. Not because it avoids pain, but because it begins to heal one of the greatest wounds inflicted on this island in our lifetimes: the slow, calculated displacement of local families from their own homeland.

We all watched it happen. Once, apartment-zoned neighborhoods were filled with laughter from keiki running down the hallways after school, aunties barbecuing, k_puna sweeping lanai steps, and families looking out for one another. Now, those same buildings sit hollow in spirit, turned into transient pods for strangers whose only connection to this island is a reservation number. The vast majority of some apartment buildings in Lahaina, Kihei, and Ma'alaea have become ghost villages in disguise, lit by unfamiliar lights, secured with coded locks, and emptied of aloha.

How did we get here? Slowly, at first—one unit at a time. Then by loophole, then by silence. We were told we needed tourism. We were told we couldn't afford to upset it. We were told there was no other way.

And yet—here we are. Lahaina burned. Families scattered. Workers living in cars. Nurses commuting from Hana to Kahului. K_puna watching their mo_opuna leave for Vegas because they can't survive here. Are we still going to pretend nothing's wrong?

Some say this bill is too drastic. Too fast. Too hard. But let's talk honestly. How long have we waited? How many hundreds of written and spoken testimonies have we heard, crying for change? How many reports, meetings, studies, protests? If anything, this bill is late. But it's not too late.

We can still choose a new path.

Maui k_puna understood that the __ina was not a commodity. Land was a relationship. Housing was a shared responsibility. Decisions were made with future generations in mind, not quarterly earnings.

The short-term rental economy, as it exists, is an inversion of those values. It profits from scarcity, not abundance. From distance, not belonging. It treats our island as a backdrop—not a home. And while tourism does bring money, it does not bring back displaced children. It does not bring back burnt homes. It does not bring back security for our community.

Opponents have argued that STR conversions won't work because the units are too small or too expensive. But I say: give locals the choice first. Let them find the creativity and resilience that their ancestors always had. We've made homes from lava tubes, tarps on the beach, tents, plantation barracks, carports, backyards, cars, and even chicken coops—because we had to. Don't tell us we can't make do with a studio!

Others raise concerns about economic fallout. But look deeper. The AP reported that the total property tax revenue loss might be \$60 million per year. That's less than 4% of our county's latest budget. Meanwhile, the social cost of not acting—of continued homelessness, trauma, and broken families—is immeasurable.

And let me tell you, the trauma is real! Even if you disagree with elements of the Bill or fear this or that

consequence, you as Council Members are morally obliged to do something in the face of all the profound suffering that has been presented to you in testimony. Unless you have a better idea that is immediately actionable, basic decency compels you to support the best idea on the table represented by Bill 9.

Listen to Stan Franco, unless you are willing to stand before the community to make the false claim that you have done more, know more, or have worked harder for the housing insecure, who are largely excluded from these proceedings because of barriers to civic participation in testimony that are inherent to housing insecurity.

Some fear lawsuits, citing property rights and legal exposure. But regulating land use is not new. What's new is the courage to do it for the people, not just the market. And with the 2027 sunset and proper grandfathering, the county has balanced fairness with necessity.

Culturally, Bill 9 represents a rare turning point. This is our chance to correct decades of extraction. This is our moment to center k_naka values in zoning policy. This is our way of saying, "We choose aloha over Airbnb. We choose 'ohana over occupancy rates. We choose kuleana over absentee profits."

Let me be clear: I do not hate visitors. I welcome those who come with respect. But we cannot survive if we continue to displace ourselves to make room for them. Hospitality should not come at the cost of local family dignity and survival.

If you vote yes on Bill 9, you are not just closing a loophole. You are opening a doorway for thousands of residents to return home. You are sending a message to every young person wondering if they'll ever afford to live here: "Yes, this island is still for you." You are restoring the sacred balance between land, people, and future.

I ask each of you, Councilmembers—especially those of you born and raised here—to remember the stories of your own families. Think of your grandparents and great-grandparents. Would they have voted to preserve a vacation unit, or to house a teacher? Would they have defended profit margins, or made room for the next generation?

And if there is a Councilmember who can sit through all of this testimony—hours of heartfelt confessions from real people describing their intense trauma and pain, their displacement, their fear, their heartbreak—and still vote no on the best, most immediate policy solution we have on the table, then with the deepest respect, then something misaligned will be exposed in your compass of public service.

Councilmembers, I understand that the nine-member Council currently earns \$101,302 each per year, with the Council Chair receiving \$106,367 annually, following a 26%–23% raise effective July 1. This level of six-figure compensation puts you far above the stress and uncertainty of housing insecurity—so much so that to truly understand the shame, the fear, the embarrassment, and the terror of being without shelter requires both imagination and uncomfortable, intentional empathy. None of you on this Council wakes up wondering whether you will be evicted, whether your children will stay safe, or whether your family will be swept away in an emergency because there's no roof over their heads.

That daily reality is the truth for many of your constituents, and their suffering is fully visible in the testimony before you. If that pain doesn't move you to support the one policy we have now—Bill_9—then I urge you to look again, reconsider, and vote with both your heart and your paycheck aligned toward justice.

At its core, democracy means paying elected leaders not to serve the wealthy, but to resist their influence—especially in times of crisis. You are not neutral observers. You are paid agents of justice, tasked with infiltrating the halls of power on behalf of those who are voiceless, landless, and politically invisible.

In this moment, that means prioritizing those who are unhoused, overburdened, and left behind by the very tourism economy that has enriched so few while displacing so many. Please take this sacred responsibility with the seriousness it demands. The credibility of our incredible local democracy, and the trust of the people who still believe in it, depend on how you show up for them now.

I don't say any of this to insult, but to awaken. We are not here to defend ideals in a vacuum. We are here because the ground is burning beneath our feet. Please, if you find yourself leaning toward a no vote, I ask you to

reconsider—not for politics, but for your soul, for your neighbors, and for the island you love.

History will remember how you voted. And in Hawaiian thought, the decisions we make in this life echo far into the next. So I say to you with all the reverence in my heart:

Vote yes, and be remembered well.

In this world and the afterlife.

Vote yes with the same urgency you would feel if your own family were facing eviction tomorrow.

Vote yes as if someone without a home is literally on their knees before you—pleading not for charity, but for justice, and asking you to use the power you hold to make this right.

Vote yes for the voters who, due to lacking a permanent residence, could not receive a mail-in ballot—but still made the effort to vote for you in person at a designated voting center. Every single Councilmember can count voters who believed in your leadership despite having no stable place to call home. Honor their trust. They showed up for you—now it's your turn to show up for them.

Mahalo nui loa for your time, your service, and your heart.

Aloha

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 3:37pm 06-24-25

To the Honorable Chair and Members of the Housing and Land Use Committee:

Aloha and mahalo for the opportunity to submit this written testimony in ****strong, enthusiastic, world-changing**** support of Bill 9.

Let me be clear: ****Bill 9 will solve the housing crisis on Maui.**** That much is obvious. But it will do so much more. Approving this bill is not merely a local zoning action — it is an act of global consequence. If passed, I firmly believe that Bill 9 will:

- * Reverse global warming by reducing Maui's reliance on unsustainable development patterns, encouraging walkable communities, and eliminating the heat island effect created by investor-owned, empty vacation units.
- * Bring peace to the Middle East — yes, even to Israel and Palestine — by showing that when a small island can prioritize human dignity over real estate speculation, then surely the rest of the world can, too.
- * Trigger a ceasefire between Russia and Ukraine, because clearly if Maui County can end its own internal zoning wars, then global superpowers will recognize the futility of conflict.
- * Lower gas prices, because more people will live near where they work, reducing commute times, increasing energy efficiency, and putting less pressure on global oil markets.
- * Increase wages, because when working families aren't crushed by housing costs, they can spend more, save more, and invest in their futures — stimulating a local economy that values workers instead of displacing them.
- * And yes — ****free Palestine****, because justice begins at home. When a county government like ours stands for the principle that land should serve people, not profit, it creates a moral ripple across the planet.

Some may say this is an exaggeration. To them I say: ****It is no more exaggerated than the damage caused by the failure to act.****

Bill 9 is not a silver bullet. It will not fix every zoning error, eliminate all speculative pressure, or heal every wound caused by colonization, extraction, and corruption. But it is ****a courageous, decisive, and moral step forward.****

By passing this bill, Maui will affirm what every person in this room knows: that housing is not a commodity — it is a human right. And in affirming that truth here on our island, we send a message to the world:

****People come before profit. Community comes before speculation. And the future starts now.****

Please pass Bill 9.

John Bonilla

Deleted User

Location:

Submitted At: 3:30pm 06-24-25

Listen to Stan Franco

Allin Bohba

Location:

Submitted At: 3:29pm 06-24-25

Aloha Chair and Council Members,

I submit this testimony in ****strong support of Bill 9**** and to offer a reasoned response to the growing opposition from legally operating short-term rental (STR) owners who argue their vested rights and economic contributions should shield them from necessary reform. While I acknowledge the sincerity of many individual STR owners, including the couple who submitted the testimony under review, I urge this Council not to confuse ****legal operation**** with ****justified permanence****.

1. ****Legal Operation Does Not Guarantee Perpetual Use Rights****

The argument that these STRs were purchased “in good faith” under existing law is not equivalent to a constitutional guarantee of indefinite continuation. Zoning laws, land use regulations, and permitted uses evolve as the public interest evolves. Every property owner is presumed to understand that zoning is not static. Legal nonconforming use (or even conditional use) can be phased out — especially when the continued use undermines the general welfare, housing equity, or sustainable land use.

No private investment, however compliant, should override the County’s constitutional duty to protect the public trust and prioritize housing for residents.

2. ****Economic Contributions Are Real — But So Are the Costs****

Yes, STRs generate tax revenue, support contractors, and feed the tourism economy — but they also come at a steep social cost:

* ****Displacement**** of residents from multifamily housing stock.

* ****Inflated property values**** that price out local families.

* ****Undermining long-term rentals**** in apartment districts, which were never intended to host transient tourism use.

The UHERO study, cited frequently by STR advocates, ****fails to weigh the countervailing costs**** — such as lost community cohesion, housing instability, and infrastructure stress. We must not be lured into thinking that short-term revenue justifies long-term community erosion.

3. ****Bill 9 Is Not a Ban — It Is a Phase-Out with Intentional Public Benefit****

The implication that Bill 9 will instantly “eliminate” 7,000 STRs is misleading. This is a ****measured legislative phase-out**** to gradually recover housing stock for residents, not an overnight shutdown. STRs in hotel and resort zones remain untouched.

The idea that “these units won’t become affordable housing” is a straw man. The ****goal is not immediate affordability****, but rather ****stopping the hemorrhage of supply to tourism use****. Over time, this restores market balance and encourages owners to shift toward long-term rental, resale, or redevelopment into primary homes.

4. ****Other Communities Took Action Because Inaction Failed****

Citing Vail, Colorado is interesting — but misleading. Vail implemented those incentive programs ****after years of worsening STR impacts****, including mass worker displacement. Maui is at an earlier (and more preventable) stage of decline. We do not have to wait for collapse to act.

Maui needs both ****supply-side and demand-side housing interventions**** — and Bill 9 is one of the few tools we have to reduce investor-driven pressure on apartment-zoned land.

5. ****Retirement Strategy _ Public Land Use Entitlement****

Framing STR ownership as a retirement lifeline or cost-offsetting strategy reveals the deeper truth: these units are primarily investments. But land use policy must not be shaped by the financial models of individual investors — especially when those models conflict with the survival and stability of the local workforce.

Conclusion

Bill 9 is not an attack on individuals. It is a long-overdue correction to a system that has failed our people. Maui's housing is not a retirement plan, a commodity, or a tax haven — it is a foundation of life, dignity, and opportunity for residents.

I respectfully urge you to ****pass Bill 9 without weakening amendments****, and to reaffirm that the County's kuleana is not to protect ROI for out-of-town investors or legal STRs, but to protect housing access for our people.

Mahalo for your courage and commitment to justice.

Respectfully,

Allin Bohba
Wailea Resident

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 1:47pm 06-24-25

Bill 9 is not an attack on individuals. It is a long-overdue correction to a system that has failed our people. Maui's housing is not a retirement plan, a commodity, or a tax haven — it is a foundation of life, dignity, and opportunity for residents.

I respectfully urge you to pass Bill 9 without weakening amendments, and to reaffirm that the County's kuleana is not to protect ROI for out-of-town investors or legal STRs, but to protect housing access for our people.

Mahalo for your courage and commitment to justice.

Tryson Kaiama

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 1:27pm 06-24-25

Subject: Opposing Bill 9 – Preserve Maui's Legal Short-Term Rentals and Local Livelihoods

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Honorable Council Members,

I am writing to respectfully voice my strong opposition to Bill 9, which seeks to phase out more than 7,000 legally operating short-term vacation rentals (STRs) in Maui County. These units have long complied with county regulations, contribute substantial tax revenue, support local jobs, and play a critical role in Maui's broader tourism ecosystem.

My husband and I are the owners of one such permitted STR. We purchased our property in good faith based on its codified legal status and have always approached ownership with a sense of responsibility to the community. We employ Maui-based cleaners, landscapers, and maintenance workers — individuals who depend on STRs like ours for reliable income. We also actively recommend nearby restaurants, shops, and activities to our guests.

Many of our visitors are families traveling with children or older relatives. They choose Maui because it offers more than a hotel room — they greatly value the ability to stay in a home-like environment with a kitchen, shared living space, and a stronger connection to the local community. For many, a short-term rental is the only way they can afford to visit Maui at all. Removing this option will not shift them into hotels — it will simply cause them to vacation elsewhere, taking their tourism dollars with them.

This isn't just our personal experience. According to the 2024 UHERO study commissioned by the Hawai'i Community Foundation, phasing out TVRs in Apartment-zoned districts could result in:

- \$900 million in lost annual visitor spending
- 1,900 job losses across the island
- \$60 million decline in property tax revenue by 2029

These numbers are sobering and illustrate just how tightly STRs are woven into the fabric of Maui's local economy.

We understand and share the Council's concern about the housing crisis. However, Bill 9 is not a real solution. It risks sacrificing the economic contributions of law-abiding property owners, local workers, and small businesses — without meaningfully increasing housing supply or affordability. Like many property owners, we face rising costs — including monthly HOA dues, wildfire-related insurance increases, and ongoing maintenance costs for older structures built approximately 45 years ago. STR income helps us meet these significant obligations while keeping the property safe, well-maintained, and available to guests who support local businesses during their stay. These units do not magically become affordable housing through Bill 9.

Other resort communities have taken more thoughtful, effective approaches to provide more affordable housing. In Vail, Colorado — which faces similar housing challenges — the county has implemented voluntary deed-restriction programs (with willing buyers and sellers), down payment assistance, mixed-income developments, and incentives for long-term rental conversions. These solutions respect the codified rights of legal STR owners while addressing housing needs head-on.

I respectfully urge you to vote against Bill 9 in its current form and instead pursue a balanced, data-driven strategy — one that protects long-standing legal operations while expanding real, workable options for local residents in need of housing.

Mahalo for your time, your service, and your thoughtful consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,
Sandra LaBaugh
sandy@itpros.net

Lore Menin

Location:
Submitted At: 1:16pm 06-24-25

****WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF BILL 9****

****To:** Maui County Council, Housing and Land Use Committee**

****Aloha Chair and Councilmembers,****

I am writing as a long-time Maui resident and the owner of short-term vacation rentals. While these rentals have helped me support my family and keep up with the high cost of living, I also believe in fairness, pono land use, and doing what's right for the long-term health of our community. That's why I am submitting this testimony in ****strong support of Bill 9****.

BILL 9 ISN'T A COMPLETE AFFORDABLE HOUSING SOLUTION—BUT IT'S PART OF ONE

I understand that **Bill 9 won't automatically lower rent or create low-income housing**. But that's not the point of this bill. What it **does** do is help make sure that the homes we already have are actually used for housing Maui residents—not as year-round hotel rooms for visitors.

That matters. Because if we don't protect what little housing inventory we have left, all our other affordable housing efforts will be wasted. Bill 9 helps **stop the loss** of residential units to commercial tourism operations, and that's a step in the right direction.

APARTMENT ZONED AREAS WERE NEVER MEANT TO BE HOTEL DISTRICTS

When I first bought my properties, I trusted that the County would enforce zoning rules fairly and clearly. But over time, I've seen apartment-zoned areas slowly turn into unregulated hotel zones. These were never meant to be short-term rental districts, but lax enforcement and loopholes made it seem like they were.

Bill 9 simply corrects that. It brings zoning back in line with its original intent: **housing people**, not maximizing tourist profits. It's not an attack on property owners. It's a reset—an attempt to get back to what was always supposed to be.

IT'S HARD TO LET GO, BUT THE RIGHT THING ISN'T ALWAYS THE EASY THING

Owning two vacation rentals has helped me stay afloat. I won't pretend otherwise. But I also see the bigger picture: the traffic, the overcrowded beaches, the rising prices, and the friends and family who've had to leave Maui because they couldn't find a place to live. I'd rather live in a place where my neighbors are locals, not strangers every week.

Phasing out STVRs in apartment zones may cost me in the short run—but it helps preserve something way more important: **community**.

HOUSING SHOULDN'T BE A TOURISM BACKDOOR

Right now, we have housing stock—built and zoned for residents—being used for transient lodging. That doesn't sit right with me. We have plenty of hotels already. And if we want more tourism capacity, let's be honest about it and go through the proper channels.

Bill 9 helps **close the backdoor** that's been quietly turning residential buildings into hotels. That's not punishing anyone—it's enforcing the law and restoring trust in the system.

BILL 9 IS A HARD, BUT NECESSARY, COURSE CORRECTION

I'm not asking the Council to make this decision lightly. But I **am** asking you to do what's right for the next generation of Maui families. If we keep sacrificing housing for short-term gain, we won't have a sustainable island community left.

I support Bill 9 even though it may impact me financially. I support it because I care about Maui more than I care about maximizing rental income.

Please pass this bill. Let it be a turning point—where we finally say, “enough is enough,” and start putting residents first.

Mahalo for your time, and for doing the hard work.

Sincerely,

Lore Menin
Maui Resident and Vacation Rental Owner

Edward Codelia

Location:

Submitted At: 12:54pm 06-24-25

While tourism remains a pillar of our economy, its current scale and saturation are ecologically, socially, and economically unsustainable. Written testimony in Support of Bill 9.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 11:40am 06-24-25

I strongly oppose Bill 9:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members. My name is Norman Doyle and our family has been hard working honest tax paying property owners on West Maui for almost 50 years now. We LOVE Maui as do so many residence and non-residence alike. Maui is special to us all. I am writing because I strongly oppose Bill 9. There is overwhelming evidence that shows the passage of this bill will severely hurt local residents and absolutely does not solve the housing crisis. Many will say otherwise but a vast majority of those are speaking from emotion and not actual data. Housing for residence is vital and we can all agree with that but the properties on the Minatoya list are in no way affordable or feasible for long term housing.

Not only do we personally support many local Maui SMALL businesses such as contractors, handymen, insurance agents, restaurants, cleaners, landscapers, many who have become like family to us. Our guests obviously feel the Maui love as a large percent of them are repeat guests. Many of these same guests have told me directly they will not be able to afford to return to Maui should this bill pass. Why is that you might ask? Condo's like ours on the Minatoya list offer lower rental rates than hotels with the added benefit of a larger living area than just a hotel room, but the biggest benefit is the fact that condo's also have kitchens. This allow families the affordability they need in order to proceed with such a wonderful vacation as coming to Maui. That alone can make a huge difference to the Maui economy and specifically local small business owners.

Owning a condo on Maui is not easy. In fact it is a risk with a very small profit margin. Don't believe those that want to call us rich mainlanders. Who we really are, are small hard working business owners like so many others on Maui. WE have saved for years and years to be able to afford our condo's. We have huge overhead in our properties with large assessments (I am expecting an assessment of over \$60,000 in the very near future for my condo because of deteriorating buildings that must be repaired.). Our insurance costs recently increased over 400%. These are just basic large fees that don't even cover normal operating expenses. My income from being an STR covers those costs some years and others it doesn't. I could not imagine the rental rate I would have to charge to just break even. Our STR income also goes a long way towards supporting local businesses. Over the years we have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars at Maui small businesses for things beds, furniture, carpet, decorations, new kitchens, bathrooms, remodels and on and on and on.

Thank you for your consideration and I am offering my sincere hope that you do what is right for Maui and keep the STR's and find the real solution to affordable house for those needing it.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 10:46am 06-24-25

Aloha Chair and Councilmembers,

I submit this testimony in strong support of Bill 9 and the proposed zoning amendments to phase out transient vacation rentals (TVRs) in the Apartment District. Maui is in the midst of a full-blown housing crisis. This bill is one of the clearest opportunities the Council has to take meaningful action.

The core question before you is simple:

Will returning over 6,000 TVRs to the long-term housing market—either as rentals or as for-sale units—help address Maui's severe housing shortage?

The answer is undeniably yes.

Maui is part of the most isolated island chain in the world. Yet, a disproportionate share of our housing stock is

owned by out-of-state investors who do not live here, do not vote here, and profit by extracting wealth from our communities. Meanwhile, local families are being priced out, displaced, or forced to leave the islands altogether.

This is not a complex issue. The public interest lies with our residents—nurses, teachers, k_puna, and keiki—who need homes, not hotels disguised as condos.

This legislation is not extreme; it is necessary. It restores balance in our communities and prioritizes housing for people who live and work here. Times like these require courage and clarity from our elected officials. The choice is between standing with your constituents or continuing to enable a speculative real estate market driven by absentee owners.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony, and for your leadership on this critical issue.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 10:35am 06-24-25

Virtually every state and country deals with increases in housing costs and housing shortages. The difference in Maui is that the county depends on the STRs for significant revenue for their budget. Most travelers simply cannot afford to stay in hotels and do not prefer that experience. Other areas are more diversified and have other options. That will not change on Maui due to geographical and logistical restrictions. Taking property rights from STR owners will do nothing to fix the housing problem. That can only be addressed through sound policy making on Maui in balance with maintaining the revenue provided by STRs. My building was constructed in 1975 and the Declarations for our building, as approved by Maui County, state that the property would be used for long term, owner occupied and SHORT TERM Rentals. Changing that rightful ownership would require the county to purchase the STR units. There are fair and balanced approaches to addressing the housing issues without throwing the baby out with the wash. Examples of this approach failing are all over the news now as New York, Lake Tahoe and others are returning to Short Term Rentals because the expected positive impact on housing availability and housing cost did not materialize. The same result will occur on Maui with a much more significant and negative impact on the local residents as well as visitors to the county. I emphasize my **STRONG OPPOSITION** to this politically misguided Bill, Bill 9.

Thank you for allowing me to comment.

Richard Smith

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 9:14am 06-24-25

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Honorable Committee Members,

My name is Jeff Yeager, and I am the owner of a legally permitted short-term rental in Maui County (Mahina Surf #220). I am writing to respectfully express my strong opposition to Bill 9, which proposes the phase-out of more than 7,000 vacation rentals that have long operated in compliance with county regulations.

I have always taken seriously my role as a responsible and community-oriented property owner. I employ local cleaners, landscapers, and maintenance professionals — individuals who not only keep the property running safely and smoothly, but who also rely on this income to support their families. I also make a conscious effort to promote local restaurants, shops, and tour operators in my guest materials, ensuring that tourism dollars reach the small businesses that form the backbone of Maui's economy.

Many of my guests specifically choose Maui because they value the more authentic and connected experience that a short-term rental provides. Some have even shared that they would not have visited at all if such accommodations were unavailable — a loss that would ripple across the island's tourism-dependent sectors.

Owning and maintaining property on Maui is not without significant challenges. Like many others, I have faced steep increases in insurance premiums following the fires, along with special assessments and the high cost of maintaining older properties in compliance with safety and aesthetic standards. Short-term rental income helps cover these obligations — and, critically, supports the local workers who help me meet them.

Bill 9, as currently drafted, appears to be a sweeping and hasty measure that penalizes responsible property owners rather than addressing the nuanced challenges facing Maui's housing market. I respectfully urge the Council to reconsider this approach and instead engage in a thoughtful, collaborative process that balances the protection of housing for residents with the preservation of legal short-term rentals that provide economic benefits, uphold community standards, and contribute meaningfully to the island's vibrancy.

I ask that you vote against Bill 9 in its current form and work toward a more balanced and inclusive solution.

Mahalo for your time, your service, and your consideration of this critical matter.

Sincerely,
Jeff Yeager
Mahina Surf #220
jayeager19@gmail.com

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 8:25am 06-24-25

Listen to Stan Franco

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 7:37am 06-24-25

We live on the mainland, but come to Maui every year. We wanted to start coming longer after we retire so we bought a condo. We used the long-term rent. It but we found out it constantly went into a state of disrepair when we would come for two weeks every winter all we did is work on the condo we rented for 11 months a year or longer if we had a good renter and we would actually rent somebody else's place to come visit. Are buying the condo was not about making money or rental income or anything except the fact that we love Maui and wanted this to enable us to spend more time there. We're retired now and can spend a few months a year, but the rules are if we don't rent it for 12 months, we have to pay a higher tax rate That being the case, it became unaffordable so we had to switch to vacation rental to be able to afford and come to Maui in the winter. When we visit, we respect the people the culture and the land. We are the best kind of visitor. Please don't make it. Impossible for us to come there by passing this law.

Mahalo, Dominic and Grace Venezia

Charles Hagerty

Location:
Submitted At: 4:00am 06-24-25

My daughter will not be able to support her ability to live on Maui if we lose the revenue she makes from managing our short-term rental. The COVID lock downs and Lahaina fire already destroyed the other income she had.

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 10:33pm 06-23-25

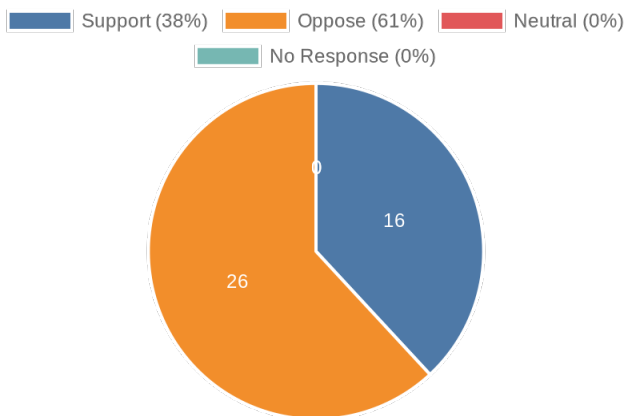
Why in this world would you ever consider that this legislation will be beneficial for Maui County much less for the island of Moloka'i?

Has being a politician made you unable to read the actual economic impact of this bill?

If you vote for it, you should resign your political position as you see the damage you have done.

Bob McCann - Permanent resident in a 1- bedroom condo that I own on Moloka'i.

Overall Sentiment



Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 8:42pm 06-24-25

I support the bill to phase out STRs on Maui because the out migration of locals and Hawaiian residents is detrimental to the economy and the community. People over profit!

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 8:09pm 06-24-25

I spend 3 to 6 months here in my illegal str, and cash flow it the rest of the year, as much as I love Maui I'm not giving you my condo to house one of your poor Alice residents.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 7:58pm 06-24-25

I would like to point out Council regarding a previous testifier from the Ma'alaea Bayans condo that their injection well is in violation of the Clean Water Act by not having any NPDES permit for a functional equivalent to a direct discharge in an area where the reef is described as "total system collapse" by DLNR in 2014:

<https://dlnr.hawaii.gov/dar/files/2014/04/MauiReefDeclines.pdf>

Here's a quick analysis of the most recent UIC water quality testing data for the testifier's condo complex, with an estimate of how many times higher than the associated HAR ocean water quality standard each pollutant shows.

Why no new Type II data since 2001 you may ask? UIC transferred testing to CWB in the mid 00's and they only test for BOD and TSS since then.

UIC Monitoring Summary – Ma'alaea Banyan (Permit UM-1272)

<https://tinyurl.com/Maalaea-Banyan-UIC>

Reported Results vs. HAR 11-54 Class AA Marine Water Quality Standards:

- Turbidity: 11.4 NTU (standard: ≤ 1 NTU above natural) — exceedance likely, natural baseline not provided
- Total Suspended Solids (TSS): 22 mg/L (standard: 10 mg/L) — 2.2x over standard
- Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD₅): 5 mg/L (standard: 2 mg/L, 24-hour average) — 2.5x over standard
- Total Dissolved Solids (TDS): 401 mg/L (no marine standard; screening indicator)
- Ammonia-N: 25 μ g/L or 0.025 mg/L (proxy for un-ionized NH₃-N, standard: 0.016 mg/L) — 1.6x over standard
- Reported TN: 25.5 mg/L
- HAR Class AA Standard for TN: 0.016 mg/L
- Exceedance:
 $25.5 \div 0.016 = 1,594\times$
- Total Phosphorus: 5.28 mg/L (standard: 0.004 mg/L) — 1,320x over standard
- Orthophosphate-P: 4.30 mg/L (standard: 0.004 mg/L) — 1,075x over standard
- Oil & Grease: <10 mg/L (standard: 2 mg/L) — $<5\times$ over standard
- Fecal Coliform: <20 MPN/100mL (standard: 7 MPN/100mL single grab) — “ $<3\times$ ”
- pH: 6.8 (Class AA expected range: around 8.1 ± 0.2)
- Dissolved Oxygen: 2.8 mg/L (standard: $\geq 75\%$ saturation, usually $\sim 6\text{--}7$ mg/L at 25°C) — indicates $<50\%$ saturation

—

Direct Discharge Screening per County of Maui v. Hawai'i Wildlife Fund

Distance to ocean: Injection wells are approximately 70–100 meters from the shoreline, likely under 240 feet horizontally to coastal waters.

Transit time and dilution: Groundwater likely travels through porous alluvium and fractured basalt. Previous USGS dye-trace studies in the area show that groundwater can reach the nearshore ocean in a matter of days to weeks. Dilution is insufficient to reduce nutrients to ambient marine levels.

Design and volume: The system is a Class V injection well receiving domestic wastewater. In the year 2000, no advanced nutrient removal was reported. The effluent quality suggests a typical secondary treatment profile, not suitable for sensitive coastal discharge.

Chemical similarity: The injected wastewater is chemically equivalent to a direct marine discharge in terms of nutrient and biological load. Given the extremely high nitrate, phosphorus, and BOD values, and the close proximity to the ocean, any resulting nearshore discharge would be functionally indistinguishable from a surface pipe.

Expectations of discharge: The original UIC permit (UM-1272) covered “onsite wastewater only,” but test results show effluent strength far exceeding reuse thresholds. No evidence of enhanced nutrient treatment was reported.

Regulatory regime: No NPDES permit was issued. Reliance solely on the UIC authorization places the discharge under potential Clean Water Act liability if it meets the “functional equivalent of a direct discharge” test under the Supreme Court’s 2020 precedent.

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Conclusion

The most recent Type II UIC effluent testing data that exists from the Ma'alaea Banyan injection well shows

nutrient pollution exceeding marine water quality standards by 1,000x or more in several categories (total nitrogen, total phosphorus). These concentrations are unlikely to be sufficiently diluted before reaching the ocean, especially given the short travel distance through highly permeable soils.

Therefore, this site meets multiple criteria established by the U.S. Supreme Court in *County of Maui v. Hawai'i Wildlife Fund* for a functional equivalent of a direct discharge.

As such, the Ma'alaea Banyan Class V injection system (Permit UM-1272) may be unlawfully operating without a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. Given the magnitude of exceedances and risk to reef ecosystems, this site is a strong candidate for immediate regulatory action and enhanced treatment requirements.

So the testifier's whole identity and narrative about his nice life as a STR operator at Banyans is made possible only by cognitively and legally avoiding compliance with applicable laws.

It is astonishing to me how confident some STR owners are in their narratives when in many cases, it's all based on a lie or institutional bias, and simply ignoring the law.

Days in violation (from April 23 2020, the date of the *County of Maui v. Hawai'i Wildlife Fund* decision, through June 24 2025): 1,889 days

Maximum civil penalty allowed under the Clean Water Act (40 CFR §19.4, 2024 inflation adjustment): \$64,618 per day per injection well

Maximum potential fine (per injection well):
 $1,889 \text{ days} \times \$64,618/\text{day} = \$122,063,402$

Maximum potential fine for two injection wells:
 $2 \times \$122,063,402 = \$244,126,804$

No one is buying any narrative that STR condo operators in Ma'alaea are law-abiding citizens. Every single one of the facilities is in violation of the Lahaina injection well Supreme Court decision and shares the identical penalty fine liability estimated above for not having the required NPDES permit, except the one facility with three injection wells, which would be 50% greater.

Just sayin!

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 7:12pm 06-24-25

I would like to add to my prior testimony. I, and many of the other str owners, spend 3 to 6 months every year in my home on Maui. These visits are distributed between 2 and 3 trips per year. I do not have any 6 month periods where I could rent to a long term renter for even 6 months. Maybe 3 to 4 months. Many pro testifiers mention that owners "threaten" to leave their condos vacant/open for family and friends to use rather than provide rentals for Hawaiian residents. My question is, how are we supposed to rent it out long term? Are they/you suggesting that we not be allowed to spend time in our own homes? If we can't rent them out short term for the 4 months until we return, and are only allowed to rent for at least 6 months, what do you suggest we do?

Brenda Lane

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 6:55pm 06-24-25

During testimony, I've noticed a recurring theme from STR owners: many assert that their ownership of at least one more housing unit than they need is solely the result of hard work and good choices. But the reality is more complex. Not everyone or every demographic has access to the same opportunities. For some historically marginalized or targeted communities, hard work and rule-following have not led to success—often, success is

systemically, systematically, actively denied and blocked.

There is a clear demographic pattern among STR owners, and it reflects broader systemic inequities. The “game” has been rigged for centuries and has never been merit-based. Of course many in these privileged groups own second homes.

But if truly exceptional individuals from disadvantaged and targeted demographic had access to a level playing field—let alone the racial and institutional advantages many STR owners have enjoyed for a lifetime—the housing market would look radically different.

The narrative that property ownership is always earned through merit and discipline erases the structural advantages that underpin wealth accumulation in the US and occupied kingdom of Hawaii. It is disingenuous—and frankly, insulting—to defend the “right” to the privileges of excess ownership while ignoring the deep injustices entrained in the very legal codes that exclude other demographics from even basic access to housing.

This conversation is not about demonizing individuals but about whether we will continue to uphold a system where “success” is almost totally pre-determined by factors including race, sexual and gender identity, generational wealth and access and privilege.

Council members must now decide: do you side with those who benefit from that rigged system—or with renters and residents who would never dream of defending it?

As they say, if you're really in need, ask a poor person for help.

Tamara Paltin is a superhero for calling that one particular testifier out who was acting all entitled like the rest of them, when she was like, um, sir, I checked and your HOA does not allow STRs.

Moments like that give me life, thank you Member Paltin! Your on-the-fly fact-checking got a sorely-needed smile out of Chair Kama and everyone in the audience on both sides.

Aloha

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 6:53pm 06-24-25

Aloha my name is Vincent Castaneto and I support Bill Nan the phase out of STR's. As a son of Lahaina, I have seen the impact that limited housing has had on me and my family personally. My mom and my sister have moved to Phoenix, Arizona in search of finding affordable housing and I am the only one left of my immediate family here still trying to get by on finding affordable housing. So my family has seen the effects of being priced out of Hawaii. Even though it's a lofty goal, I'm still trying to make it work here to try to save for down payment to get a house here on Maui. I worked two jobs just to pay rent and survive here on this island and I shouldn't have to go through that just to make it here. Please support this bill so that local individuals and families can afford to live here and make Hawaii the place that it is. Hawaii is not Hawaii without it's people. Mahalo.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 6:48pm 06-24-25

The only people who say maui is reliant on tourism are the STR owners who have CREATED this housing crisis. Maui is not reliant on tourism and it will never benefit from being exploited by these STR owners. The fact that we even consider testimony from people who do not live on island is baffling. If they really care about our community as they say they do then they will be ok losing an income that is only gained by exploiting kanaka.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 6:16pm 06-24-25

I am opposed to phasing out short term vacation rentals because I believe they provide affordable

accommodations to people who otherwise would not visit Maui due to the high cost of visitor accommodations in hotels and resorts. More diversity of accommodations allow for more diversity of visitor populations which is good for tourism. Phasing out vacation rentals has a very detrimental impact on the Maui economy. My husband and I have a vacation rental in Wailea but we also purchased 2 long term rentals one in Keihi and 1 in Kahana. Both currently serve families who were victims of the fires in Lahaina and Upcountry. We are proud of that. Our STVR helped us to fund the investment of the long term rentals. We do not make much profit on our long term rentals due to HOA fees and high insurance costs. But we wanted to make housing available to residents who otherwise can't purchase. Until other industry is available, Maui is reliant on tourism for jobs. We have legally operated our vacation rental for 13 year. We paid our fees, our taxes and hire residents to work for us. We are an employer. We provide guests who invest in the economy. We provide long term housing for residents and those who lost their homes. We would like to see balanced land use policies that acknowledge the competing priorities. Emotional responses are expected to this housing situation. However, we need to balance the needs to help any economy remain strong. Maybe create a working group with short term vacation rental owners to help develop better policies that are more balanced and address multiple needs for Maui rather than villianize STVR owners. We have learned that residents of Maui are very specific as to wanting to live very close to their jobs and daily lives. West Side focused residents do not seem to want housing on the south side. We had a rental sit for 6 months before we ultimately located a family from the West Side who would rent our long term rental. We need to better understand the geographic preferences of residents and set policies accordingly. We also need to partner with the STVR owners to learn from their expertise. They can help create better policy because they understand the market. If there was no market, they would not be doing it. We love offering affordable accommodations to both guests and visitors as well as long term rentals. Our STVR better accommodates visitors because it is a one bedroom. Our long term rentals were specifically purchased for families; they are 3 bedrooms. We were very intentional in our investments based on what we saw in the market and the demand for housing on Maui. We hope there could be more study of options before a decision is made to this highly charged issue. Affordable housing on Maui has been an issue for many decades. It is not a new issue. Emotional responses to land use decisions seldom seem to work out as intended. I have been in the affordable housing business for nearly 35 years and worked in local government for all of those years. I understand and sympathize with the Council. This is challenging to resolve. Our hope is to contrinue to help both Maui residents and visitors like we have for the past 13 years. Thank you for your consideration of my comments on this matter.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 6:14pm 06-24-25

Maui needs to help the locals more and not cater so heavily to tourist. Yes, people need to make money but if you're going to do short term rentals you should be required to match it and have a long term rental as well.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 6:12pm 06-24-25

We support local renters and buyers.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 5:58pm 06-24-25

Aloha mai and Kumustakayo (Greetings) Chair and Council Members,
I approach with deep humility with a voice from one who is born and raised on Maui and ask you would consider supporting Bill 9.

I am coming to you not only as a resident of Maui but also as a professional mental health therapist and counselor. I have served youth, families, Native Hawaiian and Filipino communities on this island I call home. Many of us here say "home is where our family resides because it's not about a specific location but of people". I stand by that and that is why I stand passionately for this bill. I have seen my extended family moving to the mainland over the years because they are not able to work and live comfortably on Maui due to housing. It is more convenient for them to buy a house in the mainland and only come to Maui to visit for short periods of time. Our family will always remain family but from a physical distance. I want our family unit to stay together. Many families like mines would like to keep the family unit in the same location but we lack affordable housing options because of short term rentals amongst other housing issues.

As a mental health therapist who stepped in to help and support our Lahaina community after the fires, I urge you as a professional. Many came to process the fires and the trauma they experienced but a lot of local residents didn't come to receive mental health support immediately. Many waited months after the fire to focus on their mental health because housing was and still is a big priority which made their mental health not a priority unfortunately. Months and even a year after the fire many of them came with their trauma of loss and as a therapist it was heart breaking hearing story after story about the fire and their dire need and want to return to a physical place they can call home again. I understand the loss of visitor spending we will lose annually but the loss of what has already happened since August 2023 is in no comparison. We must look to the future and take the hit of the loss of money through short term rentals to open up long term rentals to our local residents. Let me make it clear as a mental health therapist that this issue is not only a housing issue but also a community mental health issue. Let us not overlook what the housing crisis is doing to our Maui community because I haven't. By supporting this bill, you are also supporting the mental health of Maui County and our future generations to come. May our families come home and stay home and heal on a land that has healthy, strong, and thriving leaders who will support our wellbeing.

This is an urgent matter and needs to be addressed immediately. Mahalo piha and Agyamanak (full gratitude) for giving us space to speak and be heard. Please stand united with us!

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 5:25pm 06-24-25

I oppose Bill 9. I believe it will NOT create more affordable housing for local residents. I believe it will negatively affect local businesses and cause many to close permanently. Almost all Maui residents depend directly, or indirectly, on tourism. Taking away tourists from the small shops and restaurants will not be beneficial for the local economy. Tourists who stay in STR's will not start staying at hotels. Most of these tourists will vacation elsewhere creating huge losses for the local economy.

I think everyone agrees that we need more workforce/affordable housing, but going after small condos with 1 parking spot and with high maintenance fees is not the right way. Almost all of these condos will lose value, and thus lost property tax revenue for the county (and at a lower tax rate). These condos will most likely become someone's second home before it becomes a home for someone that lives here. And if we pretend it becomes a home for people who live here, work will be scarce. This bill, if passed, will likely lead to lawsuits which will be a complete waste of taxpayers' money.

This time should have been spent on a viable solution for more housing for our local community.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 5:15pm 06-24-25

Aloha

As another concerned resident, my words will echo through all of the other testimonies. Eleven years ago my partner and I came to Maui and joined the hospitality community. When we first arrived rents had been steadily moving up for three solid years.

As two people who had lived in difficult housing markets we stepped up to the challenge. We then spent 6.5 years maintaining a beautiful 2 bed two bath house in Paia. The owner, who lived on mainland, sold after we had just got through our first year of pandemic. The brutality in the market was unforgettable. We struggled to find a new spot for twice the price for 6 months. The opportunity that saved us was a space owned 8 generation Kanaka family. Their home was possible through Hawaiian homes many years ago. It was in this exact time in my Maui years that I started relentlessly following my local legislation. I have worked years now in our community. Helping families and educating kids. There is no reason I should not be able to own a home! It is unacceptable that if I lost my current housing, I would be forced to leave. There need to be options to allow our community to exist and continue to support each other. Bill 9 is an essential step towards an semblance of community we all deserve.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 5:04pm 06-24-25

I oppose Bill 9.

As a homeowner at Wailea Ekahi III, I support Patricia Char's June 18 testimony. Our complex is PD-H (Hotel) zoned, and short-term rentals have operated legally here for decades. Applying Bill 9 to hotel-zoned properties like ours is unfair, inconsistent with zoning intent, and potentially unconstitutional.

The Maui Planning Commission recently recommended excluding properties designated for hotel use or partially hotel-zoned from this legislation. I urge the Council to follow that recommendation and exclude Wailea Ekahi III and similar properties from Bill 9.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 4:38pm 06-24-25

I oppose this bill. I do not own a STR, but me and my spouse do own a long term zoned condo. We have been saving for a single family home for many years, and even with the interest rate increases, we were about a year from our goal of transitioning into a single family house with a small yard for our dog and keiki. Our condo has lost value immediately following this bill proposal and is likely to lose more, even though the zoning has always been long term. We are now likely 4 or more years away, not even considering the value is likely to go down further if this passes. We have friends in similar boats to us.

This is a government created problem, and a government created "solution" that is hurting families in ways that seem haphazard. It is not just STR mainland owners being harmed. I worry for all the tourism local businesses and jobs in Kihei. We have really gone through it with the pandemic and the fires and quite a few have closed. I really worry about the broader economic impacts of this bill.

I heard someone speak at a prior meeting who claimed it would take 200 years to build this much housing. That is a self imposed, bureaucracy-derived artificial restriction. That is not justification for government harm. The amount of housing units needed for folks displaced by the fires in the west side is way less than what the county is planning to take, never mind that most of that housing is unsuitable for real families. South Maui's housing solutions should be more carefully planned and considered than this bill.

I want homes for our community and family members, but I think this execution is entirely wrong. I have watched two hotels be built in south Maui in the last 5 years. It really seems unfair to put this burden on a collection of individuals that I don't even think the county fully understands who that may include, when something like those developments could have been housing for locals. This is pitting our community against each other, in a similar way that the anti-development versus affordable housing conflict has been difficult for the island to navigate, along with the business realities for construction projects.

Please stop characterizing the people most impacted negatively by this as rich outsiders; the reality is very different from where I stand. Stop building hotels. No new vacation rentals. Build affordable housing in a variety of housing types for locals. Buy back aging buildings meant for STR and hotels threatened by shoreline erosion and allocate equivalent land for local housing. Cut red tape where needed and get rid of old NIMBY zoning policies that may obstruct affordable housing. Help upcountry get water quicker for locals building houses!

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 4:11pm 06-24-25

Aloha e n_ L_I_ o ke K_mike Ho_ohana __ina a me n_ Hale,

I offer this testimony with deep gratitude and kuleana to the land, to our k_puna, and to the families whose roots run generations deep in Maui's soil.

I rise today in unwavering support of Bill 9—not because it's easy, but because it is right. Not because it avoids pain, but because it begins to heal one of the greatest wounds inflicted on this island in our lifetimes: the slow, calculated displacement of local families from their own homeland.

We all watched it happen. Once, apartment-zoned neighborhoods were filled with laughter from keiki running down the hallways after school, aunties barbecuing, k_puna sweeping lanai steps, and families looking out for one another. Now, those same buildings sit hollow in spirit, turned into transient pods for strangers whose only

connection to this island is a reservation number. The vast majority of some apartment buildings in Lahaina, Kihei, and Ma'alaea have become ghost villages in disguise, lit by unfamiliar lights, secured with coded locks, and emptied of aloha.

How did we get here? Slowly, at first—one unit at a time. Then by loophole, then by silence. We were told we needed tourism. We were told we couldn't afford to upset it. We were told there was no other way.

And yet—here we are. Lahaina burned. Families scattered. Workers living in cars. Nurses commuting from Hana to Kahului. K_puna watching their mo_opuna leave for Vegas because they can't survive here. Are we still going to pretend nothing's wrong?

Some say this bill is too drastic. Too fast. Too hard. But let's talk honestly. How long have we waited? How many hundreds of written and spoken testimonies have we heard, crying for change? How many reports, meetings, studies, protests? If anything, this bill is late. But it's not too late.

We can still choose a new path.

Maui k_puna understood that the __ina was not a commodity. Land was a relationship. Housing was a shared responsibility. Decisions were made with future generations in mind, not quarterly earnings.

The short-term rental economy, as it exists, is an inversion of those values. It profits from scarcity, not abundance. From distance, not belonging. It treats our island as a backdrop—not a home. And while tourism does bring money, it does not bring back displaced children. It does not bring back burnt homes. It does not bring back security for our community.

Opponents have argued that STR conversions won't work because the units are too small or too expensive. But I say: give locals the choice first. Let them find the creativity and resilience that their ancestors always had. We've made homes from lava tubes, tarps on the beach, tents, plantation barracks, carports, backyards, cars, and even chicken coops—because we had to. Don't tell us we can't make do with a studio!

Others raise concerns about economic fallout. But look deeper. The AP reported that the total property tax revenue loss might be \$60 million per year. That's less than 4% of our county's latest budget. Meanwhile, the social cost of not acting—of continued homelessness, trauma, and broken families—is immeasurable.

And let me tell you, the trauma is real! Even if you disagree with elements of the Bill or fear this or that consequence, you as Council Members are morally obliged to do something in the face of all the profound suffering that has been presented to you in testimony. Unless you have a better idea that is immediately actionable, basic decency compels you to support the best idea on the table represented by Bill 9.

Listen to Stan Franco, unless you are willing to stand before the community to make the false claim that you have done more, know more, or have worked harder for the housing insecure, who are largely excluded from these proceedings because of barriers to civic participation in testimony that are inherent to housing insecurity.

Some fear lawsuits, citing property rights and legal exposure. But regulating land use is not new. What's new is the courage to do it for the people, not just the market. And with the 2027 sunset and proper grandfathering, the county has balanced fairness with necessity.

Culturally, Bill 9 represents a rare turning point. This is our chance to correct decades of extraction. This is our moment to center k_naka values in zoning policy. This is our way of saying, "We choose aloha over Airbnb. We choose 'ohana over occupancy rates. We choose kuleana over absentee profits."

Let me be clear: I do not hate visitors. I welcome those who come with respect. But we cannot survive if we continue to displace ourselves to make room for them. Hospitality should not come at the cost of local family dignity and survival.

If you vote yes on Bill 9, you are not just closing a loophole. You are opening a doorway for thousands of residents to return home. You are sending a message to every young person wondering if they'll ever afford to live

here: “Yes, this island is still for you.” You are restoring the sacred balance between land, people, and future.

I ask each of you, Councilmembers—especially those of you born and raised here—to remember the stories of your own families. Think of your grandparents and great-grandparents. Would they have voted to preserve a vacation unit, or to house a teacher? Would they have defended profit margins, or made room for the next generation?

And if there is a Councilmember who can sit through all of this testimony—hours of heartfelt confessions from real people describing their intense trauma and pain, their displacement, their fear, their heartbreak—and still vote no on the best, most immediate policy solution we have on the table, then with the deepest respect, then something misaligned will be exposed in your compass of public service.

Councilmembers, I understand that the nine-member Council currently earns \$101,302 each per year, with the Council Chair receiving \$106,367 annually, following a 26%–23% raise effective July 1. This level of six-figure compensation puts you far above the stress and uncertainty of housing insecurity—so much so that to truly understand the shame, the fear, the embarrassment, and the terror of being without shelter requires both imagination and uncomfortable, intentional empathy. None of you on this Council wakes up wondering whether you will be evicted, whether your children will stay safe, or whether your family will be swept away in an emergency because there’s no roof over their heads.

That daily reality is the truth for many of your constituents, and their suffering is fully visible in the testimony before you. If that pain doesn’t move you to support the one policy we have now—Bill_9—then I urge you to look again, reconsider, and vote with both your heart and your paycheck aligned toward justice.

At its core, democracy means paying elected leaders not to serve the wealthy, but to resist their influence—especially in times of crisis. You are not neutral observers. You are paid agents of justice, tasked with infiltrating the halls of power on behalf of those who are voiceless, landless, and politically invisible.

In this moment, that means prioritizing those who are unhoused, overburdened, and left behind by the very tourism economy that has enriched so few while displacing so many. Please take this sacred responsibility with the seriousness it demands. The credibility of our incredible local democracy, and the trust of the people who still believe in it, depend on how you show up for them now.

I don’t say any of this to insult, but to awaken. We are not here to defend ideals in a vacuum. We are here because the ground is burning beneath our feet. Please, if you find yourself leaning toward a no vote, I ask you to reconsider—not for politics, but for your soul, for your neighbors, and for the island you love.

History will remember how you voted. And in Hawaiian thought, the decisions we make in this life echo far into the next. So I say to you with all the reverence in my heart:

Vote yes, and be remembered well.

In this world and the afterlife.

Vote yes with the same urgency you would feel if your own family were facing eviction tomorrow.

Vote yes as if someone without a home is literally on their knees before you—pleading not for charity, but for justice, and asking you to use the power you hold to make this right.

Vote yes for the voters who, due to lacking a permanent residence, could not receive a mail-in ballot—but still made the effort to vote for you in person at a designated voting center. Every single Councilmembers can count voters who believed in your leadership despite having no stable place to call home. Honor their trust. They showed up for you—now it’s your turn to show up for them.

Mahalo nui loa for your time, your service, and your heart.

Aloha

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 3:58pm 06-24-25

I STRONGLY OPPOSE BILL 9. Bill 9 will not increase the affordable housing supply. It will harm the entire Maui economy and thereby harm those needing affordable housing. Those voting to pass this bill understand that these are not reasonable condos for affordable housing and are doing this out of misplaced anger. The true blame should be on the elected officials and govt departments of the past and present who have either neglected to build or prevented building of the necessary infrastructure including roadways, water, sewer, and utilities. The Mayor and County Council should be focusing on building the infrastructure necessary for the next 40 years so Maui can climb out of this crisis. Other states and counties build housing in less than a year and often in less than 9 months. There is no excuse why Maui didn't press forward and build immediately after the fire. Trying to take someone else's property because you feel entitled to it is wrong and will be proven to be illegal. Unfortunately, it may likely cost Maui tens of millions in legal fees and hundreds of millions in lost tax revenue to learn that lesson. VOTE NO ON BILL 9

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 3:34pm 06-24-25

All this bill will accomplish is to punish local small business owners who cater to the tourism industry. If you take away these STRs you are taking away the livelihoods of hundreds of Maui small business owners who will no longer be able to cover their own mortgage or rental payments. How are they supposed to "pivot" after losing the businesses they have worked so hard to build?? Bill 9 makes no economic sense at all and will not provide the affordable housing Maui so greatly needs. Listen to the experts, read the studies and reports.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 3:34pm 06-24-25

To protect our community, we need to phase out short term rentals in our residential areas. We are experiencing one of the most severe housing crises in the U.S. and can no longer afford to allow our communities to be displaced by STRs, nor should you as our elected officials allow the visitor industry more right to residential housing than kama`aina residents. This is your chance to protect our communities right to housing. The economic benefit of STRs is negligible if workers do not have housing. Maui can only survive and prosper if the people from here are able to stay here. Housing our community should be your number one priority, and a vote to ban STRs will show more than anything your commitment to Maui and our neighbors. Please do not turn your back on us, while we are in our greatest time of need. Please vote to ban STRs in residential areas.

Mahalo nui,
Lauren Nelson
Makawao

Deleted User

Location:

Submitted At: 3:31pm 06-24-25

Listen to Stan Franco

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 3:10pm 06-24-25

Aloha Chair and Councilmembers,

I am in staunch support of Bill 9 (2025), Amending Chapters 19.12, 19.32, And 19.37, Maui County Code, Relating to Transient Vacation Rentals in Apartment Districts.

As a transplant, I moved to Maui in 1993 when I was 14 years old. I lived in Napili Ridge with my father and at the time the rent was \$600 a month. My father was fortunate enough to be able to purchase that condo for \$50,000 in 1998. That same condo could now be sold for approximately \$600,000. I believe that is a direct result of the

short-term rental economy that has exploded across the island. There are currently 5 STR's in my building alone, a building of 10 units. I am surrounded by transient accommodations, which dissolves the sense of community that I used to recognize at Napili Ridge and in West Maui.

In the past thirty years, West Maui's tourism industry has risen exponentially, however the infrastructure has not kept up. The roads are still designed for the population of 30 years ago, and on high tourist volume days they become unbearably backed up. The beaches have shrunk exponentially in the past 30 years, and with the growth in tourism they have become over-used and over-crowded. Our water resources are still designed for the population of 30 years ago. It has been stated that there is not enough water for new housing developments, however, that doesn't seem to be a problem when new resorts or luxury housing are built. Why not utilize apartment zoned housing for our residents instead of visitors who already have a plethora of accommodation options?

It is my humble opinion that the island, especially West Maui, has become overrun with tourism. I don't believe that this bill will hurt tourism, there is already an imbalanced ratio of tourists to residents. I believe instead that it will bring about the smallest bit of rebalance to housing that had originally been built for the residents of Maui but was taken away by the Minatoya List. This bill will right a wrong that never should have happened in the first place.

Mahalo for your time.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 1:47pm 06-24-25

Listen to Stan Franco

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 1:46pm 06-24-25

Members of the Maui County Council

I'm writing to you to state my opposition to Bill 9 and the proposed phase out of more than 6000 short-term vacation rentals (STR's) in Maui County. I was born in Oahu but raised on Maui since I was a baby. I'm also an owner of a hotel zoned legal vacation rental in North Kihei. It has been in our family for 50 years.

It is a fact that our economy survives on tourism. The phasing out of a large portion of this vital industry would have destructive economic consequences that would ripple throughout our island economy. Further, the idea that phasing out 6000 STR's will alleviate our housing problems is not a realistic conclusion. Most STR's are 1- or 2-bedroom condominium units with limited parking, no pets, expensive HOA fees and other expenses and onerous property rules and regulations.

The economic benefits that legal STR's bring to our county are enormous. From jobs that are directly related to the managing, cleaning and maintaining of the properties, to the businesses that indirectly benefit from the increased visitor counts that STR's create. These include restaurants, food and household wholesalers, grocery stores, activity providers, retail shops and many more.

It is not any overstatement to say that this phase out would negatively affect every part of Maui's economy.

I greatly encourage you to oppose Bill 9.

Cordially,

James Jones

Pukalani, Hawaii

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 1:43pm 06-24-25

Subject: Opposing Bill 9 – Preserve Maui's Legal Short-Term Rentals and Local Livelihoods

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Honorable Council Members,

I am writing to respectfully voice my strong opposition to Bill 9, which seeks to phase out more than 7,000 legally operating short-term vacation rentals (STRs) in Maui County. These units have long complied with county regulations, contribute substantial tax revenue, support local jobs, and play a critical role in Maui's broader tourism ecosystem.

My husband and I are the owners of one such permitted STR. We purchased our property in good faith based on its codified legal status and have always approached ownership with a sense of responsibility to the community. We employ Maui-based cleaners, landscapers, and maintenance workers — individuals who depend on STRs like ours for reliable income. We also actively recommend nearby restaurants, shops, and activities to our guests.

Many of our visitors are families traveling with children or older relatives. They choose Maui because it offers more than a hotel room — they greatly value the ability to stay in a home-like environment with a kitchen, shared living space, and a stronger connection to the local community. For many, a short-term rental is the only way they can afford to visit Maui at all. Removing this option will not shift them into hotels — it will simply cause them to vacation elsewhere, taking their tourism dollars with them.

This isn't just our personal experience. According to the 2024 UHERO study commissioned by the Hawai'i Community Foundation, phasing out TVRs in Apartment-zoned districts could result in:

- \$900 million in lost annual visitor spending
- 1,900 job losses across the island
- \$60 million decline in property tax revenue by 2029

These numbers are sobering and illustrate just how tightly STRs are woven into the fabric of Maui's local economy.

We understand and share the Council's concern about the housing crisis. However, Bill 9 is not a real solution. It risks sacrificing the economic contributions of law-abiding property owners, local workers, and small businesses — without meaningfully increasing housing supply or affordability. Like many property owners, we face rising costs — including monthly HOA dues, wildfire-related insurance increases, and ongoing maintenance costs for older structures built approximately 45 years ago. STR income helps us meet these significant obligations while keeping the property safe, well-maintained, and available to guests who support local businesses during their stay. These units do not magically become affordable housing through Bill 9.

Other resort communities have taken more thoughtful, effective approaches to provide more affordable housing. In Vail, Colorado — which faces similar housing challenges — the county has implemented voluntary deed-restriction programs (with willing buyers and sellers), down payment assistance, mixed-income developments, and incentives for long-term rental conversions. These solutions respect the codified rights of legal STR owners while addressing housing needs head-on.

I respectfully urge you to vote against Bill 9 in its current form and instead pursue a balanced, data-driven strategy — one that protects long-standing legal operations while expanding real, workable options for local residents in need of housing.

Mahalo for your time, your service, and your thoughtful consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,
Sandra LaBaugh
sandy@itpros.net

Lore Menin

Location:

Submitted At: 1:37pm 06-24-25

I urge the committee to recognize that Bill 9 is a vital corrective measure to Maui's housing market distortions. Responsible vacation rental owners like myself support this bill because it promotes a fair, balanced approach that protects residents and preserves Maui's unique community character. They say if it aint broke dont fix it, but that dont apply here. Bill 9 is the fix.

Thank you for your time.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 1:24pm 06-24-25

Here are some facts: 1 bedroom condo purchased for \$550,000.00 in 2018. We have had to pay \$23,000.00 in assessment and another \$100,000.00 wrapped into our HOA fees. To purchase this condo at the same price (a loss to us) you would need 20 down or \$115,000.00 down leaving \$440,000.00 to mortgage. At 6075% that payment is \$2845.00. Add HOA fees \$2100.00, taxes \$833.00, insurance \$50.00 and a variable amount for utilities you have a monthly payment of \$5837.00 not including utilities. This is for a small 500 square foot 1 bedroom with no pantry, no linen closet, half a closet for clothing, 3 built in drawers, 1 parking space, no washer and dryer (facilities on site) and no pets allowed. Most of the condominiums on the Minatoys list are at least 50 years old and will be undergoing extensive infrastructure replacement and other mandatory repairs at additional assessments to owners.

We listed this condo both for rent (\$2950.00, a break even for us as we don't carry a mortgage) and purchase and NOT 1 local person even inquired about it!

We are not your enemies! we are a retired couple from Oahu (72 and 75) whose grandson and daughter-in-law are born and raised in Lahaina. We purchased the condo so we could visit with them as he is growing up and rent it in between to help costs to our retirement. It is the abject failure of state and county governments to build AFFORDABLE housing for our workforce!

Again, please study these actual financial numbers and ask yourself, do you know anyone who lost housing in the Lahaina fire who could afford this condo? This bill will do nothing to alleviate government inaction.

We respectfully ask that you vote NO on this bill

Edward Codelia

Location:

Submitted At: 1:10pm 06-24-25

Listen to Stan Franco

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 12:35pm 06-24-25

I strongly oppose Bill 9. Please use the recently awarded \$1.6 billion dollar grant from HUD to move forward on permanent housing solutions. Bill 9 will not properly address Maui's housing issues and will devastate the economy and tax base if it passes.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 10:44am 06-24-25

Aloha Chair and Councilmembers,

I submit this testimony in strong support of Bill 9 and the proposed zoning amendments to phase out transient vacation rentals (TVRs) in the Apartment District. Maui is in the midst of a full-blown housing crisis. This bill is one of the clearest opportunities the Council has to take meaningful action.

The core question before you is simple:

Will returning over 6,000 TVRs to the long-term housing market—either as rentals or as for-sale units—help address Maui's severe housing shortage?

The answer is undeniably yes.

Maui is part of the most isolated island chain in the world. Yet, a disproportionate share of our housing stock is owned by out-of-state investors who do not live here, do not vote here, and profit by extracting wealth from our communities. Meanwhile, local families are being priced out, displaced, or forced to leave the islands altogether.

This is not a complex issue. The public interest lies with our residents—nurses, teachers, k_puna, and keiki—who need homes, not hotels disguised as condos.

This legislation is not extreme; it is necessary. It restores balance in our communities and prioritizes housing for

people who live and work here. Times like these require courage and clarity from our elected officials. The choice is between standing with your constituents or continuing to enable a speculative real estate market driven by absentee owners.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony, and for your leadership on this critical issue.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 10:15am 06-24-25

I strongly oppose this ordinance. This is a waste of time and will no doubt be litigated

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 9:39am 06-24-25

ERNEST & VALERIE BAUMBERGER

Our family have been owners of a one bedroom one bathroom apartment at Hale Kamaole for over 40 years through four generations. We have used our unit for short term rentals when not being used by ourselves, our family and/or friends. Our condominium apartment is a one bedroom - less than 900 square feet in size. We wish to express our opposition to the proposed ordinance banning such short term rentals.

First, let us say we are very supportive of efforts to address the housing shortage on Maui and believe there are policy options that can address the issue without the proposed drastic changes to historical short term vacation properties. However, prohibiting us (and similarly situated owners) from short term rental will not generate the substantial additional affordable housing as the ordinance is intended – at least in our case and likely many others. That is because we will not lease our condominium long term which would effectively prevent us, our family and our friends from being able to use the property personally. Likewise, we have no intention to sell should we be prevented from short term rentals. Being a small, one bedroom condominium apartment, our property is not suitable for more than 2 people for any long term period. Thus, the proposed ordinance would seem to fail in its stated objective to generate affordable housing on Maui.

As short term rental owners we pay not only our property taxes but also excise, transient accommodations taxes and other taxes that will be lost to the county and state if we cease short term rentals. It seems there will be unintended consequences to state and local revenues which could lead to reductions in state and local employment and services.

As an older complex, our condominium is facing major structural refurbishing and upgrades. Our complex is currently undergoing a multi-million-dollar plumbing upgrade which has resulted in special assessments and homeowners' dues increases making the complex even less affordable (and less desirable) – particularly for Maui residents.

We currently engage and support a local property manager for maintenance, repair and cleaning services whose employees will face unemployment if we, along with other short term rental owners, no longer need such services for our short term rentals. In addition, we support and refer our rental guests to other small, family owned local businesses such as Kihei Rent A Car rather than large national companies. It seems there is no doubt that elimination of short term rentals will decrease tourism that these small, family owned local business depend on.

Short term rental condominiums attract different types of tourists than do high end hotel resorts. Short term rental condominiums attract more families which tend to support more local small businesses and restaurants than do guests at high end hotel resorts.

For these reasons – and we are sure there are more – we oppose the proposed ordinance eliminating thousands of short term rentals as the solution to Maui's affordable housing shortage.

Thank you for considering our opposition.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 9:17am 06-24-25

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Honorable Committee Members,

My name is Jeff Yeager, and I am the owner of a legally permitted short-term rental in Maui County (Mahina Surf #220). I am writing to respectfully express my strong opposition to Bill 9, which proposes the phase-out of more than 7,000 vacation rentals that have long operated in compliance with county regulations.

I have always taken seriously my role as a responsible and community-oriented property owner. I employ local cleaners, landscapers, and maintenance professionals — individuals who not only keep the property running safely and smoothly, but who also rely on this income to support their families. I also make a conscious effort to promote local restaurants, shops, and tour operators in my guest materials, ensuring that tourism dollars reach the small businesses that form the backbone of Maui's economy.

Many of my guests specifically choose Maui because they value the more authentic and connected experience that a short-term rental provides. Some have even shared that they would not have visited at all if such accommodations were unavailable — a loss that would ripple across the island's tourism-dependent sectors.

Owning and maintaining property on Maui is not without significant challenges. Like many others, I have faced steep increases in insurance premiums following the fires, along with special assessments and the high cost of maintaining older properties in compliance with safety and aesthetic standards. Short-term rental income helps cover these obligations — and, critically, supports the local workers who help me meet them.

Bill 9, as currently drafted, appears to be a sweeping and hasty measure that penalizes responsible property owners rather than addressing the nuanced challenges facing Maui's housing market. I respectfully urge the Council to reconsider this approach and instead engage in a thoughtful, collaborative process that balances the protection of housing for residents with the preservation of legal short-term rentals that provide economic benefits, uphold community standards, and contribute meaningfully to the island's vibrancy.

I ask that you vote against Bill 9 in its current form and work toward a more balanced and inclusive solution.

Mahalo for your time, your service, and your consideration of this critical matter.

Sincerely,
Jeff Yeager
Mahina Surf #220
jayeager19@gmail.com

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 9:14am 06-24-25

I am an owner of a small STR, I provide a huge source of tax revenue to the county. I support my housekeepers family with my business and bring customers into so many now struggling small business.

My HOA is over \$2000 a month, my mortgage is \$3200 a month, thanks to insurance increases... my home is 600 square feet, It's truly not designed as a full time home.

If STR are discontinued I will have to sell.

Maui will lose my tax payment and visitors business. A very short sided and stupid loss.

Mahalo

Kelly

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 8:34am 06-24-25

Hi, my name is Lawrence Daluz. I am actually a part-time resident of Maui and a condo at the Palm at Wailea. I used to spend 50% of my time in Maui and the rest of my time in New York. Unfortunately, since the taxes have been raised so much. I can't afford to go any longer because the expenses in Maui are so high, the property taxes, and HOA fees. If you take away my abilities to rent my condo out short term rental. I'm surely going to go into foreclosure and I will be homeless in Maui. I bought a condo and the condo documents say that I bought a condo hotel and I pay a higher interest rate because of it. Furthermore, during the pandemic in 2020 I rented my condo out to two local people Are very low price and in the end, they stole all of my glassware silverware and scratched my floors into the dining table like they were a tiger claw 8 inches long. So letting local people into my home is not something that I would be willing to do again based on my tragic experience in the past.

The Palms at Wailea is a high-end property and not affordable by the local Hawaiian people. It's in Wailea and a great place for tourist to stay. All the restaurants and stores housekeepers everything that works around a short-term rental market. There is nothing but good for Maui and I beg you to save your economy do it right and not put people like me into foreclosure specially when it's my livelihood and no one again in Maui can afford to live there at least very few people

I beg you, please let please let The Palms at Wailea continue to operate as an STR as it was built to do so with the front desk from outrigger hotel

Best regards, Lawrence Daluz

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 7:56am 06-24-25

Aloha Chair, Vice Char and Committee Members,

Bill 9 does nothing to address Maui's housing issues and would decimate the economy and tax base if it passes.

Crack down on illegal rentals and promote building affordable housing to the exclusion of all other construction. Use your political willpower for that.

Everything else is just people playing politics and a waste of time.

And if it passes, the legal battles the county will be drawn into will last for years and cost the taxpayers millions.

Eric Detwiler
2777 S. Kihei Rd
M204

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 7:10am 06-24-25

I oppose Bill 9 because banning transient vacation rentals will pretty obviously hurt the local economy - and hence local residents - and because it won't do much - if it does anything at all - to solve Maui's housing crisis. Bill 9 may well be politically satisfying but it's not actually going to make life better for anybody on Maui. Maui residents have already endured so much hardship. Please don't make things worse by passing this bill.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 5:48am 06-24-25

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

My name is Kaley Parkinson, and I own a short-term rental property in Maui County. I am writing today to express my deep concern and strong opposition to the proposed legislation, Bill 9.

I appreciate the affordability challenges faced by Maui County residents, made even more so by the fires of last summer. As an owner, I am deeply vested in the health and prosperity of the community I am a part of. I am a small business owner. I employ local service providers; managers, cleaners, maintenance techs, and landscapers; many of whom have I known and worked with for years. I am proud to help contribute to their

families and the well-being of Maui County as a whole. Like all residents and owners, my business has faced enormous increases in costs post the fires, but I continue to invest to ensure the long-term viability of the community I support and those who depend on my business for their family. We provide a cherished home away from home for our guests, many of whom cannot afford astronomically high-priced hotel accommodations and would not visit otherwise. Purpose-built vacation condominiums like mine offer a way for respectful and responsible tourism to sustain viable economic opportunity for the local community in the long term. The UHERO study on the effects of this bill are clear, it is financially devastating to the entire community. Even the "best" case scenario will cause widespread financial hardship for everyone. This is not a solution; it only serves to tear the entire community down. The idea that creating any incremental inventory for long term use is worth ANY cost is simply not true. Artificially destroying the housing market may lower the price of a home, but it does not make it any more affordable. The jobs created by businesses like mine, the taxes generated, these support the entire community. If Maui County's future is in sustainable and responsible tourism, we need to invest together and use those funds to build a new future, not tear down the foundation on which it is built today. One thing about this bill is clear, there are inevitable and deeply negative unintended (and intended) consequences that will affect us all; with no improvement for those who need it most. This legislation looks and feels like a band aid that has no hope of addressing the fundamental issues at hand. It only serves to undermine the financial futures of everyone involved. I urge the Council to work with owners like me to find a fair and balanced path forward — one that protects local jobs, supports the economy, and holds STR owners to high standards, instead of phasing us out completely. Mahalo for your time and consideration. Sincerely,

Kaley and Natalie Parkinson
kaleyp@comcast.net, owner's at The Palms Wailea

Charles Hagerty

Location:
Submitted At: 3:49am 06-24-25

My daughter will not be able to live on island if this legislation passes. She depends on the income to support her living expenses. Please vote against banning short term rentals.

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 1:03am 06-24-25

oppose bill 9, this bill will create nothing but more unaffordable housing, stop doing damage to the community, uphold property rights and help all the people, you're making people think they're going to get free housing on the backs of others, it won't happen, then who will Maui County blame? Start acting like reasonable people and stop listening to hotels and activists, they both only have their personal interests in mind. Let the fires be in the past stop making this tragedy live on.. it only continues to promote hate.. is that what it's all about? you preach "community" but only for some, if you want to start the "healing" stop the hate, start being a leader, start telling the truth, Bill 9 solves nothing.

Sean McBurney

Location:
Submitted At: 10:40pm 06-23-25

Good Day to the Council.

I hope to be brief and to the point.

I find that the answer to a situation like this is often to enforce existing laws rather than create new laws.

We do indeed have a housing problem in Maui even before the fires. And we have an illegal rentals problem.

I feel as though this poorly considered action will create ripple effects that have not been considered that will further hurt the community and economy.

I am an owner of a 1 BR condo at the Kapalua Resort Golf Villas. I spend more than half my time in Maui and contribute to the community as much as I can, for example helping raise close to \$700,000 through a not for profit I helped found for fire relief and programs to help the homeless and children. I rent out my unit at times to vacationers so I can afford to own it and live in it.

It is not a realistic housing solution for a waiter at the Montage, or a yoga teacher, or a surf instructor. Just to keep the lights on via HOA fees and utilities costs over \$1800 per month, not including rent : mortgage, property taxes, and random costs.

Who can afford that? Well someone wealthier than me from the mainland yes, but not the people who need housing. IT IS TOO EXPENSIVE for people in need.

Where will Maui recover the LOST TAX REVENUES from these lost short term rentals?

The jobs I see on the resort - the small business owners, the house cleaners, the pretty managers, the landscapers, the service companies, all of that will diminish if not disappear. HOW WILL THOSE LOST JOBS BE REPLACED?

The Kapalua Resort was designed to be supported by vacation rentals. Why is it on this list? Was any rational thought and analysis applied to the creation of this list? There is no storage, no parking, it is not designed for long term living.

What will happen with the FLOOD of RENTAL UNITS on the market? All of our friends with Ohanas and rental units of her own will have to drop their prices significantly to compete in this flooded market. How will you explain that to your voters when you see them at Foodland or the line up at Laniapoko??

I do see that there are buildings and places that should be revoked but don't think resorts like Kapalua should be on that list. It makes no sense because they don't solve the problem it will create more problems. It is NOT AFFORDABLE HOUSING, trust me I can barely afford it.

The way to create more affordable housing is to BUILD MORE AFFORDABLE HOUSING. And to make sure the people in need get that housing not local real estate agents that flip and sell them. Continue to use the STR tax income to support affordable housing development and have the Hotels pay their fair share to support this as well be use they don't, and they take so much from Maui with respect to POLLUTION and resource consumption. bit get it they lobby hard and provide political contributions.

I have seen this in Vail, Aspen, Whistler where councils take this step and what happens is the ECONOMIC DISPARITY WIDENS. The hotels can charge way more so richer people can come and the middle class owners who are on or off island that care about Maui get displaced by institutional landlords and private equity investors who don't care about the community.

Politically this sounds like a good move so you can tell your voters WE DID SOMETHING but the s tall follow on and downstream effects are going to hurt the people who vote for you while not helping the people that need the help.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Regards, Sean McBurney

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 9:20pm 06-23-25

Please do NOT support this bill as it will be devastating to Maui economy and will do NO good for housing people

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 9:20pm 06-23-25

Please do NOT support this bill as it will be devastating to Maui economy and will do NO good for housing people

WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF BILL 9

To: Maui County Council, Housing and Land Use Committee

From: Edward Codelia, Maui Resident, Realtor

Date: June 24, 2025

Subject: Support for Bill 9 – Phasing Out Transient Vacation Rentals in Apartment Districts

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

I submit this testimony in **support** of **Bill 9**. I believe this legislation is a critical step toward restoring legal clarity, residential stability, and community integrity in our housing policy. It directly addresses years of misuse and misinterpretation of zoning laws, which have allowed hotel-like operations to thrive in residential districts while your residents continue to face the most severe housing crisis in the County’s history.

I. MAUI’S INFRASTRUCTURE AND COMMUNITIES CANNOT ABSORB UNCHECKED TOURISM

Maui County is home to approximately **164,000 full-time residents**, with the island of Maui accounting for over **168,000 residents** (U.S. Census 2020). Yet, **monthly visitor arrivals consistently range from 200,000 to 240,000**, and the **daily visitor census**—the number of tourists physically on the island—regularly fluctuates between **50,000 and 70,000**, according to the Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism (DBEDT). In **January 2025**, the average daily visitor count on Maui was **approximately 57,800**.

This level of tourism overloads Maui’s infrastructure: roads, water systems, emergency services, solid waste management, healthcare capacity—and most critically, housing. While tourism remains a pillar of our economy, its current **scale and saturation** are **ecologically, socially, and economically unsustainable**. Bill 9 does not attack tourism; it establishes lawful limits to protect residential zones from being overrun by commercial use.

II. BILL 9 UPHOLDS THE SPIRIT AND LETTER OF STATE AND COUNTY HOUSING POLICY

In 2023, Governor Josh Green issued an **Emergency Proclamation on Housing**, recognizing the urgent need to expand and preserve long-term housing for Hawai’i residents. That proclamation identifies the **preservation of existing housing stock** and the **removal of regulatory and zoning barriers** as key strategies to confront the housing crisis.

Allowing transient vacation rentals to persist in apartment-zoned districts **contradicts both state and county housing goals**. These units were never intended or zoned for hotel-style turnover. Their continued use as TVRs undermines zoning integrity, erodes community trust in public policy, and directly **removes housing from the long-term rental pool**—at a time when teachers, healthcare workers, kūpuna, and young families struggle to remain housed.

Bill 9 is not a prohibition on tourism. It is a reassertion of lawful land-use boundaries. Apartment zoning is explicitly intended for **residential use**, not commercial lodging. If an owner or association desires commercial hotel use, it must seek a legal rezoning—not exploit a loophole to extract private profit at public expense.

III. MAUI'S FINITE LAND BASE REQUIRES DISCIPLINED LAND-USE

Unlike cities on the continental U.S., Maui is a **closed ecological and economic system**. We cannot sprawl endlessly into surrounding counties. Every parcel matters. Every zoning designation is a deliberate social contract. Apartment districts were designed to meet long-term housing demand.

Instead, many have become backdoor hotels—legal fictions fueled by speculative capital. These STVR conversions are not neutral. They have **actively displaced working-class residents**, undermined intergenerational housing security, and driven artificial inflation of real estate values based on illegal or expired transient use.

Maui has **limited developable land**, limited infrastructure capacity, and limited public tolerance for being displaced in our own home. Bill 9 affirms that zoning exists to protect people, not just property rights.

IV. SHORT-TERM RENTALS DISTORT HOUSING MARKETS AND DISPLACE COMMUNITIES

As a licensed Realtor, I have witnessed the market distortions caused by the proliferation of STVRs in apartment zones. Short-term rental income potential drives up prices well beyond what local wage earners can afford. These inflated valuations do not reflect the cost of construction or the intrinsic utility of the property—they reflect speculative value based on illegal commercial use.

This distortion has **artificially inflated assessed values**, skewed appraisals, and undermined equitable taxation and valuation models. Buildings once used for multigenerational living or local rentals now cater to a revolving door of tourists. Schools lose enrollment. Neighborhoods lose cohesion. Safety becomes harder to maintain.

Communities are not built on transience. They are built on continuity, relationships, mutual aid, and place-based identity. STVRs erode those foundations.

Bill 9 offers a powerful solution: recover existing units for residents **without the delays or costs of new construction**. This is the lowest-hanging fruit in our housing strategy, and we must act swiftly before more units are permanently lost to commodified lodging.

V. LEGAL AND ECONOMIC CLARITY SUPPORT THIS POLICY

Opponents of Bill 9 argue that it represents a "taking" or harms investor rights. This is legally inaccurate. Operating a transient rental in a residentially zoned apartment building has always been **non-conforming** or contingent upon **permits**, many of which are **expired** or **never obtained**.

Zoning enforcement is not a seizure—it is an expression of the County’s **police power** to regulate land use for the health, safety, and welfare of its people.

Moreover, the economic obsolescence inflicted by TVRs is real. When residential neighborhoods are converted to commercial use, the **surrounding properties lose long-term value** for residents. Infrastructure ages without reinvestment. Community schools and amenities are neglected. Local businesses lose steady customers in favor of tourist volatility.

The principle of **highest and best use** in real estate appraisal includes **legality** and **feasibility**. Operating an STVR in an apartment district **is neither legally permitted nor socially sustainable**. Bill 9 corrects this by restoring zoning conformity and long-term economic integrity.

VI. MAUI MUST PRIORITIZE PUBLIC INTEREST OVER PRIVATE SPECULATION

No one is entitled to profit from an illegal use. The County is not confiscating anyone’s home—it is clarifying that **commercial lodging is not a protected right in residentially zoned apartments**.

This is a moral and legal stand:

- Should the County protect investor returns, or the right of its residents to remain housed?
- Should land use serve the short-term gains of absent owners, or the long-term health of local communities?

Bill 9 is the County’s answer—and it is the correct one.

VII. CONCLUSION: PASS BILL 9 FOR THE FUTURE OF MAUI

Bill 9 is not extreme. It is reasonable, overdue, and grounded in long-standing principles of land use, economic justice, and environmental stewardship. It affirms that housing is not a speculative asset—it is a human need and a community foundation.

Passing Bill 9 will:

- Recover housing for long-term local use
- Realign zoning with legal intent
- Restore market clarity
- Reduce neighborhood disruption
- And advance the County’s responsibility to serve its people first

Maui deserves to be a place where kama‘āina can live, not just visit. Our zoning laws are not suggestions—they are promises. Let’s keep them.

I urge you to pass Bill 9 without amendment and without delay.

Mahalo for your time and leadership.

Respectfully,
Edward Codelia
Maui Resident, Licensed Realtor