

**Testimony on Amendments to Residential Workforce Policy (HH-2)
November 18, 2016**

Good afternoon Chair Crivello and members of the Housing, Human Services & Transportation Committee.

My name is Tom Blackburn-Rodriguez and I am testifying today as a representative of Go Maui, Inc. on a proposed ordinance to amend chapter 2.96, Maui County Code relating to residential workforce housing policy.

Go Maui supports the intent of this bill, which is to extend housing credits for rental options. Affordable rental units are rare in Maui and getting harder to find with each passing day. With a lack of supply rents are going up and people are doubling and tripling up because they are caught in the middle with no place to go.

While the current market for housing credits is in a surplus mode, this will not always be the case and the bill in question puts in place a process to address housing credits for rental developments that will be there when it is needed. We support such forward planning.

A couple of quick suggestions:

Section 2.96.070, Residential workforce housing restrictions section C2, "c" asks that proof of compliance with income-guidelines for rental units be submitted quarterly. This seems overly burdensome and can take more staff time than available. We suggest an annual compliance report.

Section D lays out the penalty process for the failure to comply regarding income guidelines. This seems a bit complex and does not say who issues the fine and how it is to be collected. There are no penalties mentioned for not paying the fine.

Section E. "Annual Recertification" appears to set one renter against another and can remove one renter from their apartment in order to replace them with an income qualified renter. What happens to the renter having to leave because their income increased? In the current market they may not find anything to rent. Perhaps this section can be reviewed giving the Director more discretion so that it does not inadvertently punish people for their economic mobility and hard work.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of Go Maui and thank you for your continued efforts to assist in developing truly affordable housing for local people.

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