

Chair Kama and members of the Affordable Housing Committee:

My name is Tom Blackburn-Rodriguez and I am speaking on behalf of Go Maui Inc. on agenda item: Biennial Review of Residential Workforce Housing Policy.

More information about Go Maui can be found at gomaiiinc.org.

Go Maui endorses the income distributions under the current version of 2.96.

If the income categories of 80-140% of AMI were eliminated it would wipe out the value of the Affordable Housing Fund for police officers, experienced firefighters and EMT personnel, special education teachers, community and social service workers, health care support workers, library technicians, correctional officers and jailers, among others.

These are essential workers who desperately need workforce housing and we need to keep them here and not push them out to the mainland.

What citizen will vote to take an increasing percentage of our tax revenue to fund a program from which they have been deliberately excluded? This could fatally fracture the community consensus on affordable housing funding.

According to the most recent U.S. Census data the median income for Maui County is \$77,114.

According to the Realtors Association of Maui the median sale price in December 2019 for a single-family home was \$740,000. An increase of 4.6 percent over 2018.

The RAM Affordable Housing Index measures housing affordability for the region. For example, an index of 120 means the median household income is 120% of what is necessary to qualify for the median-priced home under prevailing interest rates. A higher number means greater affordability.

Currently, the RAM Affordable Housing Index stands at 45, a decrease of 2.2 percent from the same time period in 2019.

Respectfully, this is not the time to change horses in mid-stream.

We do not need to tweak income levels. Any suggestions that we can waive a wand and order developers to build housing for the income groups we are abandoning is not realistic.

We do not live in a government planned and command economy.

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The solution is to work together to do what it takes to build thousands of new housing units, including single-family homes, rentals and experimental homes.

Thank you for your time.