

Housing and Land Use Committee (2025-2027) on 2025-07-23 9:00 AM - Reconvened from 6/9, 6/18, 6/23, 6/24, 6/25, & 7/2/25

Meeting Time: 07-23-25 09:00

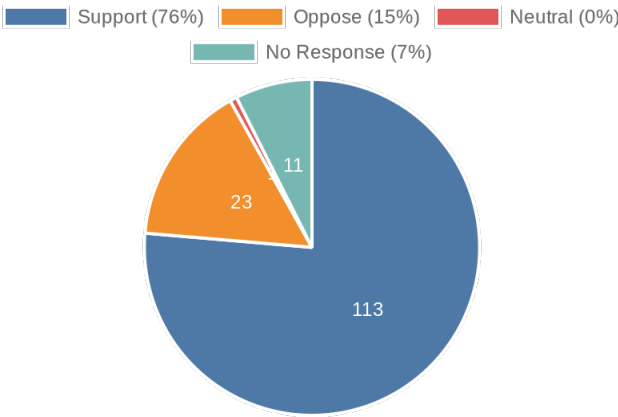
eComments Report

Meetings	Meeting Time	Agenda Items	Comments	Support	Oppose	Neutral
Housing and Land Use Committee (2025-2027) on 2025-07-23 9:00 AM - Reconvened from 6/9, 6/18, 6/23, 6/24, 6/25, & 7/2/25	07-23-25 09:00	2	148	113	23	1

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



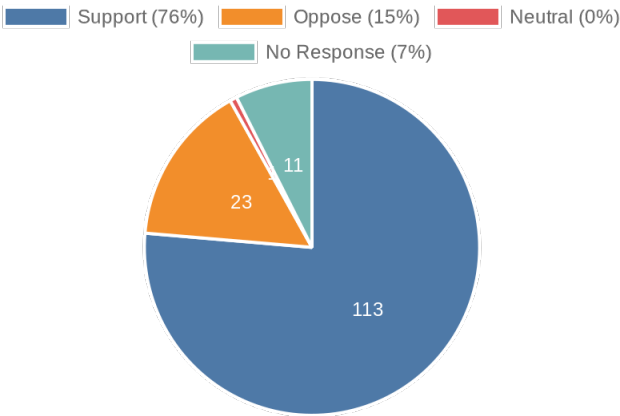
Housing and Land Use Committee (2025-2027) on 2025-07-23 9:00 AM - Reconvened from 6/9, 6/18, 6/23, 6/24, 6/25, & 7/2/25
07-23-25 09:00

Agenda Name	Comments	Support	Oppose	Neutral
A G E N D A	68	57	10	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)	80	56	13	1

Sentiments for All Agenda Items

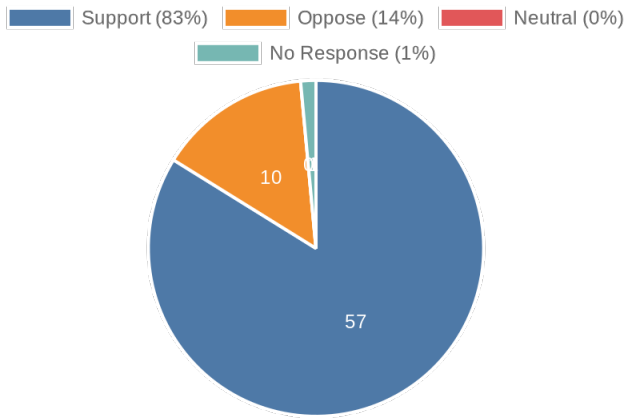
The following graphs display sentiments for comments that have location data. Only locations of users who have commented will be shown.

Overall Sentiment



Agenda Item: eComments for A G E N D A

Overall Sentiment



Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 12:52pm 07-23-25

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

I write in **strong support of Bill 9**, which is a necessary and overdue correction to decades of misapplied zoning practices that have worsened Maui's housing crisis, displaced residents, and undermined our public trust obligations.

Below are **key points in support of this bill** and rebuttals to the most common arguments made in opposition.

1. Profitability Is Not the County's Kuleana

Opponents claim many STR owners "lose \$25,000 annually," arguing they are not part of the problem. But **land use policy is not based on private investor ROI.** Whether or not an owner profits, **each STR still removes a potential home from Maui's long-term housing supply.** The County's kuleana is to serve its people, not protect investor balance sheets.

2. STR Units Are Suitable for Local Housing

Some argue that "families would not live" in these units due to small size, parking limits, or HOA rules. This is false. **Thousands of Maui families already live in similar apartments with shared parking, pet restrictions, and HOA covenants.** For young couples, k_puna, and workforce housing, **a 2-bedroom, 2-bath apartment is a viable and much-needed home.**

3. STR Trading and Loopholes Show the Need for Enforcement

Opponents admit they may “trade time” with other owners if STRs are restricted. This illustrates **why Bill 9 must pass**—to close loopholes and prevent illegal commercial use in residential districts.

4. This Is Not “Short-Sighted”—It Is Immediate Relief

Some say the “real problem” is construction delays and regulation. But Maui does not have the luxury of waiting 5–10 years for new development. **Bill 9 offers immediate, low-cost relief by returning existing residential units to the long-term market now.**

5. STR Tax Revenue Does Not Justify Displacement

It is argued that the County will lose “hundreds of millions” in STR revenue. But this revenue has **not improved local housing affordability or quality of life.** It has subsidized tourism while Maui residents are priced out. Residents living and spending locally generate **steady, sustainable tax revenue year-round** without overloading infrastructure.

6. Even Partial Conversion Will Help

Opponents claim “no one will convert,” but even a **25–40% conversion rate returns 1,000–2,000 units**—enough to meaningfully reduce displacement pressures. With strong enforcement and demand for long-term rentals, many owners will choose to rent to residents.

7. STR Revenue Cannot Be the Basis for Housing Policy

Some propose keeping STRs and using their revenue to build housing. This is circular logic—**continuing to displace residents to fund housing only worsens the crisis.** The County’s zoning authority exists to **preserve residential use, not subsidize commercial tourist accommodations.**

8. STRs Do Strain Resources

Opponents compare STR water use to hotels, but that is irrelevant. **The proper comparison is STR vs. long-term residential use.** STRs use more water, produce more waste, and generate more traffic due to high guest turnover.

9. Legal Precedent Supports Bill 9

Some argue that other cities reversed STR bans. But many jurisdictions—**Honolulu, Santa Monica, and Barcelona among them—successfully phased out STRs in residential zones.** Maui has strong constitutional authority under the **public trust doctrine** to protect housing for residents.

10. The Minatoya Exemption Was a Policy Mistake

The “Minatoya list” was **never intended as a permanent entitlement.** Many of these apartment units were originally built as workforce housing. **Bill 9 corrects this historic failure by returning A-1 and A-2 properties to their intended residential purpose.**

11. Tourism Will Continue Without STRs in Housing Zones

Visitors come to Maui for its natural beauty, not because they can stay in an apartment district. Hotels and legal resort-zoned condos provide ample accommodations. **Over-tourism has already contributed to wildfire risks, traffic congestion, and declining resident quality of life.** Bill 9 supports a shift to a **more sustainable tourism model.**

12. Bill 9 Strengthens Maui's Economy by Stabilizing the Workforce

Opponents claim STRs benefit the economy, but **an economy that displaces its own workforce is unsustainable.** Housing residents near their jobs reduces commuting, keeps local spending circulating, and creates year-round economic stability rather than seasonal tourist dependence.

CONCLUSION

Bill 9 is not just a zoning adjustment; it is a moral, economic, and legal obligation to restore housing to Maui residents, correct decades of failed policy, and fulfill the County's public trust duty.

I urge you to pass Bill 9 without delay.

Mahalo for your time and commitment to our community.

Respectfully submitted,

Reggie Akamai

Deleted User

Location:

Submitted At: 11:32am 07-23-25

1. Alice Lee's Premise is Flawed: Mainland Investors Already Own These Units

Current Reality:

The majority of the **Apartment District (A-1 and A-2 zoned properties)** under the Minatoya Exemption are already dominated by mainland and foreign investors. The County's own tax records show high percentages of out-of-state ownership.

Bill 9 Doesn't Change Ownership—It Changes USE:

Bill 9 does not **increase** or **encourage** mainland purchases. It simply shifts allowed use from **short-term transient rentals** to **long-term residential housing**.

If mainland investors already own these properties, they're **not “suddenly flocking”** because of Bill 9.

Cyclical Market, Not County-Controlled:

Real estate markets are cyclical and influenced by **interest rates, federal tax codes (1031 exchanges, capital gains), and global investor sentiment**—not by Bill 9. Investors will come and go regardless of this legislation.

The County's kuleana is to **regulate land use for the public good, not investor ROI.

2. Budget Cuts Argument is Misleading

Alice Lee's call for budget cuts assumes that **Bill 9 will cause a major tax revenue loss**. This is questionable for several reasons:

a. STVR Tax Revenue is Not Reliable or Sustainable

* STVR-related revenue is **volatile** and tied to global tourism cycles, pandemics, wildfires, and flight costs.
* Maui's overdependence on transient accommodation tax (TAT) and property tax from STVRs has **not translated to improved housing or infrastructure** for residents.

b. Bill 9 Could Stabilize Revenue in the Long Term

Transitioning these units to long-term housing can **increase resident population stability**, which leads to **more consistent GET (General Excise Tax)**, **local spending**, and **service-based employment**—a more reliable tax base.

Overcrowding, car saturation, and wildfire risks (which were worsened by over-tourism in these areas) are **far costlier** to the County than any modest revenue dip.

c. Budget Priorities Need Reevaluation, Not Cuts

* If Bill 9 forces a revenue adjustment, the logical response is **reprioritization**—cutting wasteful tourism subsidies, tightening speculative loopholes—not slashing essential public services for residents.

3. The “Mainland Investor Takeover” Hypothetical is Illogical

Alice Lee's “what if” scenario implies that Bill 9 will make the market more attractive to mainland speculators. The opposite is true:

a. Mainland Investors Prefer STVR Income

Investors are motivated by **high nightly rates**, not by long-term residential rents. Eliminating STVR use in these zones **reduces speculative appeal

b. Depressed STVR Value = Opportunity for Local Buyers

A cooling of speculative demand could **lower prices** and open pathways for **local families, nonprofits, and housing programs** to acquire these units.

c. Mainland Investor Ownership is Already Here

This concern is decades late; the Minatoya Exemption accelerated out-of-state purchases beginning in the 1990s. If Alice Lee is suddenly worried about investor control, she should be **supporting Bill 9** because it curtails the very STVR-driven incentive that attracted them.

4. The Real Question: Who Does Alice Lee Think the County Works For?

* The County's kuleana is **not to protect speculative investors or to guarantee County coffers through volatile tourism taxes**.

* The County's kuleana **is to protect residents, stabilize housing, and mitigate risks**—including:

* **Wildfire risk worsened by overdevelopment and transient density** (L_hain_ fires are a clear warning).

* **Overpopulation and car saturation** straining roads, water, and emergency response.

* **The declared housing emergency**, which makes keeping A-1 and A-2 units in residential use a legal and ethical obligation.

Mainland investors are already here—Bill 9 doesn't invite them, it removes their biggest incentive: short-term rental income. Real estate markets are cyclical and beyond County control, but housing policy is not. Alice Lee's budget cut threats are based on short-term speculation, not long-term stability. Bill 9 protects residents, not investor ROI, and that is the County's true kuleana."

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 10:15am 07-23-25

Hotel designation as it is written requires minimum count of full time staff and a front desk within the building. Some building don't meet those requirements.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 9:56am 07-23-25

Aloha,

I strongly support Bill 9 as we desperately need affordable housing now. I wish the amortization period would end sooner than 2028. Reducing the number of TVRs will not devastate tourism; as we have seen during Covid-19, people who want to visit Maui will find a way to come. If some TVRs are no longer available, they can book other TVRs, hotel rooms, B and Bs, and timeshares.

We have an acute shortage of professionals and workers on Maui, incl. teachers, medical professionals, government workers, labor, even lifeguards. People who want to move (back) here to help and contribute by filling the many open positions cannot do so because housing is scarce and too expensive.

I understand that the tourism/vacation rental industries and the developers/construction industries heavily lobby against this bill; I sincerely hope that we can put the well-being of our community first and before profits. Denying residents a basic need (housing) so others (e.g., mainland corporations, mainland investors) can continue to profit is akin to controlling a well and selling water to the highest bidder while people around the well are dying of thirst.

For a healthy and sustainable visitor-to- resident ratio, please consider the Maui Island Plan that suggested a visitor population that is one-third of the resident population, which has been exceeded in recent years to over 40%.

Mahalo for taking the time and earnestly considering and debating this very important issue.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 8:24am 07-23-25

Supporting Bill 9 from California

According to the Maui county website it states there no video for todays meeting?! Not everyone can make it in person and surely so many wish to witness what's happening. Am I mistaken, Is there a link to witness?

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 8:14pm 07-22-25

While building new affordable housing is absolutely necessary, Bill 9 addresses a different but equally urgent problem—the ongoing misuse of existing housing stock in the Apartment District (A-1 and A-2 zoned properties) for short-term vacation rentals (STVRs).

1. Bill 9 provides immediate relief by returning hundreds of existing, ready-to-occupy housing units to the long-term rental market. Constructing new affordable housing takes 5–10 years, but reclaiming these units can happen in months.

2. Maui's housing crisis is not only about new construction—it's about accessibility of existing housing. Even if we build more units, as long as investors continue converting residential apartments into tourist accommodations, locals will keep getting displaced. Bill 9 closes that loophole.

3. The County's duty is to balance both short- and long-term solutions. Passing Bill 9 and building new affordable

housing are not mutually exclusive; in fact, Bill 9 helps reduce pressure on infrastructure, land use, and speculative pricing, making future affordable housing development more viable.

4. Keeping status quo benefits investors, not residents. Failure to act allows speculative buying to continue, pushing housing prices further out of reach for Maui families while taxpayers shoulder the cost of emergency housing and subsidies.

In short, Bill 9 is a necessary first step in stabilizing the housing market and protecting local residents, while new affordable housing projects are planned and built.

Ezra Bridger, Wailuku

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 6:46pm 07-22-25

Please do not pass this Bill. It will not solve Maui's affordable housing crisis, either short-term or long-term. What you should spend your time, efforts and our money on is BUILDING new affordable housing; for current and future needs of our County.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 5:18pm 07-22-25

Good morning.

I support Bill 9 as a solution to recreate long term housing on Maui .

On the maui County Property tax and on the Maui Real estate information , when building were built, it was their property address that confirmed their zoning and use.

In the 1962 Amfac took their agriculturally zoned 1200 acres and decided to create a tourist destination. It did not become a district. It did become a 1200 acre destination with lots zoned for hotel, lots for residential condominiums, apartment use lots, used for employer housing, retail zoned lots and residential house lots. It is not a Hotel "district".

The same thing happened in Honolua area. Maui Land & Pine changed their Agriculture land into a resort area. The Kapalua bay Hotel was opened in 1978 as a hotel and then became a timeshare. The Ironwoods opened 1979 zoned A-2 , Kapalua bay villas zoned A-2, Kapalua Golf Villas A2, when the the Ridge Kapalua was built it also changed from Ag zoning to Apartment 2. Some of their agriculturally zoned land the developers had rezoned as PD . Kapalua is not and never was all Hotel Use zoned.

Please look at the Maui zoning on a lot by lot basis . We have lost enough residential zoned lots .

Sincerely

Robin ritchie

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 4:53pm 07-22-25

Aloha Chair Kama

_ 20 Reasons to Support Bill 9

1. Bill 9 Corrects a Zoning Loophole, Restoring Properties to Their Intended Use

Apartment Districts (A-1 and A-2) were designed for residential housing, not transient visitor lodging. Bill 9 closes the long-standing Minatoya Exemption loophole and realigns zoning with its original legal intent.

2. It Addresses Housing Shortages by Stopping the Bleeding of Units to Tourism

While Bill 9 doesn't build new housing overnight, it prevents further loss of existing housing stock to STVR use. Every apartment unit removed from STVR circulation is a potential home for a Maui family.

3. Public Trust in Government Requires Fixing Past Mistakes

The County has a legal and moral duty to correct a policy (the Minatoya Exemption) that unintentionally harmed

residents. Continuing to allow STVRs in apartment zones undermines public confidence in zoning laws.

4. It Serves the Greatest Public Need: Housing for Residents

The County Council must balance competing interests, but its primary duty is to protect the majority of residents suffering from housing insecurity—not to preserve speculative investments for a smaller group of owners.

5. Economic Stability Depends on a Housed Workforce

Maui cannot sustain a visitor-driven economy without workers who can afford to live here. By restoring housing to residents, Bill 9 stabilizes the workforce, which supports businesses and services across all industries.

6. Local Jobs Will Transition, Not Disappear

Opponents argue that workers (cleaners, landscapers, maintenance staff) will lose jobs, but these same services will be needed for long-term rentals, affordable housing rehabilitation, and resident-occupied apartments, which provide more stable employment.

7. Housing Residents Circulates More Money Locally

Visitor spending disproportionately benefits off-island corporations and investors, whereas resident housing increases local spending, GET, and property tax circulation within Maui's economy.

8. Bill 9 Reduces Maui's Dangerous Overdependence on Tourism

The L_hain_ fire and COVID-19 showed how fragile Maui's tourism-dependent economy is. Bill 9 diversifies the economic base by ensuring more housing for residents, which keeps essential workers on-island.

9. Phasing Out STVRs Reduces Inflationary Pressure on Housing Prices

Apartment-zoned STVRs artificially inflate property values, making apartments unaffordable for residents. Returning these properties to housing use will help stabilize or lower market prices over time.

10. It Protects Community Infrastructure and Public Services

Visitor density in residential zones strains roads, water, sewage, and emergency services. Bill 9 reduces this burden, improving quality of life for residents and lowering County maintenance costs.

11. Tax Revenue from STVRs Has Not Solved the Housing Crisis

Despite millions in STVR tax revenue, housing insecurity has worsened. Bill 9 shifts focus from collecting taxes on the problem to solving the problem itself.

12. Long-Term Housing Generates More Sustainable Revenue

Resident-occupied housing creates consistent GET and income tax revenue from workers who live, spend, and raise families here—rather than relying on volatile tourism cycles.

13. It Reduces Depopulation and Keeps Families on Maui

Bill 9 helps prevent the ongoing exodus of local families who are forced to move to the mainland due to housing costs, preserving Maui's cultural identity and workforce stability.

14. The Transition is Gradual, Not Abrupt

Bill 9 includes a phase-out period, giving owners and workers time to adjust and redeploy resources toward long-term housing markets.

15. It Reduces Social Inequity Caused by Speculative Ownership

Many apartment STVRs are owned by off-island investors who profit while local residents struggle. Bill 9 prioritizes housing for people who live and work here over speculative income streams.

16. It Decreases Wildfire and Disaster Risks Linked to Overpopulation

Visitor overconcentration increases traffic congestion and evacuation challenges, as seen in the L_hain_ fires. Reducing transient lodging in residential zones improves public safety and disaster preparedness.

17. It Aligns With the Emergency Proclamation on Housing

The Governor and County have declared a housing emergency. Continuing to allow STVRs in apartment zones directly contradicts the declared emergency need for housing.

18. Ending the Minatoya Exemption is Legally Defensible and Ethically Necessary

The exemption was never intended to permanently override residential zoning. Clarifying and enforcing the law protects the County from future lawsuits and fulfills its public trust obligation.

19. It Improves Quality of Life for Residents

Fewer transient visitors in residential zones means less noise, traffic, and overcrowding, improving the livability of Maui's communities.

20. It Balances Long-Term Community Health Over Short-Term Profit

Bill 9 represents a strategic, long-term investment in Maui's future. Sacrificing a portion of short-term rental profits now prevents deeper economic and social collapse later.

Deleted User

Location:

Submitted At: 9:05am 07-22-25

In August_2023, Maui faced a catastrophic wildfire that destroyed over 2,200 structures—96% residential—across L_hain_ and burned more than 17,000 acres, resulting in at least \$5.5_billion in property damage. Housing recovery alone is projected to cost \$2.4_billion, with three-quarters of those units formerly rental homes—more than 5,500 units destroyed, deepening displacement and skyrocketing rents. Many displaced households now pay 43% more in rent for equivalent housing, and the broader economic toll—including lost tourism income, jobs, and tax revenue—is estimated at \$12_billion, with over 12,000 residents displaced.

And yet, humanitarian aid and housing recovery measures have been stalled in committee for nearly two years, delayed by lobbying from desperate, inhumane investor groups who have fought to preserve this zoning loophole at the expense of wildfire survivors. This obstruction has kept thousands of displaced residents in hotels, cars, and unsafe temporary housing while investors argue for their right to continue extracting profits from Maui's limited housing stock.

Compared to this scale of destruction—the economic, social, and human cost—the financial correction imposed by Bill_9 is minimal. The real devastation is the ongoing suffering of Maui's people, held hostage by policy gridlock driven by STR investors. Closing this loophole is not just zoning reform; it is an urgent humanitarian necessity.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 12:02pm 07-21-25

Here is a Bill 9 Fact Sheet designed to quickly debunk the misleading narratives being pushed by realtors and STVR owners. This can be attached to written testimony, handed to committee members, or used as talking points for oral testimony.

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FACT SHEET: Debunking Misleading Claims About Bill 9

Restoring Housing for Maui Residents – Correcting Decades of Abuse in the Apartment District (A-1 and A-2 zoned properties)

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1. “Local families won’t buy these apartments – they’re too small and too expensive.”

FALSE.

_ Not all households are families of four. Teachers, nurses, k_puna, single parents, and young professionals urgently need one- and two-bedroom units.

_ Prices and HOA fees are artificially inflated by STVR use—wear-and-tear, transient insurance costs, and speculation all drive costs up.

_ As visitor demand decreases, market prices and long-term rental rates will adjust downward, making these units accessible to residents.

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2. “Bill 9 will hurt Maui’s economy.”

FALSE.

_ “Economic impact studies” cited by STVR owners were funded or influenced by the tourism industry and measure visitor spending—not community well-being.

_ Maui’s economy is already collapsing for residents because workers cannot find housing; without a workforce, businesses, schools, and hospitals suffer.

_ Over-tourism costs (traffic, wildfires, infrastructure strain) outweigh the short-term profits of STVR speculation.

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3. “This isn’t an investment property – it’s our family home.”

FALSE.

_ If a property is used part-time and rented for income when not in use, it is an investment property by definition.

_ Emotional appeals about “family memories” do not change the fact that these homes are unavailable to residents who have no housing at all.

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4. “One-bedroom condos aren’t suitable for local housing.”

FALSE.

_ Maui’s housing crisis affects all household types—k_puna, single workers, young couples, and childless families also need safe housing.

_ Claiming “if it’s not big enough for a family of four, it’s useless” is a stall tactic to protect STVR profits.

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5. “We should just build more housing instead of taking ours.”

FALSE.

- _ New construction takes 5–10 years, while families displaced by the L_hain_ fires and local workers need housing now.
- _ Thousands of existing units are locked in the visitor economy—restoring them is the fastest relief available.

6. “We’ve paid hundreds of thousands in taxes—we support the community.”

MISLEADING.

- _ Paying property taxes is a legal obligation, not a charitable act.
- _ Taxes do not create housing; housing supply must be restored by returning residential-zoned units to residential use.

7. “Local residents and Native Hawaiians should be allowed to run STVRs – it’s not PONO to take that away.”

FALSE.

- _ The greatest need for Native Hawaiians and local residents is stable housing, not tourism side-businesses.
- _ Every STVR unit removes a potential home from the community, driving residents—and Hawaiian families—out of their homeland.

8. “Bill 9 is strange and makes no logical sense.”

FALSE.

- _ Bill 9 is a straightforward correction of a zoning loophole (the Minatoya Exemption) that allowed apartment-zoned residential units to become hotel substitutes.
- _ The highest and best use of residential zoning is to house people, not transient visitors.

THE TRUTH: WHY BILL 9 IS NECESSARY

- _ Bill 9 restores residential zoning integrity.
- _ Bill 9 immediately increases housing supply without new construction.
- _ Bill 9 protects Maui’s workforce, culture, and economy by keeping residents here.
- _ Bill 9 prioritizes PONO land use—the people before profits.

Approve bill 9

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 11:10am 07-20-25

Leaders provide relief, not resistance — approve Bill 9 or step down.

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 10:32am 07-20-25

Most opposition to Bill 9 comes from people who don’t rely on Maui’s local housing market—they rely on investment returns. Many aren’t even rooted here beyond their STR properties. That’s not who should decide Maui’s future. If you can’t approve resign.

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 10:19am 07-20-25

Haoles now make up the largest single voting bloc in Maui. That shift should alarm anyone who values Native Hawaiian and local cultural survival. Bill 9 is one of the few tools left to protect Maui from becoming just another mainland tourist suburb. (Too Late)

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 10:27pm 07-19-25

We are bleeding residents faster than we can house them—this is not sustainable.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 5:42pm 07-19-25

Buying out STVRs is not affordable housing; it's an investor bailout.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 11:40am 07-19-25

It is deeply troubling that some realtors, property managers, and even cleaning contractors are reportedly encouraging owners and condominium associations to sue the County to block this bill. This is not only unethical, it may be illegal.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 11:23am 07-19-25

Those who oppose this bill are not standing for “property rights” or “fairness”; they are standing against humanitarian relief. They are opposing the right of Maui residents to live with dignity in their own home communities.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 9:42am 07-19-25

Ethical realtors and property managers should support this bill because it helps the community they serve. Those who oppose it need to be honest: they are opposing humanitarian relief for the people of Maui.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 9:21am 07-19-25

The true measure of our economy is how we treat our people, not how many tourists we host.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 1:17am 07-19-25

I, too, support creating truly affordable housing for local residents—but that is not the purpose of Bill 9, and this argument misleads the public. Bill 9 is not an affordable housing bill; it is a land-use correction bill aimed at restoring Apartment District (A-1 and A-2 zoned properties) to their intended residential use. The claim that Bill 9 should be opposed because it “does not create affordable housing” is irrelevant—no zoning enforcement bill can “create” housing; it can only ensure that existing residential-zoned housing is actually used for residential purposes.

1. Humanitarian Impact – Who Is Suffering Now?

Thousands of Maui residents are displaced, overcrowded, and priced out because Apartment District units—originally intended for long-term housing—are being used as short-term vacation rentals (STVRs). Every unit used as a hotel room is one less home for a teacher, nurse, restaurant worker, or kupuna caregiver. The humanitarian crisis is not theoretical; it is happening right now. Bill 9 will not solve all housing issues, but it will stop the hemorrhaging of housing supply in apartment-zoned areas.

2. Tourism Jobs vs. Human Dignity

Opponents argue that Bill 9 will “destroy tourism jobs.” But no ethical or sustainable economy should be built on the forced displacement of local families just to house visitors. Prioritizing speculative investor ROI and transient visitors over Maui’s working families is neither humanitarian nor pono. Moreover, tourism is already saturated and unstable, as the post-L_hain_ fire economy demonstrated—Maui’s long-term economic health depends on a diversified, resident-centered workforce, not further dependence on short-term rental economies.

3. The “Properties Are Not Conducive to Family Living” Argument Is a Red Herring

The claim that units on the Minatoya List are “not conducive to family living” because of high HOAs, limited parking, or no playgrounds is misleading for several reasons:

- Local residents are already living in these same types of apartments across Maui—in Kihei, Kahului, and Wailuku—despite high HOAs and limited space.
- Not every resident in need of housing is a family with children; single workers, retirees, and couples need housing too.
- If these units are unsuitable for families, why are they suitable for tourists? They are zoned for apartments, not hotels.

4. “Locals Will Lose Jobs” – Misstated Economic Reality

Opponents assume that residents in need of housing all depend on tourism. In reality, many displaced workers leave Maui altogether because they cannot find housing. A thriving economy needs a stable resident workforce—teachers, healthcare workers, police officers—not just housekeepers and tour operators. Long-term housing stability strengthens local businesses far more sustainably than speculative tourism-based economies.

5. The County’s Failure on Affordable Housing Is Not an Excuse for Inaction

Yes, the County has failed for decades to build affordable housing. But that failure does not justify continuing to allow apartment-zoned housing to be used as de facto hotels. Restoring these units to their intended residential use is a necessary first step to stabilizing the housing crisis while long-term affordable housing projects are developed.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 3:24pm 07-18-25

I am in favor of creating affordable housing for local residents. Bill 9 does not create "affordable housing". The loss of tourism, the income that tourism brings, not to mention the thousands of jobs that tourism brings... Bill 9 will destroy our already struggling Maui economy. The local residents cannot support the small restaurants, small stores, tour companies, housekeepers, management companies, drivers, etc... I am very familiar with the properties on the Minatoya List, many of them are not conducive to family living, as they have no storage, only 1 parking stall, no street parking, no place for Keiki to play, the HOA's average at \$1000 per month and most do not allow pets.

The local residents in need of housing currently will most likely not have a job if Bill 9 passes, as most jobs are directly or indirectly affected by tourists or owners of properties listed on the Minatoya List.

The County has dropped the ball for decades on Affordable Housing, it's time for them to focus on creating housing & communities for the local residents. Bill 9 is not what's needed, it does NOT create affordable housing.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 2:59pm 07-18-25

Aloha Chair and Members of the Council,

I am writing in strong support of Bill 9 because it restores the original intent of Maui's Apartment District (A-1 and A-2 zoned properties): housing for residents, not hotel operations disguised as apartments.

Opponents of Bill 9 make several claims that deserve clarification:

—

1. "Bill 9 targets legally operating short-term rentals that contribute positively to the community."

While these rentals are technically legal under the Minatoya Exemption, that exemption was a temporary grandfathering measure, never meant to permanently convert residential-zoned apartments into transient hotels. Compliance with outdated rules does not erase the fact that these units are urgently needed for Maui families, disaster survivors, and displaced fire victims. Continuing to operate them as vacation rentals during a declared housing emergency undermines humanitarian relief efforts and prolongs suffering for those forced to live in cars, tents, or temporary shelters.

—

2. "Short-term rentals create jobs, use local services, and generate tax revenue."

Yes, STRs generate some revenue, but no amount of TAT or property tax can replace lost homes. This revenue does not feed displaced families or shelter k_puna sleeping in hotel rooms months after the fires. Meanwhile, the social cost—inflated housing prices, mass displacement, and loss of long-term rental stock—is borne by local residents, not STR operators. Redirecting apartment units back into the housing market is not just economic policy; it is humanitarian relief.

—

3. "Bill 9 abruptly removes long-standing legal uses without a practical path forward."

Bill 9 provides a reasonable phase-out period (18 months to 3 years)—hardly abrupt when weighed against the urgency of our crisis. Every month we delay means more fire survivors and working families remain homeless while visitors sleep in apartment buildings designed for residents. The County has both the legal right and the moral obligation to act decisively during this emergency.

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4. "The Council should focus on illegal rentals instead of banning legal ones."

Enforcing against illegal operators is essential, but legal STRs in the Apartment District are a major driver of the problem. Whole apartment complexes have been converted into de facto hotels. These are precisely the types of units that humanitarian relief organizations and the Red Cross have been begging for to house fire survivors. Leaving them in the tourist market is unacceptable when our own residents are in crisis.

—

5. "Bill 9 will harm small businesses and workers."

The disruption to STR-related businesses is real, but the humanitarian crisis is far greater. We cannot prioritize maid service for tourists over shelter for fire-displaced families. Many STR workers can transition into the housing, construction, and recovery sectors, which need labor to rebuild homes and infrastructure.

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Conclusion

Bill 9 is not just a zoning adjustment; it is a humanitarian measure. It will:

- Free up critically needed housing for displaced Maui residents and fire victims.
- Reduce overpopulation and car saturation in disaster-affected areas, improving emergency response capacity.
- Restore the Apartment District to its intended purpose—housing for people, not tourists.

Maui is still recovering from the L_hain_ fire and facing the worst housing crisis in its history. Continuing to allow tourist rentals in these apartments while thousands of our residents remain unhoused is not just bad policy—it is a moral failure.

I strongly urge you to advance Bill 9 and put the people of Maui first.

Mahalo for your time and leadership.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 9:01am 07-18-25

The Mayor created Bill 9 because after the fires, thousands of Maui residents were homeless while long-term housing sat vacant as STVRs in A-1 and A-2 zones. Even with state tax breaks, extra high rents these units remained empty locked away for tourists. If the County government can't pass this basic HUMANITARIAN AID for fire victims—on their own island, from the very people who elected them—then who are they really serving?

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 8:51am 07-18-25

Residents are desperate for housing relief, 2 years later, Maui's HUMANITARIAN AID sits on a desk because councilmembers won't do their jobs.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 8:16am 07-17-25

Bill 9 is HUMANITARIAN AID. It is relief from the fires, from displacement, and from the ongoing housing emergency that has forced Maui families out of their own island. Returning Apartment District (A-1 and A-2) units to residents is not just zoning—it is immediate HUMANITARIAN relief for people who lost homes, jobs, and stability after the L_hain_ disaster. It is shameful that so many Councilmembers show more concern for condo values and vacation rental profits than for their own neighbors. Bill 9 is not about politics; it is about putting residents first when they need it most.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 4:04pm 07-16-25

Under Alice Lee's watch, Maui went from a remote island paradise to an overcrowded, wildfire-prone playground for tourists.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 10:58am 07-16-25

In an email sent from the Maui County Council, Alice Lee wrote: 'I support the goal of creating more workforce housing for kama__ina. However, I also recognize the economic impacts this phase-out may have on families, jobs, and local businesses that rely on visitor spending.'

When a politician delays humanitarian housing relief to protect condo values and vacation rental profits, that's not leadership—that's a detour to corruption. Bill 9 is the test, and Alice Lee is failing.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 9:49am 07-16-25

Alice Lee claims to support workforce housing, but her indecision hands Maui's future to speculators. Pass Bill 9 now or admit you stand with investors, not residents.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 8:25am 07-16-25

If you care about kama__ina housing, you vote yes. If you care about visitor dollars, you stall. Bill 9 will show Maui exactly who you serve.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 4:28pm 07-15-25

Pass it or kill it—but stop pretending to care about housing, water, infrastructure, public safety, zoning, planning, permitting, and the many other departments of Maui County.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 9:43am 07-15-25

If this Council is too compromised or unwilling to move Bill 9 forward, then at least have the courage to tell the people the truth. Stop hiding behind closed doors, pretending this body is working for the good of Maui, when inaction only serves special interests—not the residents who call this island home.

Edward Codelia

Location:

Submitted At: 8:57am 07-15-25

Bill_9 is not anti-tourism; it is pro-resident, pro-community, and consistent with the law. By approving Bill_9, the Council will:

- _ Enforce zoning's original purpose.
- _ Reclaim thousands of units for residents.
- _ Restore public trust after decades of investor favoritism.
- _ Demonstrate leadership after the tragic failures exposed by the August_2023 fires.

Approve Bill_9. The people of Maui deserve a government that serves them—not speculative profit.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 8:51am 07-15-25

please pass this bill.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 3:11pm 07-14-25

STVR Invasion of A_1/A_2 Apartment Districts

1980

- Ordinance 1134 introduces Maui County's zoning code; STVRs defined for properties under 30 days in “multi-unit” buildings—permitting TVRs in Apartment Districts _.

1989

- Ordinance 1797 amends §_19.12.010(C): mandates long-term residential occupancy in A_1/A_2 zones (min. 6 months/year), with a pre_existing use exemption for structures approved before April 20, 1989 _.

1991

- Ordinance 1989 further restricts TVRs in Apartment Districts—ending explicit permissiveness _.

2001

- Deputy Corporation Counsel Richard Minatoya issues legal memo clarifying that condo units with permits, SMA use approvals, or STR operations in Apartment Districts as of April 1989 or March 1991 may continue. This gives birth to the “Minatoya Exemption” and the “Minatoya List” of legal STVRs in A_1/A_2 _.

2014

- Ordinance 4167 codifies the Minatoya Exemption into §_19.12.020(g), formally allowing pre_1989 A_1/A_2 units to operate STVRs despite residential zoning intent ().

2020–2023

- Additional regulations enacted (Ords. 5126, 5301, 5473, 5502) tightening qualification for Minatoya Exemption—but maintaining its core allowances _.

May 2–3, 2024

- Gov. Green signs SB_2919, empowering counties to regulate STRs.
- Mayor Bissen and Councilmember Rawlins_Fernandez introduce a bill to phase out Minatoya STVRs: 2,200 units in West Maui by July 1, 2025; remainder by Jan 1, 2026 _.

June 2024

- Maui, Moloka_i, and L_na_i Planning Commissions hold hearings and unanimously recommend phase_out to the County Council _.

June 9, 2025

- Housing & Land Use Committee holds over 5 hours of public testimony; no vote taken. Debate continues on economic impact and possible rezoning amendments _.

July 2025

- HLU Chair Kama recesses proceedings until July_23 for in-depth committee deliberations.

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_ Why This Timeline Matters

- A_1 and A_2 zones were originally intended for long-term residential use, not visitor accommodations.
- The Minatoya Exemption, intended as a limited fix to legal ambiguity, has been weaponized into a permanent loophole—transforming entire apartment complexes into hotels.
- The phase-out timeline set by Bill_9 (West Maui by July 2025; rest of county by Jan 2026) is a measured, legally supported effort to realign land use with zoning intent and public welfare.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 1:59pm 07-14-25

Bill 9 is about putting families before profit, residents before investors, and safety before speculation. The wildfires already showed us what failing to act looks like—and it cost billions and lives. Nothing Bill 9 does can match that scale of damage—but failing to pass it could.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 10:28am 07-14-25

Some say PROPERTY RIGHTS should come before all else. That if you OWN it, you can DO WHATEVER YOU WANT with it—even in the middle of a housing emergency. But that belief—unchecked—is exactly what turned the Lahaina fire from a NATURAL DISASTER into a HUMANITARIAN FAILURE. Property rights are not absolute. They exist within a SOCIAL CONTRACT. They are subject to PUBLIC TRUST. And when thousands of MAUI RESIDENTS are homeless or displaced, while investors run SHORT-TERM RENTALS in zones intended for COMMUNITY HOUSING, the law must INTERVENE.

The Constitution does not protect PROFITS OVER PEOPLE. The COUNTY has both the DUTY and the AUTHORITY to regulate land use in the interest of PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY, and WELFARE. That is what Bill 9 does. It reaffirms that APARTMENT DISTRICT zoning—A-1 and A-2—is for RESIDENTIAL USE, not commercial exploitation. It says: when our community suffers, we don't double down on extraction—we protect the land FOR THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE HERE.

If you believe that “property rights” mean the freedom to evict locals to host tourists, or to hold housing hostage in the middle of a DISASTER, then you’re not defending liberty—you’re defending ENTITLEMENT. That’s not FREEDOM. That’s FEUDALISM. And it’s exactly the mentality that left our k_puna and families to sleep in cars, hotel rooms, and shelters—while hundreds of units sat vacant or were listed online for vacationers.

BILL 9 is not an attack on ownership. It is a DEFENSE OF DIGNITY. It says: you can invest here, but you cannot displace us. You can buy property, but you cannot commodify a CRISIS. We cannot keep sacrificing housing to the highest bidder, then pretend we have no responsibility when people suffer.

The fire exposed what happens when we put PRIVILEGE over PREPARATION. This law is how we fix it. If you oppose Bill 9, ask yourself: what’s more valuable—your RENTAL INCOME or your NEIGHBOR’S LIFE?

MAUI DESERVES BETTER. THE TIME TO CHOOSE PEOPLE OVER PROFIT IS NOW.

Laura Dejardine

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 9:49am 07-14-25

Please pass this bill

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 3:58pm 07-13-25

Please pass Bill 9. Protect zoning integrity. Support long-term housing. Stand with the people who actually live, vote, and raise families on this island.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 11:46am 07-13-25

Aloha Chair and Councilmembers,

I strongly support Bill 9 because it corrects a long-standing misuse of Apartment District zoning in Maui County and returns these properties to their intended purpose: long-term housing for residents. The A-1 and A-2 zones were never created to support commercial hotel operations. The Minatoya Exemption was a temporary political compromise—not a permanent entitlement. It is completely reasonable and lawful for the County to bring this use back into alignment with zoning laws that were always intended to serve the community first.

Opponents claim that over 3,000 testimonies were submitted in opposition to Bill 9, as if that number proves the bill is wrong. But Maui has over 115,000 registered voters. That means opposition testimony represents less than 3% of the voting population. And of those who submitted opposition, many are non-resident property owners—people who do not vote in Hawai‘i, do not pay income taxes here, and have no long-term stake in our schools, infrastructure, environment, or community life. Their interest is purely financial. They bought real estate in a speculative market based on short-term rental profits, and now that loophole is closing.

It’s important to be honest about this: the loudest opposition is being driven by people who are trying to protect investment returns—not residents trying to raise families or find stable housing. Many don’t live here, don’t vote here, and won’t suffer the long-term consequences of over-tourism, housing scarcity, and rising costs. They benefited from a zoning loophole, and now they want to claim victimhood as that loophole is closed. That’s not injustice—that’s market correction.

There’s also a disturbing racial undertone in some opposition rhetoric. We’ve seen letters and public comments claiming this bill “targets white mainlanders” or that the County is “wiping out white wealth.” That is false and dangerous. This bill is about land use, not race. No one is being targeted for who they are—only for how they’ve been using a property in violation of the spirit (and increasingly the letter) of zoning laws. The attempt to racialize this issue is designed to distract, divide, and inflame a local population that has already suffered greatly from displacement and economic pressure. There is no place for that here. Using race as a shield for commercial

misuse is shameful. It is not Aloha. It is not pono.

Supporters of STRs argue that Bill 9 won't lead to housing for locals, that values have dropped, and that properties are sitting on the market. But these are the results of a market cooling off after years of artificial inflation by STR income potential. Prices falling and days on market increasing means these properties are finally coming within reach for local buyers or long-term renters. That's how land use regulation is supposed to work. The goal of zoning is not to protect investor profits—it is to create orderly, equitable, and community-serving land use.

Some opponents point out that these properties are located in resort areas like Wailea and Kā'anapali and claim that makes STR use appropriate. But zoning is zoning. Apartment-zoned buildings are not hotel properties, no matter how close they are to resorts. If we allow illegal or non-conforming uses just because of location, then we no longer have zoning—we have chaos and favoritism.

The County's responsibility is not to maximize speculative real estate profits but to preserve the livability of Maui for the people who live here. If some owners lose profit potential because they can no longer operate a nightly rental business in an apartment zone, that is not a tragedy. That is the price of doing business within the law. No one guaranteed them permanent STR income, and the County is under no obligation to subsidize those expectations—especially not when they come at the direct expense of housing for working families.

Bill 9 will also help rebalance our economy. Short-term rentals have made us more dependent on tourism than ever. They drive up infrastructure costs, increase traffic, inflate housing prices, and strain our environment. Every STR removed from an apartment zone is one step toward reducing that pressure and returning to a more balanced and resilient island economy.

Let's also be clear: the so-called "majority" opposing this bill is not the majority of Maui voters, taxpayers, or residents. It is a well-funded, organized group of property owners fighting to preserve a commercial privilege. They are loud, but they are not the voice of Maui's people.

To those trying to racialize this issue or divide the community with scare tactics: aloha means goodbye. If your investment model depends on bending land use laws and exploiting local communities, then yes—it's time to say goodbye to that model. The County is making a moral and legal correction, not an attack.

Please pass Bill 9. Protect zoning integrity. Support long-term housing. Stand with the people who actually live, vote, and raise families on this island.

Mahalo.

Brandon Perreira
Makawao Resident

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 10:28am 07-13-25

My name is Kekoa. I was born and raised in Lahaina. After the fire, I stayed. I'm still here, but I've been living in a tent by the beach with my girlfriend. We both work—me in the visitor industry, and her part-time doing housecleaning. We try to stay strong and show up to work every day. But we're exhausted. We're scared. And no matter how hard we try, we can't find a place to live that we can afford.

I support Bill 9 because I don't know what else is going to help people like us. We don't qualify for ALICE or other programs. We make just a little too much, but not enough to afford housing. We're just trying to rent a small place—something safe and clean for under \$3,000 a month. That's still expensive, but it feels impossible right now.

What hurts the most is seeing whole apartment buildings that are supposed to be for residents being used as short-term vacation rentals. They weren't built for tourists, but that's who's living there. After the fire, people like us were pushed out while those apartments stayed empty or hosted visitors.

People say, "It's their property—they can do what they want." But what about our right to live where we were born? I work in tourism. I clean up after guests. I help the economy. But somehow I don't deserve a home? I've lived here my whole life, but now I can't even rent a one-bedroom in the town I grew up in?

I'm not a politician. I don't understand all the laws. But I know what I see. And I see that something's broken. Bill 9 is the first thing that feels like someone is finally thinking about us—people who work here, live here, and stayed after the fire.

Please pass Bill 9. We're not asking for much. Just a fair chance to come back inside and have a roof over our heads.

Kekoa Enos
Joy Batalon

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 4:22am 07-13-25

There has been literally zero evidence put forward by the supporting side that any significant number of housing units would "suddenly" come available for local use.

Property values for these very units have plummeted by up to 30% and days on market are exceeding 100. Talk to any realtor who is buying these units. IT'S NOT LOCALS.

After the Japanese Yen tanked in the 1980's, the distressed properties from Japanese owners were ultimately sold to mainland buyers (NOT TO LOCALS), many of whom then set off a series of transactions to other mainland buyers for decades. History is being ignored and will then repeat itself.

Study the ENTIRE history of these buildings - not just the last 10 years like the shoddy work from Autumn Ness - and you'll see a majority of them, especially in resort areas like Wailea, Kaanapali and Kapalua, have only ever been owned as vacation properties or vacation rentals.

I think it's disgusting that the Mayor and his cabal of fools are promising plentiful housing options, but that "affordability is not the goal".

So he is willfully wiping out the hard earned savings of a bunch of predominantly white mainlanders simply to "make available" thousands of properties that no locals can afford to buy, and are likely in complexes that are surrounded by hotels and other hotel zoned condos.

Literally every argument made on the supporting side is a strawman, and literally every argument made by the supporters are based on principles of delusional wishful thinking. Nothing concrete, nothing proven, and nothing truly beneficial. It's a lose-lose for property owners, a lose-lose for the county revenues, it's lose-lose for locals who are being promised a castle built on sand.

But would we expect anything less from a county like Maui? Of course not.

As long as Lahaina Strong has a voice in anything, it's only ever going to be a long slow march toward making Maui like Molokai or Samoa.

They do not represent the majority of the island and they certainly shouldn't be treated like they even represent a significant minority.

COUNCIL READ ALL 3000+ OF THESE TESTIMONIES. THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF PEOPLE OPPOSE THIS BILL.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 12:00pm 07-12-25

Artificial Intelligence can not dictate public policies. This AI drivel is pathetic. Ed Lane and many other supporters are probably some AI created public personas on social

Media causing digital creations that stir controversy not solutions.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 5:37pm 07-11-25

Aloha Chair Kama

In the aftermath of the L_HAIN_ FIRES, the people of Maui witnessed what happens when HOUSING POLICY, EMERGENCY RESPONSE, and PUBLIC TRUST break down at the same time. This was NOT THE FIRST WILDFIRE. It will NOT be the last. If the system is truly STANDARDIZED—as FEMA and the State of Hawai_i claim—then its repeated FAILURES must be seen not as unpredictable tragedies but as SYSTEMIC NEGLIGENCE.

Reports such as “Equality in Flames” confirm what many already knew: survivors, especially WOMEN, IMMIGRANTS, and K_PUNA, were left without protection, food, or long-term housing—despite thousands of available units across the island. Why? Because those units were PROFIT-ENGINEERED into SHORT-TERM VACATION RENTALS. Because those buildings, in the APARTMENT DISTRICT, were permitted—against their original zoning purpose—to serve INVESTORS instead of RESIDENTS.

BILL 9 is a necessary step to CORRECT this betrayal. To RESTORE apartment-zoned lands to their intended PUBLIC USE. To ensure that housing infrastructure, especially MULTI-FAMILY UNITS, is prioritized for SURVIVORS, FAMILIES, and LOCAL WORKERS—not transient tourism. When FEMA could not place fire survivors into housing, it wasn’t because no housing existed—it was because our COUNTY LAWS allowed that housing to be SOLD OFF TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER.

This is not just a ZONING decision. This is a MORAL TEST. Will we learn from the fire—or REPEAT IT? Will we protect our neighbors—or PROFIT FROM THEIR LOSS? We must stop defending failed systems and start building ones that SERVE OUR PEOPLE. If our disaster frameworks are to be trusted, we must align our LAND USE with our VALUES.

BILL 9 is not anti-tourism. It is PRO-RECOVERY. It is PRO-READINESS. It is PRO-MAUI. It is the clearest opportunity to end the ongoing EXILE of residents from their own island and prevent the next wave of exploitation that always follows disaster.

We cannot claim ignorance anymore. We saw what happened. If we allow it again, it will be because we chose MONEY over LIFE. BILL 9 is the beginning of a PROMISE TO OUR FUTURE. Let us pass it—WITHOUT DELAY.

S. Ching
Kahului Resident

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 4:02pm 07-11-25

Thank you for the message. While your right may be considered ‘vested’ under current interpretation, that does not make it ethically or publicly defensible. The term ‘grandfathered’ doesn’t exempt a use from evolving public policy, especially when it contributes to housing scarcity, displacement, and zoning abuse. Legal preservation is not moral justification — and rights can be lawfully sunset when they harm the broader public interest. Just because something was permitted in 1989 doesn’t mean it belongs in 2025.

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 1:54pm 07-11-25

Yes please

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 12:36pm 07-11-25

Listen to Stan Franco

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 8:48am 07-11-25

Certainly. Here’s a revised, paragraph-style written testimony in strong support of Bill 9, incorporating:

- Hawai'i's ongoing emergency housing declarations,
- the Governor's new housing laws,
- Maui County's zoning and density reforms, and
- how Bill 9 addresses systemic problems like the revolving door of displacement, housing scarcity, and unsustainable future density.

—

Written Testimony in Strong Support of Bill 9

To: Maui County Council, Housing and Land Use Committee

From: [Your Full Name]

Date: [Insert Date]

Re: Support for Bill 9 – Returning the Apartment District (A-1 and A-2 Zoned Properties) to Residential Use

Aloha Chair Kama and Council Members,

I am writing in strong support of Bill 9, which will phase out short-term vacation rentals (STVRs) in the Apartment District—specifically properties zoned A-1 and A-2—and return this housing stock to its intended purpose: housing for local residents. This legislation is a crucial step toward addressing the deepening housing crisis on Maui and aligns with recent state and county actions recognizing the emergency we are in.

The State of Hawai'i has declared a housing emergency, and Governor Josh Green has issued a series of emergency proclamations acknowledging that the lack of affordable and available housing is a threat to the wellbeing, health, and economic security of Hawai'i's residents. In response, the Governor signed sweeping housing legislation in 2024 and 2025 to accelerate construction, reduce permitting delays, and increase funding for state housing programs such as the Rental Housing Revolving Fund. These moves reflect a bipartisan consensus: the crisis is real, and we must act now.

Maui County has already responded with significant policy changes of its own. In 2023 and 2024, the Council passed amendments to Title 19 that allow for increased density and mixed-use development in appropriate urban areas, such as Wailuku, Kahului, and near transit corridors. These reforms are designed to promote transit-oriented development (TOD) and increase the number of housing units in areas that can support population growth. But without parallel efforts to protect existing residential housing stock from being cannibalized by short-term rentals, these reforms will fall short. Bill 9 is that parallel effort. It ensures that the newly created density is not swallowed up by investors converting new units into tourist accommodations.

Currently, thousands of STVRs operate in A-1 and A-2 zoned buildings—areas meant for long-term residential use. Their continued operation undermines our housing market in three ways: first, by removing entire buildings from the long-term rental market; second, by inflating the cost of nearby housing through speculative pressure; and third, by turning residential neighborhoods into commercial hotel zones, driving residents out and destabilizing communities. This creates a revolving door, where displaced locals are replaced by tourists, and then forced to re-enter the rental market in more crowded, more expensive conditions—if they can stay on island at all.

If Maui County fails to pass Bill 9, we will only deepen the housing deficit and exacerbate the very density challenges we are trying to resolve through smart growth and urban infill. Every apartment used as a vacation rental is one fewer available to a teacher, a firefighter, or a family trying to remain in the community they've called home for generations. Worse still, allowing STVRs to remain in the Apartment District invites speculative behavior that corrupts land use policy and rewards commercial exploitation of residential zones.

We must remember: zoning is not just a bureaucratic formality. It is a moral contract between the public and its government, promising that designated residential zones will remain residential—not silently converted into commercial hotel stock. Bill 9 restores the integrity of that contract and gives Maui County the legal footing to enforce it.

Moreover, this bill is supported by the broader public. A 2025 statewide survey by Civil Beat revealed that over

90% of residents view housing as the top issue, and nearly 80% support “locals-only” housing solutions. Public sentiment is not ambiguous. People are demanding action—and Bill 9 is action. It prioritizes homes over hotels and long-term stability over short-term profits.

We are at a critical moment. The state has declared a housing emergency. The Governor has signed new housing laws. The County has reformed its codes to support density. Now it is time to ensure that our limited housing stock actually serves the people who live and work here. Bill 9 is not just good policy—it is essential for Maui's survival and sustainability.

I urge you to pass Bill 9 in full, without delay or dilution. Let this bill mark a turning point in Maui's housing story—a return to balance, fairness, and responsibility.

Mahalo for your time and leadership.

Sincerely,

Ed Lane
Wailea Resident

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 6:21pm 07-10-25

Aloha Chair Kama and Committee Members,

I submit this testimony in strong support of Bill 9, which will finally remove short-term vacation rentals (STVRs) from Maui's Apartment District—specifically in A-1 and A-2 zoned properties. This bill is not just about zoning—it is a moral, economic, and demographic necessity to reclaim our island's future.

_ 1. The Numbers Speak — and the People Are Begging Us to Listen

A July 2025 Civil Beat article revealed that nearly half of Hawai'i residents under 35 are considering leaving due to housing costs. Over 90% of residents cite housing as the most urgent problem, and 87% want lawmakers to treat it as a top priority.

Bill 9 aligns exactly with these pleas. It prioritizes long-term housing for residents, not short-term profits for absentee investors. STVRs in the Apartment District displace local renters, inflate housing costs, and cannibalize the island's housing stock—all in direct opposition to the will of the people.

—

_ 2. STVRs in Apartment Zones Are a Core Cause of Maui's Housing Crisis

Maui is in a declared housing emergency. Yet as of 2023, more than 2,000 STVRs were operating in apartment-zoned properties, originally intended for residential use—not hotels.

This blatant misallocation of residential housing has:

- Removed long-term rentals from the market
- Raised median rents and sales prices
- Overcrowded neighborhoods
- Increased vehicle traffic and wildfire risk

Bill 9 is the County's opportunity to restore the Apartment District to its intended purpose—housing for people who live and work here, not transient tourists.

—

___ 3. Local-Only Housing Policies Are Popular — and Necessary

According to the same Civil Beat survey:

- 79% support “locals-only” housing markets
- Over 50% of homeowners are willing to sell to local buyers, even at a discount

This isn’t a fringe idea—it’s the future of housing justice. Bill 9 removes a loophole that has allowed real estate to become commodified in zones meant to shelter local families. Restoring A-1 and A-2 zones to residential use is a crucial step toward a “locals-first” housing policy.

—

_ 4. Economic Reform and Regeneration Must Replace Speculation

Critics will argue this bill threatens tourism or investment. But the real threat is systemic: speculation and absentee ownership have stripped Maui of its most precious resource—people. Without housing, we lose teachers, nurses, firefighters, and the next generation.

Bill 9 doesn’t destroy value—it reclaims it for the community:

- It boosts long-term housing availability.
- It helps stabilize rents.
- It lowers public infrastructure costs tied to STVR saturation (traffic, enforcement, emergency response).
- It fosters community trust in local government.

—

_ 5. Bill 9 Moves Maui in the Right Direction

The State of Hawai_ī has already earmarked over \$400 million in 2025 for affordable housing projects, and the public overwhelmingly supports density near transit, streamlined permitting, and deed-restricted locals-only housing.

Maui should not be the exception to this wave of reform—it should lead it. Bill 9 positions Maui as a forward-thinking county with the courage to stand up to speculative interests in favor of its own residents.

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_ Conclusion

It is not the County’s kuleana to protect investor ROI while residents suffer displacement, overcrowding, and insecurity.

It is the County’s kuleana to uphold the public trust, steward residential zoning, and ensure Maui remains livable for the people who call it home.

Bill 9 is one of the most impactful housing justice bills Maui has seen in decades. It is a necessary correction. It is a moral imperative. And it has overwhelming public support.

I respectfully urge you to pass Bill 9 without dilution or delay.

Mahalo for your service.

Sincerely,

S Kanemitsu

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 4:02pm 07-10-25

Bill 9 is probably going to fail — not because it's wrong, but because too many of our leaders are weak, bought, and controlled. The system is rigged to protect investor profits, not local families.

The truth? The same people who sold us out for decades are now pretending to fix the mess they made. Their zoning decisions, their loopholes, and their silence in the face of exploitation have destroyed our island's culture, history, and people. You can't undo that with press releases and empty promises.

Bill 9 won't fix everything, but it's a start. It cleans up one of the worst abuses — short-term rentals in apartment districts (A-1 and A-2) that were never meant for tourism. These were supposed to be homes for us. Not condos for visitors. Not income streams for absentee landlords.

Listen to k_puna like Stan Franco. Listen to the people who've been in this fight from the beginning. Stop pretending this is about “affordable housing” when you've done everything possible to make it unaffordable.

We see the game. And even if this bill gets buried, the movement will not.

Anthony Simmons
Kula resident

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 1:54pm 07-10-25

Listen to Stan Franco

Allin Bohba

Location:
Submitted At: 12:30pm 07-10-25

While I oppose Bill 9 as it is currently written, I urge this Council to either pass a more strategic version or put the current version to public vote. The housing crisis is too severe to let this opportunity be buried in committee. We have seen tens of millions funneled into CIP programs that yield little housing, accountability, or quality of life improvements. If the Mayor's Office can claim urgency and then delay action, that's not just hypocrisy—it's potentially a breach of fiduciary duty that warrants deeper scrutiny. If we cannot get a functional housing plan through legislation, then we must let the people decide through the ballot.

Nani Kaiama
Makawao Resident

Lore Menin

Location:
Submitted At: 2:22pm 07-09-25

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

Maui's crisis is not the result of a temporary decline in tourism—it is the result of decades of failed land use policy, speculative development, and the systematic conversion of housing into investment inventory.

It's true that tourism remains below pre-pandemic and pre-fire levels. As of May 2025, Maui visitor arrivals were down approximately 22–23% compared to 2019. But to claim that regulating unlawful short-term vacation rentals in the Apartment District (A-1 and A-2 zoned properties) is the cause of economic harm is not only misleading—it is a dangerous misdiagnosis that serves the interests of investors, not residents.

The downturn is due to a range of macroeconomic and reputational factors, not a housing policy meant to protect residents. Let's be honest: what's hurting Maui is not the loss of a few hundred vacation rentals—it's the loss of entire neighborhoods to displacement, congestion, and over-commercialization.

Let us not forget that Hawai_i is under an active emergency proclamation on housing, declared by Governor Josh Green in 2023, and echoed by Maui County's post-fire emergency orders. These declarations call on all levels of government to respond swiftly and decisively to the housing crisis.

And yet, we have seen the opposite: a failure of courage. The Mayor, after initiating this policy, has delayed its implementation under political pressure. This Committee has stalled, wavered, and failed to act in accordance with the urgency demanded by both the law and the moment. Let's speak plainly: moral and ethical decisions require actual morals and ethics—and those appear to be in short supply here.

Instead of following the law, upholding zoning integrity, and standing by working families, our leaders are protecting speculative interests under the guise of “economic recovery.” That is not leadership. That is cowardice.

When politicians abandon the people, the people must act.

And if this Committee will not do its job, then the only just solution is to place this matter on the ballot.

Let the people of Maui decide whether their communities should continue to be cannibalized by vacation rentals. Let them choose whether residential-zoned land should serve kama__ina or capital.

The Apartment District was never meant to be a loophole for hotel operations. Every short-term rental in these zones strips away a unit of desperately needed housing during a declared emergency. The County is not obligated to preserve tourist convenience or investor ROI—it is obligated to protect its people and the public trust.

Bill 9 is not radical—it's restorative. It is the bare minimum response to a crisis decades in the making. If this Committee won't act with courage, it should at least act with humility—and defer to the will of the people.

Mahalo for your time. But the time for half-measures and excuses is over.

Lore Menin
Kihei Resident

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 12:24pm 07-09-25

Bill 9 offers a zoning-based correction that restores balance and repurposes existing housing for long-term residents.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 10:58am 07-09-25

Thank you for your time, your service, and your commitment to protecting housing for the residents of Maui County.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 2:49pm 07-07-25

Listen to Stan Franco

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 2:12pm 07-07-25

Madam Chair, Honorable Members of the Committee,

Let us no longer participate in this civic masquerade under the pretense of public service. What is unfolding here is not policymaking — it is a carefully scripted performance, a grand illusion, wherein actors elected to lead instead cower behind curtains, delay curtains rising, and sabotage their own plotlines at the first sign of confrontation with truth or power.

Bill 9, conceived amid wildfires, housing displacement, and a declared emergency, was heralded as a turning point — a legislative intervention to confront the unlawful exploitation of Apartment District-zoned properties and

return housing to residents. But now, with the Mayor proposing a three-year delay, and the Committee Chair suggesting an even more egregious five-year postponement, we see the truth: this was never about housing — this was about appeasement.

This brings us to a sobering moral and civic reality:

To make a morally and ethically correct decision requires courage, integrity, moral clarity, a capacity for self-sacrifice, and loyalty to the people — not to donors, party bosses, or industry benefactors.

And based on the public record, official conduct, and observable behavior, this Council and this Mayor do not appear to possess those qualities.

Instead, we observe self-preservation disguised as pragmatism. Cowardice masked as compromise. And delay deployed as a shield to avoid doing the very thing public servants are elected to do: make difficult, decisive, and principled decisions — in the public interest.

Act I: A Stage Set in Crisis

L_hain_ burned. The County declared a housing emergency. Our communities were displaced. In that inferno, we looked to this body for leadership. Instead, we got performance art — complete with rehearsed language, virtue signaling, and ultimately, a refusal to act.

Act II: Testimony Without Teeth

We, the people, submitted thousands of pages of testimony. We showed up, told the truth, offered our experience, and asked — no, begged — for action. The committee listened politely and did what all theatrical actors do: performed attentiveness without committing to the outcome.

Act III: The Coward's Curtain

A three- or five-year delay is not legislative caution — it is a betrayal. It is a delay cynically calculated to outlast electoral cycles, to preserve political relationships, and to shift responsibility onto the next group of performers. The Mayor's term ends before implementation. The Committee Chair's tenure will expire before consequences arise. This is not policy — it is political cowardice in costume.

And behind it all, we can hear the offstage whispers of lobbyists, attorneys, and campaign donors directing this tragic production — where working families are the props and the housing crisis is the stage.

Act IV: A County Government of Ritual, Not Reform

Do not speak of legal risk when the greater risk is moral failure. Do not invoke procedural propriety while thousands sleep in cars, suffer overcrowding, or flee the islands entirely. Do not speak of “balance” while the scales are tipped irrevocably toward capital and speculation. And above all — do not delay action and call it leadership.

You cannot fix a housing emergency by delaying the emergency response. This is basic logic, yet our leaders abandon logic when it threatens their comfort.

Act V: The Reckoning

Let us now strip away the final illusion: The Council and the Mayor are not the protagonists in this drama — the people are. And the people are growing tired of waiting for their supposed leaders to remember who they work for. If you will not act, resign. If you will not lead, step aside. Let others who do possess the necessary moral fortitude take your place.

We do not oppose Bill 9 in its intent. We oppose it because the County has proven itself incapable — or unwilling — to implement it with integrity. We reject this empty ritual, this costly illusion, and this betrayal of public trust.

End this farce, withdraw the bill, and return to the drawing board — with real leaders at the table.

History is watching. And so are we.

Respectfully submitted,
Kimbo Meade
Kihei Resident

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 6:31pm 07-06-25

Hello cowards, vote it down and move on

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 10:29am 07-06-25

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

I write in strong support of Bill 9, not only as a matter of policy but as a necessary act of repentance, deliverance, and forgiveness—three virtues central not only to the Christian faith but to the restoration of any just society.

Repentance

At its core, repentance means acknowledging harm, turning away from wrongdoing, and choosing a better path. For decades, Maui has allowed the erosion of our residential Apartment Districts (A-1 and A-2) through the proliferation of short-term vacation rentals. This was not merely an economic oversight—it was a moral failure to protect local families, k_puna, and future generations. The Minatoya Exemption may have begun as a loophole, but it grew into a pipeline for displacement and investor speculation.

Supporting Bill 9 is our collective act of repentance. It is our admission that we allowed profit to outpace principle. It is our commitment to turn back from policies that have divided our neighborhoods and priced our people out of their own island.

Deliverance

Maui residents cry out for deliverance—not from tourists, but from the burden of housing insecurity, overcrowding, and intergenerational debt. This bill offers that deliverance by reclaiming residential-zoned land for residential use. It doesn't punish—it realigns. It doesn't destroy opportunity—it redirects it toward sustainable housing and community resilience.

Deliverance is not about vengeance. It's about setting things right. It is the act of lifting burdens that should never have been imposed on working families, renters, k_puna, and displaced survivors of disaster.

Forgiveness

True forgiveness in public policy comes when we prioritize healing over blame. While this bill may cause economic disruption to some, it offers a path forward with fairness and integrity. Those who invested in short-term rentals must be offered clarity, transition, and dignity—but not indefinite privilege at the expense of Maui's people.

Forgiveness does not mean inaction; it means moving forward with accountability. We can acknowledge the real pain and confusion created by past policies while still insisting on a future that puts housing for residents before housing for tourists.

—

In closing, Bill 9 is more than zoning reform—it is a moral reckoning. It is a call to realign our economic policies with our ethical responsibilities. Let us repent from unsustainable land use, deliver our communities from

displacement, and forgive past mistakes by choosing a better way forward.

I urge you to pass Bill 9 without weakening amendments. Stand for housing. Stand for justice. Stand for Maui.

Mahalo for your time and courage.

Daniel Carpieux
Kahului Resident

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 10:13am 07-06-25

Testimony in Strong Opposition to Bill 9

Submitted to the Maui County Housing and Land Use Committee

Date: July 4, 2025

To Chair Kama and Members of the Committee:

I submit this testimony in firm opposition to Bill 9, not because I disagree that Maui is in a housing crisis, but because I see through the false promises, political cowardice, and corrupt intentions behind this bill and the process it has taken.

Let's not pretend anymore — this entire process has become a farce.

You've spent months and taxpayer resources holding hearings, soliciting public testimony, analyzing legalities, and talking about the future of Maui's housing. You have declared a housing emergency and claimed this bill is the answer. But just when the time comes to act, our Mayor proposes a 3-year delay — conveniently after his term ends — and your Committee Chair wants five years, well beyond her tenure. This isn't housing policy. It's political posturing in its most shameful form.

Here's the truth:

- You don't believe in this bill enough to implement it now.
- You're wasting the public's time and money while buying political cover for yourselves.
- You are using Bill 9 to pretend you care about housing — while protecting the economic interests of your donors, allies, and party leaders.

And it's not lost on us that Maui is ground zero for the global climate crisis. The fires of L_hain_ were not just a disaster — they were a signal to the world that land use, housing, tourism, and climate are deeply connected. Maui is now the center of the universe for testing bold policy solutions — and instead of showing courage, you've retreated into delay, confusion, and cowardice.

Bill 9 could have been the start of something real. But instead, it's become a symbol of everything wrong with local politics:

- Big promises with no follow-through
- Political leaders who answer to parties and donors instead of residents
- And a committee more concerned with reelection and appearances than solutions

I oppose Bill 9 not because I oppose solving the housing crisis — but because this bill, in its current form and context, is a lie.

You've shown that you won't implement it honestly, and you've made it clear that any "solution" that threatens special interests gets postponed until the people forget.

You do not deserve the public's trust on this matter. Let the record show that Bill 9 was not killed by opponents — it was strangled by its own creators, who lacked the integrity to stand by it when it mattered.

Reject Bill 9 and start over with leadership that isn't owned by outside parties, investors, or mainland political

operatives. Until then, the public has every right to distrust and defy this corrupted process.

Sincerely,
Logan Cabrera
Waikapu Resident

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 9:44am 07-06-25

This is all an act. The committee doesn't have the intelligence to approve this bill.

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 6:42am 07-06-25

I oppose Bill 9 as it is currently proposed. I understand and agree with the intent and have seen similar issues throughout my home state of CO in the tourist mountain towns. That said, the execution of Bill 9 lacks the specificity and strategy that could help it be effective. The arguments presented by the Mayor's office around economic impact are grossly understated and biased and their projections for the conversion of units in the resort areas (which as we all know have dual zoning for resort and Apartment) are naive. 1BR units that currently sell for over \$1M will not come down in price enough to make any sense as a family residence. They will simply come down in price enough so that someone can afford to own it as a vacation home without supplementing with rental income. Then those communities will be dormant for large portions of the year, harming local businesses and restaurants that depend on the tourist traffic.

Again, I support the idea of cracking down on illegal rentals and those units that are not in resort areas. I also feel that more consideration should be given in how those bans are implemented and think there's potential to revisit the grandfathering option that was once on the table so that current owners and their investments don't get torpedo'd but as they turn over the units are returned to residences.

Obviously, the Mayor's office and council can't seem to agree on the urgency of the issue since they say that this is the only answer (and building new units won't be soon enough) yet they can take over a year to consider the Bill and are now proposing the implementation of it be pushed out years.

Again, overall good intentions but poor execution. We should demand more thought, research, and strategic thinking from our local leaders.

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 6:58pm 07-05-25

Proposing a delay until after your term ends is not public service — it's political escape artistry. It's a sleight-of-hand to buy peace with donors and landlords while the people of Maui burn through their savings, sleep in cars, or get priced off-island. You can't call it pono if you're planning to leave the mess for someone else to clean up.

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 5:42pm 07-05-25

Aloha Chair Kama and Councilmembers,

I strongly support Bill 9 because it is a necessary step to restore zoning integrity, reduce wildfire risks, and reclaim housing for Maui's residents.

As short-term vacation rentals (STVRs) have rapidly expanded in the Apartment District—specifically A-1 and A-2 zoned properties—they've created a revolving door of transient visitors in areas never designed for that kind of population churn. This constant turnover brings more vehicles, more strain on infrastructure, and most importantly, increased fire risk.

We've already seen the devastating consequences of unmanaged land use and overstressed systems in West Maui. Tourists unfamiliar with the land and unengaged with local disaster protocols don't maintain defensible space or know how to respond in emergencies. More STVRs mean more high-turnover occupancy, more fuel loads, more ignition risk, and fewer eyes and hands who actually steward the land.

This is not just about zoning violations—it's about public safety, housing security, and survival. Maui cannot afford to keep sacrificing long-term housing for short-term profit.

Bill 9 does not eliminate STVRs everywhere. It simply phases them out of areas never intended for resort use, returning over 2,000 units back into our long-term housing inventory.

If we're serious about reducing wildfire risk, supporting local families, and upholding the law, then we must pass Bill 9.

Mahalo for your leadership.

Respectfully,
Austin Maniago
Kahului resident

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 4:24pm 07-05-25

The argument that "Bill 9 will do nothing for affordable housing" is inaccurate and shortsighted. Bill 9 restores the legal integrity and intended purpose of Apartment District zoning, which was created to allow for long-term residential use—not transient vacation accommodations. By ending the misuse of these zones for STVRs, Bill 9:

- Increases housing supply for long-term renters and residents by removing over 2,200 units from speculative short-term use.
- Deters real estate speculation by clarifying that the County will no longer protect STVRs as a high-yield, investor-focused use of Apartment-zoned land.
- Reduces upward pressure on rental prices, which are currently inflated by competition with lucrative short-term rentals.
- Strengthens land-use consistency and zoning integrity, creating space for lawful planning and future affordable housing development.

The Reality of Housing Displacement

Maui's people are not displaced by a lack of effort, but by a perverse incentive system that rewards absentee ownership, vacation rental conversion, and extractive wealth flows. If we wait for outside investors to solve the affordable housing crisis, we will be waiting forever. Bill 9 interrupts that cycle.

It may not build a single affordable unit overnight—but it reclaims over 2,000 dwellings from the tourist economy and redirects them to the community economy. That is real, measurable impact.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 5:06pm 07-04-25

I strongly oppose bill 9. This bill will do NOTHING to provide affordable dignified housing for the locals who need it the most.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 8:02pm 07-03-25

The arguments opposing Bill 9 often rely heavily on anecdotal stories and emotional appeals rather than grounded data or sound public policy. One recurring claim is that local residents cannot afford to buy homes on Maui without the supplemental income generated from short-term vacation rentals. This argument fundamentally misunderstands the nature of the housing crisis and the intent of Bill 9.

If ownership is only possible by turning a residence into a business, this reveals a broken housing market—one driven by speculative investment rather than providing affordable, long-term shelter for residents. The assumption that locals must depend on short-term rental income to “afford” homeownership is not a solution; it is a symptom of the systemic failure Bill 9 seeks to address.

Moreover, the reliance on vague anecdotes—friends, relatives, or acquaintances struggling to buy homes unless they operate short-term rentals—lacks the rigor necessary for serious policy debate.

It is also important to recognize that opposition frequently comes from individuals such as realtors with vested interests in maintaining the current market dynamics that favor investment properties and short-term rentals over affordable housing. The continuation of this status quo benefits a small segment of the market at the expense of Maui’s working families and full-time residents.

Bill 9 is a critical step toward rebalancing Maui’s housing market, prioritizing long-term residents’ access to affordable housing, and reducing the outsized influence of speculative real estate practices. Opposition based on anecdotal, emotionally charged but logically weak claims must be critically examined and weighed against the urgent need for sustainable housing solutions.

Tryson Kaiama
Haiku Resident

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 4:59pm 07-03-25

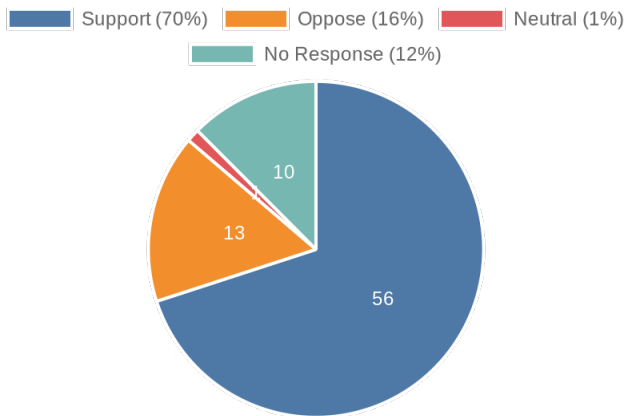
My name is Steve Fuller. I recently received this message from my daughter, who grew up in Lahaina (a "Luna" graduate). It provides a bit of perspective from someone that is not an owner on Maui but wishes to be:

"I was chatting to 'XX' while she was here and we had a pretty open and honest chat about how local (grew up on Maui) people our age feel about it and she was very much in agreement with us. Her sister has actually been thinking about buying a place back home but won't be able to afford to do so if this passes. So, as we discussed, it's actually preventing Maui people from doing exactly what it says it wants to do. I'd be similar...think most people would be...no one can afford those homeowner fees if they can't supplement it with rentals."

Food for thought. Please feel free to contact me for more perspective or information... (808)283-2420

Best regards and aloha,
Steve Fuller

Overall Sentiment



Deleted User

Location:

Submitted At: 12:45pm 07-23-25

Aloha Chair and Councilmembers,

I write in strong support of **Bill 9**, which will restore the intended residential use of properties in the **Apartment District (A-1 and A-2 zoned properties)**, phase out transient vacation rentals (STVRs), and help address Maui's housing crisis.

The arguments against Bill 9—particularly around **financing and litigation risks for condos**—are overstated, historically inconsistent, and fail to address the true kuleana of this Council: **to serve residents first, not to protect speculative investor markets.**

1. Housing is a Public Trust, Not an Investor Guarantee

* As Maui faces **displacement, overcrowding, homelessness, and housing insecurity**, it is **not the County's kuleana to protect investor ROI**.

* The County has a **public trust obligation** to stabilize housing for residents.

* STVRs in the Apartment District were never meant to be permanent; the decades-old **Minatoya Exemption** created a loophole that allowed residential-zoned housing to be used as de facto hotels.

Restoring these units to residential use will **free up badly needed housing stock** and align with the emergency housing proclamations already declared by the County and State.

2. Condos Already Face Litigation—And Sales Continue

Councilmembers have expressed concerns about **financing and litigation risk**. But let's be clear:

Condo litigation is normal and routine.

HOAs foreclose on units, evict tenants, and file lawsuits for construction defects, insurance disputes, or unpaid fees regularly. None of this has ever stopped the condo market from functioning.

Financing adjusts, but markets continue.

Lenders and realtors have navigated condo litigation since condos were first developed. Units may temporarily shift to cash buyers or private lenders, but sales continue, and properties retain value.

Bill 9 litigation risk is no different.

Fears about "new" litigation ignore the fact that real estate markets have absorbed much worse disputes without collapsing. The financing market is built to adapt.

3. Bill 9 Actually Improves Financing Stability Long-Term

STVR-heavy condos are already harder to finance. Many are treated as "condo-hotels" by Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, restricting FHA, VA, and conventional lending.

Once restored to residential use, more local buyers will qualify for traditional loans, which strengthens local demand and reduces speculative volatility.

The real threat to financing has been the **uncertainty caused by the Minatoya Exemption**, not Bill 9. Clarity and stability are what lenders want—and Bill 9 provides that.

4. Markets Are Cyclical, Not Controllable

Some argue, "What if these units are bought by mainland investors after Bill 9?" This is the wrong question.

Mainland investors already own a significant share of these units **today**, under the STVR model.

Real estate markets are cyclical and driven by global economic trends, not County zoning.

The Council cannot and should not attempt to control who buys property through zoning—it **can** control whether those properties are used for housing or for tourism.

Bill 9 ensures these units are returned to their intended purpose: **housing for residents.**

5. Kuleana: The Moral and Economic Obligation

Maui is one of the most expensive places to live in the United States. If we want families, teachers, nurses, and k_puna caregivers to stay here, we must make hard decisions that prioritize housing over speculative profit.

Every business and property owner on this island has a kuleana to support livable wages and livable housing. As a community, we cannot sustain a system where housing is treated primarily as a tourism commodity.

Bill 9 is a necessary step to protect our people, reduce car saturation, lower wildfire risks from overdevelopment, and stabilize our neighborhoods.

Conclusion

Litigation fears are exaggerated, financing will adjust as it always has, and the real risk to Maui is doing nothing.

Bill 9 is not just a zoning clarification—it is a statement that this Council is serious about protecting housing for residents, reducing speculation, and restoring stability to our communities.

I urge you to pass Bill 9 without weakening amendments.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Ronald and Victoria Lee, Lahaina Residents, STVR Owners

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 7:43am 07-23-25

Good morning to all. I wanted to share my situation and thoughts on the STR ban in apartment districts. My wife and I own a condo in S Kihei, we stay there for 1 month in the winter and 1 month in the summer and rent it out for short term stays when not here. We plan on living here full time once we retire. We do not make any profit on our unit - the stays help to offset some of our costs but as an investment we are in the red over \$25k every year. Our unit is 2bdrm / 2 bath, no smoking, no pets, and 1 assigned parking stall with no guest parking — so I am not sure if this would work for most families as their home. And if the bill were to pass we would not sell this unit - we would find other groups or couples to trade time in our unit for time in their units elsewhere - removing the county revenue generated with no additional housing stock. I am sympathetic to the need for additional housing in Maui for local residents and native Hawaiians but I just find this bill to be short sighted. I don't believe the bill addresses the true root cause of the problem - which is government rules and regulations that promote and make new construction easier and more available. The solution proposed could add up to the 5000 units if all were to convert to long term housing - which I am not sure they would. But give up several hundred millions of dollars a years in perpetuity. Why not find a way to use some of the revenue generated from STRs to fund construction of single family homes after easing construction costs and regulations

The other comment I wanted to make was on water usage - I have read numerous comments on STRs using much more water than long term housing so this conversion will also save water usage. But that is a false comparison and conclusion. Our unit is usually occupied by families with kids, it can sleep up to 6, with 4 adults. So if our unit is not a STR - these families (if they can afford to come at all) will probably need 2-3 hotel rooms at a resort or hotel. So the true comparison to ask would be the average daily water usage in 1 STR versus the average daily water usage of 2-3 hotel rooms - which I am sure will look much different. Finally, this has been tried in some large cities on the mainland - and were reversed for legal reasons in some cases and in others they found they did not help the root causes of the problems and the lost revenue was too great to overcome

So, I believe most STR owners would like to and be willing partners to help in finding solutions for the true root cause of the housing issues - but this bill as proposed is not it

Thank you

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 7:23am 07-23-25

Has anyone considered keeping the original minatoya list short term, The properties listed from beginning could be "grandfathered in" and stay short term . All the ones after that should go to long term, The problem is owners at many complexes took it upon themselves turning into short term after they were long term for years, example is pacific shores. It makes more sense to keep our tourist industry healthy by letting the original minatoya list stay short term since that is what they have been from the start. It shouldn't be very hard to determine the difference, too many condo owners changed on their own

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 7:20am 07-23-25

From: County Clerk <County.Clerk@mauicounty.us>
Sent: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 7:15:49 AM (UTC-10:00) Hawaii
To: HLU Committee <HLU.Committee@mauicounty.us>
Subject: FW: Bill 9 STR testimony

From: Syl Cabral <sylviacabralmaui@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 7:09 AM
To: County Clerk <County.Clerk@mauicounty.us>
Subject: Bill 9 STR testimony

I understand that Minatoya took the workforce housing away from the working people with very little or no hearings for the public. It's time to give the workforce housing back.

1. many of those units were requirements for developers to build elsewhere.
2. This is an executive order that is needed for public survival

ask yourselves . "how did Mantonya have the authority to take the workforce housing away from the working people?"

On Thu, Jun 12, 2025 at 4:38_PM Syl Cabral <sylviacabralmaui@gmail.com> wrote:
Thinking there might be an exception to some residents if that is their only income on a case by case decision w requirements. That might reduce the banter 15 or 20%.

Syl Cabral
808 879 9007

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 7:17am 07-23-25

From: AOL.MAIL <butchandkate@aol.com>
Sent: Wednesday, July 23, 2025 5:24:57 AM (UTC-10:00) Hawaii
To: HLU Committee <HLU.Committee@mauicounty.us>
Subject: Bill 9 Testimony

Aloha,
George McDowell, #A-306, 940 S. Kihei Road, Kihei, HI. My hope today is that common sense is what guides you as you move forward on Bill 9, for without it, the Committee could inflict irreparable harm to the economy and people of Maui.
Mahalo,
George

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 6:08am 07-23-25

My family of four has been to Maui the last three years. We love it and spend a lot of money in the community. However, we will not return if short term rentals are not available. They provide so much flexibility and comfort for a small family versus a hotel. I think there will be many unintended consequences to Maui if Short term rentals are disallowed.

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 4:38pm 07-22-25

Aloha Chair Kama and Committee Members,

Mahalo for your time and commitment to addressing one of the most critical issues Maui faces: the long-term housing crisis and the urgent need to rebalance our Apartment District (A-1 and A-2 zoned properties) away from transient vacation use.

I have reviewed the recent testimony from Mr. Ron Hansen, who presents himself as a "30+ year appraiser/analyst." While he cites selective sales data to argue against Bill 9, his own information actually proves

why Bill 9 is working exactly as intended. His statements are full of misrepresentations, misleading comparisons, and loophole-defending arguments that deserve to be called out.

—

1) “Prices are Dropping” – That’s the Point

Mr. Hansen claims mainland retirees are buying Minatoya List condos at 30–37% discounts compared to 2024 STR-inflated prices. That is not evidence of failure; that is proof Bill 9 is deflating the speculative investor bubble.

For years, STR speculation has artificially driven up condo prices beyond what locals could compete with. Now, by removing the STR income premium, prices are trending back toward reality. If Mr. Hansen were truly concerned about affordability for local residents, he would celebrate this correction instead of defending inflated investor profits.

—

2) Cherry-Picked Sales _ Market Truth

Mr. Hansen’s entire argument rests on two cherry-picked sales at Ma_alaea Banyans—one of the smallest and least representative condo complexes on Maui.

- He ignores the broader market trend, where many former STR units are sitting unsold, with prices continuing to drop.
- He conveniently leaves out that 2024 was an abnormal STR-driven high, not a stable baseline.

The Council should not base policy on selective anecdotes designed to protect a loophole, especially from someone who has likely profited from STR appraisals.

—

3) “Mainlanders Are Buying” – And That Will Change

Yes, some mainland retirees are buying now. But Bill 9 was never intended to instantly transfer ownership to locals; it was designed to stop the bleed of investor-driven transient use.

Hansen fails to acknowledge that as prices continue to normalize, local and workforce buyers will re-enter this market. His assumption that retirees will permanently dominate ignores basic market behavior:

- When profit margins collapse and property taxes shift to residential rates, many absentee owners will sell.
- The investor gold rush is ending, and that’s good for Maui residents.

—

4) “Locals Don’t Rent STR Condos” – Because Prices Were Rigged by STR Investors

Mr. Hansen claims locals “do not rent STR-type apartments” and cites a 47% Craigslist vacancy rate. But his logic is upside down:

- Locals aren’t renting because STRs kept rents artificially high to match vacation rental ROI.
- Once STRs are permanently banned, owners will have no choice but to drop rents or sell.
- He also compares luxury STR condos to affordable rentals like Kaulana Mahina—a dishonest comparison designed to confuse workforce housing with high-end investor products.

Bill 9 will force a long-overdue rental price correction.

—

5) “Locals Can’t Buy” – Another STR Loophole Myth

Mr. Hansen claims locals “cannot” buy these units because of \$4,600/month “carrying costs” and condotel lending restrictions. But this is misleading for three reasons:

1. Those costs are STR-driven (high insurance, investor-risk premiums, STR tax rates). As more STRs convert to residential, carrying costs will decline.
2. FHA and conventional lending expand once transient use is removed. Many financing barriers disappear when these buildings are no longer classified as “condotels.”
3. His focus on “cash retiree buyers” ignores the long-term impact of investor withdrawal; the speculative demand he defends is exactly what priced locals out in the first place.

—

6) Hansen’s True Agenda – Protecting Investor Loopholes

Every “concern” Hansen raises ultimately argues for maintaining the status quo that benefits off-island investors, appraisers, and STR operators:

- Cherry-picked data to exaggerate retiree demand
- Selective vacancy numbers to claim STR units don’t benefit locals
- Fearmongering about financing to discourage policy change

The reality is simple: Bill 9 closes the Minatoya loophole that turned our residential-zoned apartments into speculative commodities. Returning these properties to long-term housing use—gradually, but permanently—is the only sustainable path for Maui.

—

Conclusion

The Council’s kuleana is not to guarantee investor ROI or to act as an appraiser’s marketing tool for off-island buyers. Your responsibility is to restore balance, protect the public trust, and ensure Maui’s housing serves Maui’s people.

Ron Hansen’s own testimony, when read critically, proves that Bill 9 is already achieving its goals: cooling speculative pricing, removing investor incentives, and shifting the market back toward local housing.

Please continue to move Bill 9 forward and close this loophole once and for all.

Mahalo for your leadership.

Kimo and Jolee Bindo, Waikapu

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 4:10pm 07-22-25

All of these non-resident TVR owners are living in a "Me" world and it sure would be nice for them to join us in a "We" world. They are doing just fine in their mainland residence as everyone struggles to survive. And so many have left are will be leaving. Do we like 27% resident homes and 73% investments by people that want to put up walls, fences and gates. TVR investors more interested in good reviews than being a good neighbor. The ones that are on island for a week but since they own a property, they consider themselves "Part of the community"? The opposition is clearly about them selves at the expense of the community. They can long term rent or rezone if they choose not to sell. Also, they need to be prepared to accept the fact they most likely bought an inflated property but someone else that knew this was coming. There was a testifier that bought for \$500k in 2021 and tried to sell for \$600k in 2025. 4 years and they were so upset they did not get a 20% return they decided to pull from the market. That same home will sell for a reasonable amount to a resident. Yes we can afford them. We are just aware of the actual value and are not fooled by the real estate person saying it will pay for itself if you TVR these properties. Unlikely they fully disclosed the delicate nature of the Minatoya list. Then again so many speculative investors hope for the best. Take your losses and move along investor.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 3:00pm 07-22-25

To: Tasha Kama, Chair, Housing & Land Use Committee

From: Ron Hansen, 190 Hauoli St., Wailuku

Aloha, Chair Kama,

As a 30+ yrs. real estate appraiser/analyst, I've been analyzing Bill 9's possibilities for the past 9 mos. I hope my observations are helpful for deciding Bill 9.

A) MAINLANDERS ARE BUYING THE STR-BAN APTS.

The word is spreading...that Maui condos. are for sale at discount prices.

As confirmed by anecdotes from Maui realtors, as well as sales data, retirees & family vacationers from the mainland are looking at and buying apts. that are on the Minatoya List. For example, at our Maalaea Banyans condos the most recent sales to non-residents were \$665k on 5/30/25, and on 5/16/25 at \$599k...

.....which sold immediately on the listing day.

These prices represent (for identical 1 bdr. units) a discount of 30% and 37%, respectively, from the \$945k to \$950k 1 bdrm. sales in 2024..... prior to proposal of Bill 9.

In addition to price discounts, the new retiree/buyer enjoys a \$9,500/yr. savings in property taxes (see schedule 1.0 attached) as an owner-occupied apt.

Since the Minatoya List apts. are nearly all located on beachfront or near (walk to) beach, realtors' increasingly successful marketing to mainland retirees is robust....as 76,000 U.S. residents reach age 65 every week.

B) LOCALS DO NOT RENT STR-TYPE APTS.

STR-type apts. have been, and are abundantly available on offerings such as Realtor.com and Craigslist.com. Yet many of these offerings are not rented even after 30 or more days listed. (see surveys 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 attached reveal 47% not rented after 30 days).

These 1 & 2 bedroom apts. are small, lack storage or private yards, and are not as attractive for families as non-STR design apts., duplexes, or modest houses that are offered for rent. And prices, due to the carrying costs on STR apts., are usually \$3500 or more.

Even newer, non-STR apts. on Maui are not fully occupied. For example the new (since 2023) 340 units, more affordable Kaulana Mahina Apts. in Wailuku has reduced rent rates (from 2024), offers 1 month free move-in rent, and still has vacancies for their 1 & 2 bedroom apts.....that are very similar in size to Minatoya-List apts.

So adding 6,172 Minatoya-List apts. to the long term rental market is likely to provide very little benefit to local residents.

C) LOCALS DO NOT QUALIFY....OR EVEN WANT....TO BUY A MINATOYA LIST APT.

The \$4,600 per month "carrying costs" (per testimony presented) for insurance, HOA fees, mortgage loan, property tax, etc. would require an income of \$11,500 to \$15,300 per month to qualify for a mortgage loan of 30% to 40% of qualifying income. The average \$1,050/mo. HOA fees makes all STR apts. unattractive as family homes/investments...relative to non-STR apts., duplexes, or modest houses. Even with some current apt. prices as low as \$300k to \$500k, they are still on the market...with price drops being offered (see Redfin.com). Unfortunately, most STR apts. are difficult (or impossible) to find mortgage financing, since they are classified as "condotels" for lenders...not qualifying for regular FHA loans.

So the all-cash buying by retirees edges out locals' purchase efforts.

After months of observations and analysis, I can only conclude that,
UNFORTUNATELY, BILL 9 CANNOT AND WILL NOT ASSURE THAT ANY MINATOYA LIST APTS. ARE ACTUALLY OCCUPIED BY LOCAL RESIDENTS.

Thank you..and your committee members... for your extraordinary time and attention!!

Mahalo,

Ron Hansen, 22 yrs. Maui Resident, 190 Hauoli St.

Attached: *Hansen Appraiser Qualifications

*Schedule 1.0 Price & Prop. Tax Discounts

*Surveys 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3 -STR-type Rentals

3 Attachments

- Scanned by Gmail

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 1:41pm 07-22-25

Bill 9 will not correct housing shortage. It will only punish owners of short term rental properties and the Maui citizens that are employed maintaining those properties. The County Council was elected to serve all, not just the people that want to destroy lawful owners.

Hurting one part of the population does little good and will cause major damage which will not be easily overcome.

Harry Hecht

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 1:39pm 07-22-25

From: Mike Pytlinski <bronco67@hotmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 11:10 AM

To: HLU Committee <HLU.Committee@mauicounty.us>

Subject: Bill 9 Testimony

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members,

My name is Michael Pytlinski, 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 6,000 vacation rentals.

I appreciate your efforts to address the need for more affordable housing on Maui. I do not believe that eliminating over 6,000 current licensed STRs is the answer. I applied back in 2006 to be able to rent out my unit in a short-term capacity. I, like the other 6,000 licensed STR owners, applied to Maui County and the State of Hawaii and were granted licenses and permission to do so legally. Every dollar we collect we contribute nearly 18% in GE, TA, and MCTAT taxes. Since 2006, I have contributed nearly \$400,000 myself to the State of Hawaii and Maui County in tax revenue. You have over 6,000 legal licensed STRs that are generating money for the State and County. The State and County will lose 14% of every dollar generated by STRs if you ban the 6,000 STRs for operating as they have been legally been able to do. Eliminating these STRs erases a whole revenue stream that generates millions of dollars for Maui County and Hawaii annually. Just all of this threatening to cut them has greatly decreased this revenue that I am sure is very visible now.

My, and all STRs, bring guests to the island that then contribute to many Maui businesses: Aloha-Rent-A-Car, Kihei Rent a car – two locally owned Maui businesses that employ many local residents. Our guests eat at many local restaurants and coffee shops also owned by local residents. Many of the Maui activities thrive due to our guests: Start Me Up (Blue Water) fishing, Maui Adventure Cruises, Kainani Sails, Scotch Mist Sailing Charters – All staffed by local residents. Just to give a few of the many examples of local businesses and residents that benefit from STRs.

Please reconsider your efforts to increase affordable housing by eliminating the legal STRs. The revenue they generate can greatly be used to assist with developing other solutions.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Michael Pytlinski

honokowaipalmsb7@hotmail.com

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 10:48am 07-22-25

From: Belinda Battistelli-Meeker <mauipalms213@gmail.com>

Sent: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 10:45:19 AM (UTC-10:00) Hawaii

To: HLU Committee <HLU.Committee@mauicounty.us>

Cc: Cristina Graziano <cristina@destinationmaui.net>; Sherry Kennedy <sherry@destinationmaui.net>; Robb and Linda Haskins <rlhaskins@msn.com>; Barbara Olson <barbaracolson@msn.com>; Keani N. Rawlins <Keani.Rawlins@mauicounty.us>; Thomas M. Cook <Thomas.Cook@mauicounty.us>

Subject: Bill 9 Testimony

A pertinent question for the STR RENTAL owners to consider is what transpired during the prosperous times. Maui was flourishing well before the onset of COVID, and as the world reopened, Maui began to prosper once more with an influx of visitors. Throughout this period, Maui County was accumulating TAT and GET taxes from all of us—amounting to thousands upon thousands of dollars. Additionally, fees were imposed on the business owners of Property Managers—where did all that money go? If the concerns revolve around the homeless and houseless natives of Maui, where were the leaders of Maui, including politicians, mayors, and other influential figures, in their efforts to create housing for their own? We acknowledge that the Lahaina fire caused immense destruction for many, but the reserves generated from all the taxes collected by Maui, along with the contributions from hotels, raise the question—where are the homes? The crisis of homelessness and "houselessness" has been escalating long before the Lahaina fires, and the leadership of Maui is aware of this; they are failing to address their responsibility in a project that has long been overdue and is essential for the islanders. Do not stifle tourism on your island by penalizing those who have contributed taxes to you and the beautiful island of Maui. You are aware of where the funds are and the programs necessary to resolve the houseless crisis. Stop overtaxing the STR owners that generate the income that MAUI needs so badly.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 10:33am 07-22-25

From: Laura Chadwick <lchadwick@traveltech.org>

Sent: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 10:30:50 AM (UTC-10:00) Hawaii

To: HLU Committee <HLU.Committee@mauicounty.us>

Subject: Travel Tech Opposition to Proposal to Phase Out Legal Short-Term Rentals

Dear Chair Kama, Vice Chair U_u-Hodgins, and Committee Members:

On behalf of the Travel Technology Association (Travel Tech) and our members, I appreciate the opportunity to submit these comments concerning the proposal to eliminate legal short-term rentals in the Apartment Districts of Maui County.

Travel Tech represents the leading innovators in travel technology, including online travel agencies (OTAs), metasearch platforms, travel management companies, and short-term rental platforms. Our members connect travelers to lodging options and support Hawai'i's tourism economy by empowering consumer choice and helping thousands of local property owners, small businesses, and workers thrive. Our members' vital role in the travel and tourism industry empowers consumers, creates a fair and competitive marketplace, fosters accountability, and promotes positive customer experiences.

We strongly oppose the proposal to phase out lawful short-term rentals in Maui's Apartment Districts. These units—which are tax-compliant and legally permitted—play a vital role in Maui's visitor infrastructure. According to a June 2024 economic analysis conducted by Kloninger & Sims and commissioned by Travel Tech, short-term rental guests in Maui County spent \$2.2 billion in 2023, generating \$4 billion in total economic activity. These visitors support thousands of jobs, contribute substantially to local businesses, and help sustain a wide range of economic sectors beyond just lodging.

The analysis also projected that removing short-term rentals in the Apartment Districts could cost Maui County tens of millions annually in lost tax revenues—including up to \$91.8 million in combined real property, transient accommodations, and general excise taxes.

Such losses would severely impact the County's ability to fund essential services and community investments. Rather than eliminating these accommodations, we encourage Maui County to focus on targeted enforcement of existing regulations, which can address community concerns without destabilizing a critical component of the tourism economy. We welcome the opportunity to partner with Maui County to ensure responsible short-term rental practices while supporting the local economy.

For these reasons, we urge the Maui County Council to reject this proposal and consider balanced alternatives that preserve Maui's economic health, protect local jobs and revenues, and maintain the variety of lodging options that make the island accessible to a wide range of visitors.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Laura

Laura Chadwick | President & CEO

Travel Technology Association

3033 Wilson Blvd., Suite 700, Arlington, VA 22201

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 9:54am 07-22-25

Maalaea is all workforce housing.

Tanci Mintz

Location:

Submitted At: 8:43am 07-22-25

On behalf of the Ma'alaea Village Association, MVA we respectfully submit the attached testimony.

Deleted User

Location:

Submitted At: 8:35am 07-22-25

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

I submit this testimony in **strong support of Bill 9** because the **status quo is not working**. The housing crisis on Maui has reached emergency levels, as formally declared by the County itself, and it will only worsen if we continue to allow residential housing in the **Apartment District (A-1 and A-2 zoned properties)** to be operated as de facto hotels.

The Status Quo Is Broken

For years, a zoning loophole has allowed **short-term vacation rentals (STRs)** in Apartment Districts, diverting homes from local families and workforce housing. This loophole has **extracted billions of dollars from our community every year**—wealth generated on Maui but leaving Maui—while simultaneously:

*** Driving up housing prices and rents beyond what working families can afford.***

*** Pushing multi-generational families into overcrowded homes, cars, or off-island entirely.***

*** Causing workforce shortages in essential services, from teachers to healthcare workers.***

The people of Maui are bearing the cost, while investors—many of whom live off-island—reap profits from what was always intended to be residential housing.

Fire Damage and Housing Emergency Demand Action

The devastation of the **L_hain_ and Kula wildfires** exposed how fragile and inequitable Maui's housing system has become. Thousands of displaced residents remain without permanent homes, while STRs continue to operate in housing-zoned buildings.

The economic and social damage from these fires is **far greater than the financial impact of correcting a zoning loophole**. Continuing the status quo—prioritizing STR investor returns over resident housing needs—is not only morally unacceptable, it directly obstructs wildfire recovery efforts by keeping homes out of reach for the very workers and families needed to rebuild.

Bill 9 Is a Necessary First Step

Bill 9 is not a complete housing solution, but it is a **necessary first step** toward restoring housing to its intended purpose. By phasing out STRs in Apartment Districts:

* **More housing units will become available for long-term residents.**
* **Property values and rents will stabilize instead of being driven by speculative STR income.**
* **Workforce housing efforts will finally have a fighting chance to succeed.**

The County has a **legal and moral obligation** to act in the public trust. Housing is a basic human need; STR income is not.

Correcting a Loophole, Not Punishing Anyone

It is important to remember that STR operators in Apartment Districts were never promised perpetual commercial use of residential housing. **Compliance with existing STR rules is a legal requirement, not a charitable act**, and cannot outweigh the collective harm caused by speculative use of housing stock.

Yes, some investors will experience financial losses. But no private investment—especially one based on a zoning loophole—can be guaranteed against policy correction, particularly when the broader community is suffering.

Conclusion

Bill 9 restores balance, corrects a zoning misuse that has contributed to the housing crisis, and begins to return housing to the people who live and work on Maui. **The real devastation is the ongoing displacement of Maui residents, not the market correction that will come with closing this loophole.**

I urge the Committee to pass Bill 9 without delay.

Mahalo for your time and commitment to the people of Maui.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald Schenk, Waikapu Resident

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 6:53am 07-22-25

From: Sara Briendel <daisycircle@yahoo.com>

Sent: Tuesday, July 22, 2025 6:39:52 AM (UTC-10:00) Hawaii

To: HLU Committee

Subject: Bill+9+Testimony

To Whom This Concerns:

I am offering my testimony against Bill 9 on Maui. I live off island but have a deep family connection to it. My parents came here every year for twenty years until they passed. My father contributed to the economy as a musician, performing with his beloved friends, local musicians. He recorded an album about and on Maui called "Where the Warm Winds Blow."

My parents could not afford to buy a home in Maui but felt it to be a second home.

We spread both parents ashes by the airbnb complex my parents annually stayed.

My husband and I scraped together every last cent after they passed and invested it in an Airbnb in Kihei near where they stayed so we could continue to come to our beloved Maui with our children, as well as help pay for that second home through STR. As we approach retirement, this place was planned to be our retirement income and eventually, our permanent home. We threw everything we had into this condo, only a few years ago, because of our love for the island of Maui, where we continued to stay and planned as our future home.

Plan 9 will devastate us financially, losing at least a third of equity in our Maui condo, as well as income intended to see us through retirement. We cannot afford the outlandish prices of the resorts, so will have no options for

continuing our decades-long annual return to Maui. We will also lose a significant portion of our retirement income, forcing us to have to continue to labor beyond what our health will allow. Enormous hardship will befall us if Plan 9 passes.

Many of the friends we have made who work in the tourist industry will also suffer - restaurant owners, activity providers, performers will also lose their livelihood and we are terrified for them as well.

We love Maui and want to see affordable housing created for all natives but this bill is not the answer.

Plan 9 will destroy the lives of so many locals and Plan 9 does not guarantee the housing stolen from STR owners will be affordable to locals, many ultra rich will rush in to buy third, fourth, fifth homes they will leave vacant most of the year. Rents will still be too high for the average local, especially when the industry upheld by Airbnb tourism will collapse. How can Plan 9, that will devastate so many lives actually be helpful? I beg you to consider that the current tragedy of housing unavailability will be replaced by further financial and housing devastation for others in the community. Plan 9 is not an answer, it is a road to more suffering than currently exists.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sara Breindel and family

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 11:46am 07-21-25

Submitted to the Maui County Housing and Land Use Committee

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

I submit this testimony in strong support of Bill 9 and in direct opposition to the misinformation being circulated by some realtors and short-term vacation rental (STVR) owners who either misunderstand or intentionally distort the purpose and impacts of this bill.

Bill 9 is a targeted, lawful correction of a zoning loophole that has allowed properties in the Apartment District (A-1 and A-2 zoned properties)—originally intended for residents—to be diverted into the visitor economy for decades. Restoring these units to their lawful residential purpose is not only PONO, it is essential for the survival of our local community.

—

1. The False Narrative: “Bill 9 will not add housing because families won’t buy small condos.”

Many realtors and STVR owners argue that local families will not purchase or rent these apartments because:

- They are “too small for families.”
- HOA and insurance costs are too high.
- Parking and amenities make them unsuitable.

These claims are misleading and self-serving:

_ Not every household is a large family. Teachers, nurses, k_puna, single parents, and young professionals desperately need smaller, affordable units close to jobs. One- and two-bedroom apartments are ideal for many of these residents.

_ Costs are artificially inflated by STVR use. High insurance premiums, wear-and-tear, and elevated HOA fees are driven by the transient rental market. As STVRs phase out, operating costs stabilize and long-term rental markets naturally adjust.

_ Affordability improves when speculation is reduced. Removing visitor-driven demand will reduce inflated purchase prices and rents, making these units accessible to residents.

—

2. The False Narrative: “Bill 9 will hurt Maui’s economy.”

STVR owners cite “economic studies” predicting decline. But those studies:

- Were funded or influenced by the tourism industry.
- Measured economic impacts only in terms of visitor spending, not community wellbeing.

The reality is:

_ Maui’s economy cannot survive if its workforce leaves. Businesses, hospitals, and schools are already losing staff because there is no housing. A healthy economy requires residents, not just tourists.

_ The cost of over-tourism is greater than the revenue it generates. Overcrowding strains infrastructure, increases wildfire risk, drives up car saturation, and displaces residents, eroding the very cultural fabric visitors come to experience.

—

3. The False Narrative: “This is our family home, not an investment.”

Many second-home STVR owners claim, “We didn’t buy it as an investment; it’s where we make memories.” But if a property is:

- Occupied part-time,
- Rented for income when not in use, and
- Treated as a way to offset \$7,000/month carrying costs,

...it is, by definition, an investment property. Emotional language does not change the fact that these units are being withheld from Maui residents who have no housing at all.

—

4. The False Narrative: “One-bedroom condos aren’t suitable for local housing.”

This is a convenient but dishonest argument. Maui’s housing crisis isn’t just about families of four; it’s about everyone who needs a safe, stable home. Smaller condos are perfect for:

- Single k_puna living on fixed incomes,
- Newly hired teachers or healthcare workers,
- Local couples or single parents with one child.

The idea that “if it’s not perfect for a family of four, it’s useless” is a delay tactic to protect rental profits.

—

5. The False Narrative: “Just build more housing; don’t take ours.”

Building new housing is important, but it takes years and massive funding. Meanwhile:

- Thousands of existing units sit locked in the visitor economy.
- Families displaced by the L_hain_ fires cannot wait 5–10 years for new construction.

Bill 9 provides immediate housing relief by restoring already-built residential units to their intended purpose.

—

6. The False Narrative: “We should just raise taxes instead.”

Taxes alone do not create housing. Even if STVR taxes were raised, it would not instantly make units available for displaced families. Housing supply—not just revenue—is the immediate emergency.

Further, STVR owners claiming they’ve “paid \$250,000 in taxes over 20 years” present it as a charitable act.

Paying property tax is not philanthropy—it's a legal obligation.

—

7. The False Narrative: “Local residents and Hawaiians should be allowed to run STVRs.”

Some claim that restricting STVRs is “HEWA” because it shuts locals and Native Hawaiians out of the visitor economy. This argument ignores the bigger truth:

_ Locals need housing more than a side business in tourism. Without housing, residents will continue to leave Maui entirely, further eroding Hawaiian cultural presence on the island.

_ Tourism profits must not outweigh the right to housing. PONO governance requires prioritizing community survival over speculative profit.

—

Conclusion

Bill 9 is not anti-tourism and not anti-resident. It is a correction of a decades-old zoning abuse that has fueled displacement, overpopulation, and economic inequity.

STVR owners and realtors misrepresent Bill 9 because it threatens their profits, but public policy cannot be dictated by individual investors' financial comfort while our own residents are forced to leave their homeland.

I urge this Committee to pass Bill 9 without dilution or delay. The land's highest and best use is to house our people, not to serve as transient lodging for part-time visitors.

Mahalo for your time and for standing for the future of Maui.

Respectfully submitted,

Tyler Hunter
Kihei Resident

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 7:59am 07-21-25

From: Kelly Beggrow <kellybeggrow@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, July 21, 2025 6:15 AM

To: HLU Committee <HLU.Committee@mauicounty.us>

Subject: Bill 9 Testimony

We are home & landowners for the past 21 years at the Ridge In Kapalua.

We spend 1/2 our time in this home and our other home in Eagle. It is our home where we have made memories with our children and now grandchildren growing up.

We did not buy it as in investment property but as a home to be family and escape the harsh winters in Idaho for our health.

We have paid more than \$250,000 in taxes over this period. Property taxes continue to rise.

We have supported the local community and families throughout this time including our wonderful property managers Ridge Realty Rentals whom we love like family.

We are confused as to the strangeness of this bill.

It makes no logical sense to us.

To just maintain and keep our home, we have to pay around \$7,000 a month even though it is paid off. This include property taxes, HOA fees, etc.

We have one space for parking.

This one bedroom condo is not conducive for long term family housing at all.

I do not understand how a family can afford \$7,000 a month in a residential area.
The solution is to build more. What happened to the concept of build back better?
Don't these displaced victims of the Lahaina fire deserve to build back better?
As one family we have donated to families trying to help. Shouldn't their governor & mayor do the same?
If a bill is presented to increase taxes for 5 years to directly be used to build back better for these victims, and it went directly to them, no one would deny that.
Do the right thing and build back better for these victims.

Sincerely,

Kelly & Dave Beggrow

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 7:57am 07-21-25

From: Colleen Medeiros <colleenpmedeiros@gmail.com>

Sent: Sunday, July 20, 2025 6:41 PM

To: HLU Committee <HLU.Committee@mauicounty.us>

Subject: Bill 9 Testimony

Aloha HLU Committee Members,

Please let this serve as my testimony for Bill 9, the Proposed phase out of Short term rentals in Apartment zoning for the purpose of adding affordable house to Maui's housing market.

It is my educated opinion that the proposed phase Will Not serve its intended purpose, and several studies show, it will hurt the overall economy of Maui County.

Firstly, based on current and past trends, I don't believe that local families will purchase these apartments, mainly because most are too small for families but also because the current state of exorbitant insurance and other HOA fees are making these apartments more expensive than they were in the past. Hopefully some state subsidized insurance options will come online soon and that would help, but for now there are many caveats, and I believe these caveats should be taken into consideration, perhaps Apartment complexes should be phased out based on their Actual Potential for suitability as local family homes;

- parking stalls that come with units (2 or more spaces available)
- in unit laundry
- cost of grounds maintenance; pools, tennis courts, amenities that drive HOA fees up.
- Insurance costs
- unit size (2 bedroom or more)
- storage space
- pets allowed?

I strongly urge the HLU to read all the studies conducted on the economic impacts of phasing out this sector of our economy, every study has predicted an economic decline across the county, impacts that will be felt by all citizens. I do believe that could be reduced if only the most suitable apartments were phased out, if the phase out process were more precise based on where local families will actually have a suitable living arrangement; enough space, storage, parking, and affordable HOA and insurance. I would assess all complexes to find the most suitable ones.

Lastly I'd like to reiterate what I have said for many years now; Local Maui residents, haole and Hawaiian alike, must have an avenue to DIRECTLY benefit from our tourism economy. The OFF-SHORE, BIG BOX, HOTEL CONGLOMERATES, should not be the ONLY entities to benefit from our Islands, in a perfectly sustainable world, they would have never been allowed to proliferate and small mom and pops inns and bed and breakfasts would have been the best model. What we need to do is SCALE BACK the GIANT RESORT AREAS, take back the beachfront, require the GIANT BIG BOX hotels to provide affordable housing within their hotels, and house their own employees, which they already import from other countries en mass.

Allow full time Maui residents and ethnic Hawaiians to run the short term vacation rentals and B&B's. Allow full-time Maui residents and Hawaiians to DIRECTLY BENEFIT from our biggest economic driver, do not shut us out.

Perhaps this can be done by raising the STRH tax on out of state owners and offering an "tax exemption" for resident STRH owners.

Disallowing local residents and Hawaiians from benefiting from our main economic driver, is shutting us out economically, is a means to SUPPRESS financial and overall advancement, to shut out more local families and Hawaiian families from getting ahead in their own homeland and that is wrong...not PONO... HEWA.

With Aloha,
Colleen P Medeiros
Realtor-Associate | RS-80134
Island Sotheby's International Realty

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 10:34am 07-20-25

Any councilmember who cannot support Bill 9 is signaling that investor profits matter more than residents' survival. If that's your stance, have the integrity to resign rather than block real solutions. Maui deserves leaders, not gatekeepers for speculative interests

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 10:30pm 07-19-25

101 lives lost in Lahaina, and we're still prioritizing vacation rentals over residents?

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 8:35pm 07-19-25

Stan Franco, he explained to you what to do

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 5:33pm 07-19-25

Aloha Chair and Councilmembers,

I strongly support Bill 9 because it is the most cost-effective, fair, and logical way to return much-needed housing to Maui residents.

Opponents have suggested using affordable housing funds to purchase short-term vacation rentals in the Apartment District, specifically zoned A-1 and A-2, to convert them into affordable housing. At first glance, this might sound reasonable, but it is fundamentally flawed for seven key reasons:

1. It's Not Free Market Economics.

A true free market relies on private transactions based on supply and demand, not taxpayer-funded buyouts. Using public money to purchase private investor properties is not free-market policy—it's government intervention designed to rescue investors from a declining market.

2. It Burdens Taxpayers.

Affordable housing funds come from the people of Maui. Spending millions to buy STVRs, even at a "discount," is essentially a taxpayer-funded bailout for speculative investors who overpaid for vacation rentals.

3. It Wastes Limited Housing Funds.

Maui's affordable housing funds are limited. One \$800,000 condo purchase could instead build four to six affordable housing units elsewhere. Bill 9 achieves the same result—returning these units to the housing pool—without spending a dime of public money.

4. It Fails to Address the Root Problem.

Purchasing a handful of properties does nothing to stop the ongoing cycle of speculative investment. Bill 9, on the

other hand, permanently corrects the misuse of the Apartment District by restoring its intended residential purpose.

5. It Creates a Government Landlord Problem.

The County should not be forced to manage scattered condo units as a landlord. Historically, County-managed housing is slower, more expensive, and less efficient than privately managed residential rentals.

6. It Overpays for Vacation Condos Not Suited for Residents.

Prices in A-1 and A-2 zones remain inflated by speculative demand, even if they've "fallen." Most of these units are not designed for local family living, and purchasing them for affordable housing would be an inefficient use of funds.

7. It Protects Investor ROI, Not Residents.

The only real beneficiaries of this buyout scheme are STVR investors looking to cash out. Bill 9 protects residents, not investors, by simply enforcing zoning and returning housing to its intended purpose.

For these reasons, Bill 9 is the smarter, faster, and more fiscally responsible solution. It restores hundreds of units to long-term housing immediately, without draining taxpayer resources, and it corrects years of speculative misuse of the Apartment District.

Please pass Bill 9 as written.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 3:40pm 07-19-25

Use the affordable housing funds to purchase or subsidize purchase of these. Check the MLS listings, find ones in the A1/A2 districts and purchase them at a discounted price as prices have fallen. Just like you did with the old Haggi Institute. Then the county will own them and keep them in the affordable housing pool. That is how a free market economy works.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 2:29pm 07-19-25

What are you waiting for? Move it to the council for deliberation.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 11:39am 07-19-25

True professionals—those with ethics and respect for this community—should support Bill 9 and help implement it responsibly. Those who oppose it should be honest with the public: they are not fighting for Maui's future; they are fighting against it.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 9:54am 07-19-25

Bill 9 is humanitarian relief for Maui. It's about getting housing back into the hands of residents who need it most—families displaced by wildfire, workers priced out of their own neighborhoods, and k_puna struggling to survive.

So why are some realtors, property managers, and cleaning contractors fighting it? Because Bill 9 threatens their profits. And now they're crossing the line by telling clients and condo associations to sue the County—a move that isn't just unethical, it's potentially criminal.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 9:22am 07-19-25

A stable resident workforce generates year-round spending—tourists leave after a week.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 1:57am 07-19-25

Protecting housing for residents is the most basic form of humanitarian aid a county can provide.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 2:53pm 07-18-25

Bill 9 is HUMANITARIAN AID—not just policy, not just zoning reform, but direct disaster relief for Maui families displaced by the L_hain_ fires and a worsening housing emergency. Mayor Richard Bissen introduced Bill 9 as an emergency measure because thousands of long-term units remain locked up as short-term vacation rentals (STVRs) in A-1 and A-2 zoned properties, even as families live in cars, tents, and overcrowded shelters.

—

What Humanitarian Aid Means

The United Nations defines humanitarian aid as:

“Material or logistical assistance provided for humanitarian purposes, typically in response to natural disasters or other emergencies, with the primary objective of saving lives, alleviating suffering, and maintaining human dignity.”

The L_hain_ fires displaced thousands. Housing is as essential to survival as food or medical care in a disaster. Humanitarian aid includes shelter relief and housing stability—precisely what Bill 9 delivers.

—

Why Bill 9 Qualifies as Humanitarian Aid

- _ Disaster Relief: It directly responds to the fire disaster by making vacant units available to residents.
- _ Immediate Action: It reclaims thousands of long-term housing units, providing relief now, not years later.
- _ Alleviating Suffering: It reduces overinflated rents and eases overcrowding for displaced families.
- _ Restoring Dignity: It gives residents a chance to live safely on their own island, rather than being pushed out for tourist profits.
- _ Legal Obligation: The Hawai_i State Constitution requires government to act for public welfare—housing is fundamental to that duty.

—

Council's Responsibility

Mayor Bissen has done his part by proposing this HUMANITARIAN AID. The Council's responsibility is not to protect condo values, inflated rents, or investor profits—it is to protect the people who elected them. Every day of delay is another day fire victims and displaced families go without homes, while thousands of units sit empty for tourists.

—

Conclusion

Bill 9 is not politics—it is survival. It is the most immediate HUMANITARIAN RELIEF Maui can deliver to its own people after disaster. If our elected officials cannot pass basic humanitarian aid for their neighbors in crisis, then they have failed in their most fundamental duty to serve.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 2:11pm 07-18-25

From: Kat Zerb <kathyzerbib@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, July 17, 2025 6:13 PM
To: HLU Committee <HLU.Committee@mauicounty.us>
Subject: Opposition to Bill 9

Dear Chair and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. I am writing to express my strong opposition to Bill 9, which proposes phasing out legally operating short-term rentals in apartment-zoned areas.

As a permitted short-term rental operator in Maui County, I've worked hard to comply with all regulations and contribute positively to the community. My operations support local jobs, rely on local services, and generate significant tax revenue that benefits the county.

Bill 9, as currently written, would abruptly remove long-standing legal uses without offering a clear or practical path forward. This would not only disrupt stable, law-abiding rental operations but also have a ripple effect on small businesses and workers who depend on this industry.

Rather than eliminating legal rentals entirely, I urge the Council to consider balanced solutions (such as stricter enforcement of illegal operations, voluntary conversion incentives, and reasonable caps) to help achieve housing goals without unintended harm.

Please do not advance Bill 9 in its current form. I appreciate your time and commitment, and I hope we can work toward effective, collaborative approaches for the benefit of all Maui County.

Sincerely,
Jean-Paul Zerbib

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 9:10am 07-18-25

Maui's voters lost homes in the fires—yet their own elected officials can't even vote them basic HUMANITARIAN RELIEF.

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 8:50am 07-18-25

If councilmembers can't even pass basic HUMANITARIAN AID in a housing emergency, they shouldn't call themselves leaders.

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 8:17am 07-17-25

Bill 9 is HUMANITARIAN AID. It is relief from the fires, from displacement, and from the ongoing housing emergency that has forced Maui families out of their own island. Returning Apartment District (A-1 and A-2) units to residents is not just zoning—it is immediate HUMANITARIAN relief for people who lost homes, jobs, and stability after the L_hain_ disaster. It is shameful that so many Councilmembers show more concern for condo values and vacation rental profits than for their own neighbors. Bill 9 is not about politics; it is about putting residents first when they need it most.

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 9:52am 07-16-25

Alice Lee claims to want 'workforce housing for kama__ina,' yet she's stalling Bill 9 over 'economic impacts' to the vacation rental industry. How many Maui families have to be priced out before she sees this isn't about cleaning jobs—it's about survival?

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 8:25am 07-16-25

Alice Lee hides behind 'legal questions' and 'property rights,' but the real issue is simple: housing for residents is a moral obligation, not a corporate investment opportunity.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 8:06am 07-16-25

Pass Bill 9 and watch Alice Lee stall out Maui housing again—two years in and still no real leadership

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 8:06am 07-16-25

Pass Bill 9 and watch Alice Lee stall out Maui housing again—two years in and still no real leadership

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 4:34pm 07-15-25

Pass Bill 9 and hand Alice Lee the wheel—let her drive Maui housing off a cliff after nearly two years of refusing to form an opinion.

Edward Codelia

Location:

Submitted At: 3:39pm 07-15-25

My formulated opinion is this dies in committee. thank you.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 10:03am 07-15-25

Alice_Lee and the Council have acknowledged they are still “formulating opinions” in private. That’s unacceptable. The public has a right to know: Who is shaping this policy? Who is paying for the lobby? And why are we using tragedy as political cover?

Bill_9 phased_out the Minatoya List by July_1, _2025 in West Maui and January_1, _2026 elsewhere. This aligns with state law (SB_2919) allowing counties to regulate STVRs—especially when it’s clearly in the interest of affordable housing. Yet it’s courage—transparency and accountability—that are missing at every Council turn.

If the Council won’t lead transparently, let the public demand it. Get it on the ballot! Or Vote yes on Bill_9 to finally use apartment zoning as intended—for residents, not transient profit. Expose the closed-door influence peddling. Respect the voices of the 115,000 registered voters, not just the loud industry lobby. The people deserve better. Now is the time.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 2:00pm 07-14-25

Councilmember Lee warns of economic harm from Bill 9. Yet compare that to the disaster we’ve already suffered:

- August 2023 wildfires caused \$5.5 billion in damage (2,200+ buildings destroyed, 102+ lives lost) _
- Moody’s and Fast Company estimate \$4–6_billion in economic loss—some estimates even reach \$8–10_billion ()

That is money lost forever—through destruction, displacement, lost productivity, and rebuilding — far more than any short_term STVR rent could ever bring in.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 10:34am 07-14-25

Any litigation that follows passage of BILL 9 will proceed through the normal judicial process. The County is in a STRONG POSITION to DEFEND the ordinance on constitutional and statutory grounds. If necessary, the County may consider TIME-LIMITED TRANSITIONAL MEASURES to further mitigate potential claims, though such measures are not LEGALLY REQUIRED to uphold the ordinance’s validity.

In summary, the LEGAL RISK posed by litigation is LOW, the COUNTY'S AUTHORITY is CLEAR, and the POLICY OBJECTIVES of BILL 9—restoring appropriate land use, protecting housing stock, and promoting zoning consistency—are LEGITIMATE and DEFENSIBLE. I urge this Council to PROCEED with the ENACTMENT of BILL 9 without hesitation.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 9:49am 07-14-25

From: County Clerk <County.Clerk@mauicounty.us>
Sent: Monday, July 14, 2025 9:43:33 AM (UTC-10:00) Hawaii
To: HLU Committee <HLU.Committee@mauicounty.us>
Subject: Fw: Testimony from non - local (german researcher)

From: Mila <djami.saadi@googlemail.com>
Sent: Monday, July 14, 2025 9:11 AM
To: County Clerk <County.Clerk@mauicounty.us>
Subject: Testimony from non - local (german researcher)

You don't often get email from djami.saadi@googlemail.com. Learn why this is important

Aloha,

My name is Djamila (Mila) Saadi, and I'm writing in strong support of Bill 9. I am not from Lahaina, but I've had the privilege of spending several months there conducting research, sharing story, attending community workdays, and listening — deeply — to residents who are living through the aftermath of the 2023 fires.

I write today as an outsider, but also as someone who has witnessed the strength, pain, and clarity of this community. I've seen firsthand how families are navigating loss not just of homes, but of belonging. I've heard story after story of k_puna pushed out, while condos sitting empty and locals are told there's no space, of __ina treated as investment portfolios while lineages are being broken.

What strikes me most is this: the people most impacted have been showing up — testifying, organizing, rebuilding, resisting. Yet too often, their words are dismissed as emotional or idealistic.

I believe the voices of Native Hawaiian families, long-time residents, and grassroots organizers should be leading this conversation. If the community is not protected it will also cause negative effects on the tourism, because Maui will lose its spirit without its people. But that's not why people visit it - they visit it because of the Alhoa-spirit.

The heart to heart relationships.

Bill 9 is not about "taking something away." It's about restoring what should never have been taken: housing as a right, __ina as relationship, and community as the center of policy.

This is not a simple housing shortage, but a housing injustice. And Bill 9 is one step toward correcting it.

Mahalo for your time.

Greetings from Cologne, Germany

Mila

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 7:52am 07-14-25

From: County Clerk <County.Clerk@mauicounty.us>
Sent: Monday, July 14, 2025 7:34:10 AM (UTC-10:00) Hawaii
To: HLU Committee <HLU.Committee@mauicounty.us>
Subject: Fw: Vacation rental ordinance

From: J Best <jenpete@aol.com>
Sent: Saturday, July 12, 2025 4:36 AM
To: County Clerk <County.Clerk@mauicounty.us>
Subject: Vacation rental ordinance

[You don't often get email from jenpete@aol.com. Learn why this is important at

<https://aka.ms/LearnAboutSenderIdIdentification>]

Dear Supervisors:

Our family loves visiting the islands, but we very much value the maintenance of residential neighborhoods for full-time residents. Sure, we'd enjoy the peace of staying in a neighborhood, but we see across the country the impact these short term rentals have on our communities: lack of long-term housing for locals, loss of affordable housing (whether renting, leasing or buying), loss of community.

As I have proposed for our own tourist-industry-dependent community, I propose at least a shift in ownership of such units to locals with a limit on the number of units. Say, one rental per local resident. That allow for secondary income for an actual resident, rather than, say, 440 units for one resident (or absentee) owner. Don't live there? Don't profit.

You might look at San Luis Obispo, California. They have a policy which only allows for the rental of primary dwellings. If I want to rent out the house I LIVE in, I can vacate and do that on a limited basis. It must be my primary residence. I may also rent out a room in my house. But no one can make a housing unit in that city a full-time vacation rental. There are more details to their ordinance which you can find in municode or simply by reaching out to staff.

Yes, we want to visit. Yes, we will need a place to stay. But we understand there's only so much room, only so many beds, only so much space on your beautiful islands. And locals should be prioritized.

Aloha,
Jennifer Best
Creston, California

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 3:37pm 07-13-25
Listen to Stan Franco

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 3:37pm 07-13-25
Listen to Stan Franco

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 11:52am 07-13-25

Some say PROPERTY RIGHTS should come before all else. That if you OWN it, you can DO WHATEVER YOU WANT with it—even in the middle of a housing emergency. But that belief—unchecked—is exactly what turned the Lahaina fire from a NATURAL DISASTER into a HUMANITARIAN FAILURE. Property rights are not absolute. They exist within a SOCIAL CONTRACT. They are subject to PUBLIC TRUST. And when thousands of MAUI RESIDENTS are homeless or displaced, while investors run SHORT-TERM RENTALS in zones intended for COMMUNITY HOUSING, the law must INTERVENE.

The Constitution does not protect PROFITS OVER PEOPLE. The COUNTY has both the DUTY and the AUTHORITY to regulate land use in the interest of PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY, and WELFARE. That is what Bill 9 does. It reaffirms that APARTMENT DISTRICT zoning—A-1 and A-2—is for RESIDENTIAL USE, not commercial exploitation. It says: when our community suffers, we don't double down on extraction—we protect the land FOR THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE HERE.

If you believe that "property rights" mean the freedom to evict locals to host tourists, or to hold housing hostage in the middle of a DISASTER, then you're not defending liberty—you're defending ENTITLEMENT. That's not FREEDOM. That's FEUDALISM. And it's exactly the mentality that left our k_puna and families to sleep in cars, hotel rooms, and shelters—while hundreds of units sat vacant or were listed online for vacationers.

BILL 9 is not an attack on ownership. It is a DEFENSE OF DIGNITY. It says: you can invest here, but you cannot displace us. You can buy property, but you cannot commodify a CRISIS. We cannot keep sacrificing housing to the highest bidder, then pretend we have no responsibility when people suffer.

The fire exposed what happens when we put PRIVILEGE over PREPARATION. This law is how we fix it. If you oppose Bill 9, ask yourself: what's more valuable—your RENTAL INCOME or your NEIGHBOR'S LIFE?

MAUI DESERVES BETTER. THE TIME TO CHOOSE PEOPLE OVER PROFIT IS NOW.

Albert DeJardine
Kahului Resident

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 10:32am 07-13-25

Aloha Chair and Members of the Housing and Land Use Committee,

I write today in strong support of Bill 9, which is not only a necessary correction to decades of zoning mismanagement but also a vital step toward restoring integrity to Maui's land use laws and addressing our worsening housing crisis. The opposition has claimed that there is "zero evidence" that any significant number of housing units would become available through this measure, but that argument ignores how housing policy works. No one is suggesting that thousands of units will be instantly handed over to local buyers. What this bill does is restore the original intent of Apartment District zoning—long-term residential use—by ending the use of a loophole that has allowed for resort-style short-term rentals (STRs) in non-resort areas. That correction alone is a powerful act of legal clarity, and it sets the stage for future housing reform. Similar actions on other islands have shown real results: after Kaua'i's 2008 law restricting illegal STRs, many units returned to long-term rental use within two years. Honolulu's Bill 89 likewise resulted in a surge of long-term rental listings when STR activity was curbed. Bill 9 is a step in the same direction—one based on legal precedent and grounded policy.

Opponents argue that property values in these areas have dropped by as much as 30% and that these properties are sitting on the market unsold for over 100 days. But this market correction is precisely what should be expected when a commercial entitlement like vacation rental use is removed from residential-zoned properties. These units were never priced based on their residential value—they were inflated by their income potential as short-term rentals. Removing that commercial use returns these properties to their appropriate legal and market classification. That's not a failure of the bill; it's a rebalancing of the market. Many of these STR owners made speculative investments based on a temporary policy loophole, and it is not the County's job to protect speculative investor returns. It is the County's kuleana to protect the public interest, uphold the integrity of zoning laws, and ensure that housing resources serve residents—not extractive capital.

Much has been said about the historical pattern of investor cycles on Maui, such as when Japanese owners sold off properties after the yen weakened in the 1980s and mainland buyers took over. But that cycle only happened because the County failed to act. Allowing the market to decide again is not neutral—it is choosing to let speculation repeat itself. This bill interrupts that cycle. It does not guarantee that every unit will be bought by a local family, but without action, no units will be. Simply throwing up our hands and declaring the market too far gone is a political and ethical abdication. We have to intervene if we want a different result. This bill sets the legal and policy conditions for that intervention.

Some opponents argue that these buildings have always functioned as vacation rentals and should continue to do so. That argument is fundamentally flawed. Long-term historical use does not override zoning law. Most of these properties were not legally permitted as STRs until they received the Minatoya Exemption in 2001—a political compromise that was never meant to last forever. The Apartment District (A-1 and A-2 zones) was and is intended for housing. Maintaining STR use in those areas just because they've operated that way in the past undermines every principle of zoning, and perpetuates the very displacement crisis that the County has declared an emergency.

A particularly disturbing line of opposition testimony accuses the County of "wiping out the savings of white mainlanders" and calls Bill 9 "disgusting." This is not only racially divisive but entirely misrepresents the intent and

effect of this legislation. Zoning laws are not designed to preserve investor equity. They are designed to shape the physical and economic character of communities in a way that reflects public values and needs. No property owner is guaranteed permanent profit from a use that was never intended to be legal in the first place. Furthermore, the County has no obligation to ensure these properties remain luxury investment commodities forever. The fact that locals may not be able to buy many of these properties today does not justify continuing a failed system that ensures they never will.

Opponents also claim that because these properties are near hotels or in resort-adjacent areas, they should remain as STRs. That argument ignores the fact that many of these apartment-zoned complexes are in mixed-use or residential neighborhoods—with schools, bus routes, and long-term residents. Proximity to a hotel does not turn an apartment zone into a resort zone. Zoning exists for a reason. Maui's long-term residents need housing stability in these very areas. They are not asking to live inside resorts—they are asking for access to the housing inventory that was legally designated for them in the first place.

To those who argue that every supporting argument is “wishful thinking,” I say this: Bill 9 offers tangible, measurable benefits. It restores legal zoning boundaries. It begins the process of recovering thousands of potential housing units. It mitigates environmental impacts by reducing tourism-related car traffic. It lowers fire risk by reducing transient population turnover, especially in high-risk areas like West Maui. It helps the County manage tourism growth and rebalance its economy. And perhaps most importantly, it begins to undo a policy failure that let a temporary exemption become a permanent entitlement. That's not a fantasy—it's public policy doing what it is meant to do.

Finally, the claim that “3,000+ testimonies oppose this bill” is not evidence of consensus. It is evidence that those with a financial stake in STRs have organized a robust lobbying campaign. This committee must recognize the difference between orchestrated opposition and genuine public interest. The silent majority—the working families, k_puna, and young people who cannot access stable housing—are not writing testimony because they are working two jobs, living in cars, or couch surfing with relatives. This bill is for them.

The County Council has an opportunity to take a bold, necessary step toward restoring housing balance on Maui. Bill 9 is not a silver bullet, but it is a foundation. It reflects a commitment to place-based policy, legal integrity, and future generations. I urge you to pass it.

Larry Worth
Kihei Resident

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 12:02pm 07-12-25

If you won't listen to Stan Franco, listen to the Governor; he authorized the counties to enforce zoning codes that will create long term housing, not steal from it.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 7:37pm 07-11-25

Some say PROPERTY RIGHTS should come before all else. That if you OWN it, you can DO WHATEVER YOU WANT with it—even in the middle of a housing emergency. But that belief—unchecked—is exactly what turned the Lahaina fire from a NATURAL DISASTER into a HUMANITARIAN FAILURE. Property rights are not absolute. They exist within a SOCIAL CONTRACT. They are subject to PUBLIC TRUST. And when thousands of MAUI RESIDENTS are homeless or displaced, while investors run SHORT-TERM RENTALS in zones intended for COMMUNITY HOUSING, the law must INTERVENE.

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MAUI DESERVES BETTER. THE TIME TO CHOOSE PEOPLE OVER PROFIT IS NOW.

Joelle Condo
Kihei Resident

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 4:02pm 07-11-25

Listen to Stan Franco

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 1:55pm 07-11-25

Good luck. We praying for you.

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 4:35pm 07-10-25

So much drama for nothing.

Allin Bohba

Location:
Submitted At: 12:30pm 07-10-25

Yes—Bill 9 in its current form may be imperfect, but it is more real than any theoretical CIP project or voluntary compliance program. The alternatives offered by critics often rely on nonexistent pipelines, fantasy conversions, or corrupt spending cycles. If this Council cannot implement it, they should allow voters to approve or reject it—and let the public weigh in on whether our land should serve residents or speculation.

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 11:44am 07-10-25

Aloha Chair Kama

Bill 9 is not an affordable housing bill. It creates no new housing units, provides no financial support for low-income housing development, and does not alter any affordability thresholds under county or state law. Its primary purpose is to restore compliance with the original land use designation of the Apartment District (A-1 and A-2 zones), which was established to provide long-term, multi-family housing. The claim that Bill 9 addresses affordable housing is a rhetorical device used to frame opposition to the bill as socially responsible, when in fact, the bill is focused on zoning enforcement. The indirect impact of returning apartment units from short-term to long-term use may marginally increase housing availability, but that outcome is incidental, not the intent.

The use of short-term rentals in apartment-zoned properties originated from a 2001 legal opinion known as the Minatoya Memo. This memo interpreted existing law to allow certain grandfathered vacation rentals to continue operating without undergoing formal rezoning or conditional use permitting. The memo was never adopted as ordinance, was not subject to democratic review, and has since been misapplied to justify widespread transient

use in zones where it was never legally or procedurally intended. Continued reliance on this exemption effectively undermines the zoning code and the legislative role of the County Council.

Opposition testimony that centers on economic impact often fails to acknowledge the economic distortion caused by STRs in residential zones. The proliferation of STRs in apartment buildings reduces housing supply, inflates rents, and displaces long-term tenants. These effects are well-documented and contribute directly to Maui's ongoing housing crisis. Local businesses that benefit from tourist traffic in residential areas operate on an externalized cost model, in which their profits depend on the sacrifice of residential stability. These businesses do not address the loss of school teachers, health care workers, and public employees who cannot afford to live on the island due to housing scarcity fueled by transient vacation use.

Arguments that tourists feel unwelcome due to regulations like Bill 9 are anecdotal and irrelevant to land use law. Planning decisions are not based on visitor preferences or customer sentiment. The role of zoning is to allocate land uses in accordance with the general plan, infrastructure capacity, environmental impact, and public interest. There are designated resort zones and hotel districts throughout Maui that serve the needs of the visitor industry. Apartment zones were not intended to accommodate transient occupancy, and enforcing those boundaries is a matter of law, not hospitality.

Suggestions for compromise, such as imposing impact fees or allowing STRs under density caps, have been explored in the past and have generally failed to produce meaningful results. Enforcement has proven difficult and often selective, with illegal operations continuing despite formal rules. Many of the STRs operating in apartment-zoned properties are owned by absentee landlords, investment trusts, or limited liability companies whose owners do not reside or vote in Maui County. Their interests are often represented through political action committees, not through the democratic channels of local participation. This structural imbalance limits the County's ability to govern land use in the public interest.

Bill 9 does not impose new burdens; it corrects a long-standing deviation from the lawful purpose of the Apartment District. Continuing to allow STRs in these zones is tantamount to an informal rezoning without proper legislative process or community input. The County has a legal obligation to uphold its zoning code, protect the integrity of its planning framework, and ensure that apartment-zoned housing serves its intended residential function.

Margie Vida
Haiku Resident

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 7:51am 07-10-25

From: County Clerk <County.Clerk@mauicounty.us>

Sent: Thursday, July 10, 2025 7:26:32 AM (UTC-10:00) Hawaii

To: HLU Committee <HLU.Committee@mauicounty.us>

Subject: Fw: Bill 9 concerns

From: Arbonne Molina <maui3dp@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 7:20 PM

To: County Clerk <County.Clerk@mauicounty.us>

Subject: Bill 9 concerns

Aloha Councilmembers,

My name is Arbonne, and I was born and raised on Maui. I'm writing today as a local business owner who does not own a short-term rental — but whose livelihood relies on the tourism industry.

I support the need to create more affordable housing for our local families — that's a priority we all share. But Bill 9 goes too far, and I'm deeply concerned about the damage it will do to our island's already fragile economy. Many of my customers stay in short-term rentals, especially those who can't afford hotels or prefer more flexible

options. If those visitors disappear, many local businesses — including mine — will suffer.

Beyond the economics, I've also seen a troubling shift in how welcomed visitors feel. Through my own social media presence and conversations with guests, it's clear many tourists now feel like they're walking on eggshells, unsure if they're wanted here. This perception is growing — and policies like Bill 9 only reinforce that tension. It creates a message that visitors aren't part of the solution, when in fact they support thousands of local jobs and businesses.

I respectfully ask that you reconsider this bill and instead pursue a more balanced approach, such as:

- Limiting STRs by region or density, rather than eliminating them outright
- Enforcing illegal operators while supporting compliant ones
- Charging impact fees or creating incentives for conversion to long-term rentals
- Working with the tourism sector to find win-win solutions that preserve both housing and jobs

Maui has already been through an incredibly painful year. The last thing we need is more economic instability, especially for those of us who are working hard to rebuild and support our families.

Mahalo for your time, service, and for considering the voices of the small local businesses who keep Maui running.

Mahalo,
Arbonne

Lore Menin

Location:

Submitted At: 2:25pm 07-09-25

Listen to Stan Franco

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 12:27pm 07-09-25

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

The current economic hardship facing Maui is not rooted in the elimination of short-term rentals, but in decades of land use mismanagement, speculative real estate practices, and the commodification of our housing stock. To frame this crisis solely as a “tourism downturn” due to lost Airbnb and VRBO options is to ignore the deeper truth: Maui has suffered because the needs of its residents have been subordinated to outside investor returns for too long.

Maybe tourism is down—by 38 to 41 percent (depending on who you believe)—but blaming that on the loss of illegal or non-conforming STVRs in Apartment Districts is a narrow and misleading narrative. Tourism declined globally and nationally due to inflation, recession fears, natural disasters, and changes in travel behavior—not simply because some vacation rentals were regulated. Meanwhile, Maui families face homelessness, overcrowding, and intergenerational displacement these Apartment-zoned STVRs were not designed to be hotels. They were intended to house our working families, k_puna, and essential workforce. Turning them into de facto hotels violates the original intent of zoning laws, displaces residents, inflates property values and rents, and shifts tax burdens onto the working class.

The “warm hospitality of the Hawaiian people” should not be manipulated into a justification for speculative profiteering. True hospitality requires that the host has a home from which to offer it. As it stands, many Native Hawaiian and long-time local families have been forced off-island or into substandard living conditions because housing has been monetized into a luxury product for tourists.

The myth that STVRs “benefit everyone” is an outdated fantasy. While some restaurants and tour operators may benefit, the overall economic system has become extractive. Revenues generated by STVRs have not meaningfully improved County infrastructure, schools, hospitals, or housing supply. Instead, they have created economic dependencies that collapse when tourism slows—just as we are seeing now.

It is not the County's kuleana to protect investor ROI while residents suffer from displacement, overcrowding, and housing insecurity. The County's duty is to its people—first and foremost. Upholding zoning laws, rebalancing our land use, and restoring housing for residents is not “punishment”—it is protection.

Maui is not in “deep disparity” because of STVR enforcement. It is in disparity because for years, policymakers looked the other way as residential communities were hollowed out, priced out, and turned into vacation enclaves.

Supporting Bill 9 is a courageous step toward correcting that imbalance. We owe it to the future of this island to stop romanticizing the era of unregulated short-term rentals and start building a model based on equity, sustainability, and local wellbeing.

Mahalo for your time and your commitment to responsible leadership.

Henry Kaaina

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 11:00am 07-09-25

From: Belinda Battistelli-Meeker <mauipalms213@gmail.com>

Sent: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 10:56:09 AM (UTC-10:00) Hawaii

To: HLU Committee <HLU.Committee@mauicounty.us>

Subject: Bill 9 Testimony

The current crisis in Maui is indeed tragic. This summer, tourism has declined by approximately 38-41 percent across the board. This downturn affects not only short-term rentals but also upscale hotels, which are experiencing a deficit. The extremely negative media coverage has transformed our paradise into a nightmare for tourists. From my involvement, I have heard many express reluctance to visit the islands, particularly Maui, due to the elimination of appealing VRBO and AIRBnB rental options. Both Maui and its politicians are aware that this model has consistently benefited them; it generated revenue and filled restaurants, shops, bars, and snorkel tours. Tourists enjoyed shopping and pre-paying for the warm hospitality of the Hawaiian people, who have welcomed visitors for the past 70 years. What actions have the politicians and the mayor taken against this defenseless and loving island? When will they stop sending the Maui island (other Hawaiian islands are affected) into deep disparity. Belinda Battistelli Maalaea

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 10:58am 07-09-25

Listen to Stan Franco

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 10:58am 07-09-25

From: County Clerk <County.Clerk@mauicounty.us>

Sent: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 10:50:59 AM (UTC-10:00) Hawaii

To: HLU Committee <HLU.Committee@mauicounty.us>

Subject: FW: Condo owner!

From: BOB WALLACE <rs_wallace@shaw.ca>

Sent: Wednesday, July 9, 2025 10:48 AM

To: County Clerk <County.Clerk@mauicounty.us>

Subject: Condo owner!

Dear Maui County Council/Maui County!

Please include this with your agenda submissions! Please advise me that this has been received!

WITHOUT PREJUDICE!

I am the owner of a condominium being Paki Maui #420, 3601 Honoapiilani Rd, Lahaina, HI 93601 on Maui!!

I am distraught with your egregious determination to outlaw STRs on the Minatoya list of condominiums on Maui! This highly uncoordinated, irresponsible action without any scientific study or analysis has ruined the rental and real estate market on the island of Maui! It has cost billions in economic losses!

This will be just the beginning of the destruction of the Maui economy since there is a vast amount of tourist dollars and tax revenue to be lost without 7000+ short term rentals that are the life-blood of the mainstream tourist market! It will result in widespread unemployment and loss of native populace! Only high-end elite tourism will be left!

I know for a fact the vast majority of absentee owners of these units are 'Maui lovers'! They have contributed to the Maui lifestyle and success! They go above and beyond their time spent living and loving the Maui dream by participating in local customs and culture as well as the economy! They love the Maui native peoples and cherish them! In my view and experience they are excellent stewards of the lands and cultures of Maui! They even participate in island cleansing and clean-ups and reforestation! Do you realize this?

I find your political motives to be pandering, ill-prepared and planned as well as disingenuous! Your actions may even be fraudulent!

I decided 18 months ago to place my condo up for LTR with the FEMA agents and was offered a one or two year lease but on seeing the lease document I was upset to find that although I was committed to a one or two years term with no recourse in any event, the tenant was able to depart the lease on one month's notice! This is ridiculous and creates a month to month tenancy for the tenant! Therefore I decided not to sign it! They offered me a two month cancellation term but that was not satisfactory either!

So I stayed with my STR management firm and I have been losing a fortune in rental income ever since!

So several months ago I contacted the FEMA agent again and said I would rent long term and wanted to get offers! They stated they would get back to me in two weeks!

I HAVE HEARD NOTHING BACK FROM THEM IN MONTHS!

I assert that there is no urgent need of housing now and nor is there any real need for 500 sq ft one bedroom units with only one parking stall which probably represent 90%+ of the condo units on the Minatoya list! These units were built with no intention of renting to long term tenants with family housing needs and requirements!

Therefore your ongoing dogged pursuit of this action is disingenuous, ill-conceived, dangerous and misguided and possibly fraudulent!

There is also the matter of fifty years of legal STR practice precedent, and corresponding tax assessments as well as Judge Minatoya's sanction of them!

I have no choice but to pursue legal action and there are thousands like me who have the same economic loss!

Robert Wallace
Owner

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 7:44pm 07-08-25

For many, Hawai'i is not a place you "use." It's a place you belong to.

If you reduce Hawai'i to a place to make money, you lose what made it worth anything to begin with. The soil grows bitter. The rain forgets how to fall. The people disappear.

The better question is:

How do we make Hawai'i a place people can afford to live, and still want to stay?

Approve Bill 9

William Mena
Wailuku Resident

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 5:13pm 07-08-25

Aloha Chair and Members of the Housing and Land Use Committee,

I write in strong support of Bill 9 and urge the Council to pass it swiftly and decisively. While some testimony has claimed this bill appeases a "small vocal minority," the reality is this: Maui's working families, k_puna, teachers, first responders, and renters—the people who vote, volunteer, and live here year-round—are the majority, and we are not silent. We are simply outspent.

Much of the loudest opposition to Bill 9 comes from out-of-state investors and absentee owners who have benefitted for years from a loophole that allowed short-term vacation rentals in our Apartment Districts, even when those zones were clearly intended for long-term housing. Let's be honest: these owners do not vote in our elections. They do not bear the cost of overcrowded roads, school underfunding, wildfire evacuation failures, or housing shortages. Yet they are trying to dictate our local zoning laws from the mainland.

If members of this Council feel unable to pass this bill due to fear, political pressure, or threats of litigation from non-resident investors, then I respectfully suggest the following: put it on the ballot. Let the people of Maui County vote on whether our limited Apartment-zoned land should continue to be used for short-term vacation rentals, or restored to its original purpose—housing local families.

This charade is simply a test of whether or not local government will be guided by public service or private profit.

Bill 9 will not "devastate hardworking families"—it will protect them. It will not kill tourism—it will help rebalance it. And it is not anti-business—it is pro-community.

The fear and greed of a few must never outweigh the needs of the many. The Council has the legal authority, the moral mandate, and the community's support to act. Please don't delay. Pass Bill 9.

Mahalo for your courage and kuleana.

Respectfully,

Carlo Eleban
Wailuku Resident

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 11:25am 07-08-25

From: Kevin Lorenz <off2kihei@yahoo.com>

Sent: Tuesday, July 8, 2025 4:21:47 AM (UTC-10:00) Hawaii

To: HLU Committee <HLU.Committee@mauicounty.us>

Subject: STR

I know the comment/testimony period has expired, but it appears the debate is still ongoing. Please put me down again as being opposed to this legislation. I understand the desire to appease a small vocal minority at the expense of a larger silent majority. If the consequences in this case were not so catastrophic I would simply advise going along to get along. However, in this case the legislation clearly won't accomplish anything regarding cost of living in Maui. The legislation will be devastating for many hard working families on your island who

depend on your only source of revenue...tourism. Please take this into account while deliberating. Thank you.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 2:50pm 07-07-25

Let's turn the entire island in hotel/resort zones and we can all rent our homes and offices on a nightly basis.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 2:22pm 07-07-25

By 2030, Maui will be denser, faster-growing, and legally restructured to favor development. But whether that translates to local prosperity or systemic gentrification will depend on how counties enforce, regulate, and prioritize community benefit over developer ROI.

_ Maui can:

- Restore long-term housing through Bill 9,
- Use state reforms to reshape neighborhoods for local families,
- Or, if mismanaged, accelerate displacement, tourism creep, and infrastructure failure.

Based on this council and the mayor, people of Maui are screwed.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 5:41pm 07-06-25

The suggestion that Maui County should spend \$45 million annually from the affordable housing fund to purchase or subsidize short-term rental (STR) units as an alternative to passing Bill 9 is deeply flawed and economically unsound. This proposal assumes that the County should use public funds to buy or subsidize luxury market units that were never intended to be affordable in the first place. These units were built and marketed for transient use, not long-term residential housing, and using taxpayer money to preserve inflated property values is neither a sustainable nor responsible approach to affordable housing.

The claim that units sitting on the market, even after \$200,000 to \$300,000 reductions, must therefore be "affordable" is misleading. These units are not moving because they remain fundamentally out of reach for local families. If you have to subsidize a property by \$350,000 to make it marginally affordable, then by definition, it is not affordable. These are not starter homes—they are speculative investment assets priced and built for vacation rental income, not for working families trying to establish generational roots on Maui.

Suggesting that the County become a landlord for dozens or hundreds of these units introduces another layer of risk and inefficiency. Managing resort-style condos scattered across the island, many of which are governed by private associations with strict rules and high maintenance fees, would require the County to build a massive new property management infrastructure. Moreover, using public funds to prop up units in resort zones fundamentally misaligns with the purpose of public housing efforts, which should prioritize community-centric, long-term affordable development—not high-cost units in areas designed for tourism.

This line of argument also fails to address the root issue that Bill 9 directly confronts: the misuse of A-1 and A-2 Apartment District zoning. These zones were never intended for hotel-like operations, and the Minatoya Exemption represents a bureaucratic loophole that has distorted Maui's housing market for decades. Bill 9 simply restores the intended purpose of apartment zoning and reclaims land use for the residents who need it most. Choosing to spend millions on subsidizing investor-owned units rather than reforming the structural problem is a backwards solution.

Additionally, the idea that purchasing these units would avoid water or legal issues is factually incorrect. Many of the properties being referenced are located in areas with water constraints, HOA limitations, and legal covenants that complicate long-term residential use. Ownership alone does not remove these barriers. Nor does it make the units suitable for kupuna, families with children, or low-income residents who need housing within reach of schools, healthcare, and employment—not isolated in tourist zones.

In reality, this proposal would shift the burden of a broken market onto taxpayers while preserving the profitability of failed STR investments. That is neither equitable nor strategic. Bill 9 offers a zoning-based correction that restores balance and repurposes existing housing for long-term residents. It's time to stop subsidizing speculation and start defending the integrity of our housing system.

Greg Schenk
Wailuku Resident

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 5:41pm 07-06-25

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Greg Schenk
Wailuku Resident

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 2:51pm 07-06-25

This legislation will do little to no good in terms of providing housing that local families can afford. Maui County should use affordable housing funds already being collected to purchase or subsidize purchases. There are

many STR units from the Minatoya list that are for sale now and they are not selling. Even after 200,000 to 300,000 reductions from Maui County assessed values. If these units were affordable and local families could afford them they would be “flying off the market”. Maui County could purchase 64 unit each year (at \$700,000 each) with the \$45,000,000 budgeted per year in the affordable housing fund. Or subsidize purchases with \$350,000 per unit and purchase 120+ units. This would make home ownership for local families much more affordable. Please consider this option as it could be implemented IMMEDIATELY. NO WATER ISSUES, NO LEGAL ISSUES with a plan like that. The County could also consider purchasing them and just becoming landlords like you are trying to force others to do. Please remember, you are not “converting” anything, you are simply saying short term rentals are not allowed. Individual homeowners still control the unit. If you want control, then buy them and deal with issues that landlords deal with.

Mahalo

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 9:47am 07-06-25

I support Bill 9 because it is a necessary correction to decades of zoning abuse and corporate capture of our housing market. The use of Apartment District (A-1 and A-2 zoned properties) for short-term vacation rentals has directly contributed to displacement, housing scarcity, and ecological stress. This bill is a step toward rebalancing our land use priorities in favor of residents, not profit.

But let me be clear: I do not support the motives of the Council majority, the Mayor’s office, or the State. This is not a government of the people—it is an operation under duress, forced to act only because public outrage reached a boiling point after the L_hain_ fires and continued displacement of working families. Many of the same officials backing Bill 9 today have protected the very exemptions, loopholes, and investor interests that created this crisis.

This is not reform by conviction. This is reform by pressure. And I urge the public to remain vigilant. We must pass Bill 9 not because we trust the committee, but because we no longer can.

If this bill passes, it will be a rare win despite the system—not because of it.

Mahalo.

Justin Rante

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 8:47am 07-06-25

From: Andrew Pamplona <noreply@adv.actionnetwork.org>

Sent: Sunday, July 6, 2025 7:34:29 AM (UTC-10:00) Hawaii

To: HLU Committee <HLU.Committee@mauicounty.us>

Subject: Support for Bill 9 to Phase Out the Minatoya List!

Housing Land Use Committee,

Aloha Councilmembers,

Please SUPPORT Bill 9 to phase out the short term rentals on the Minatoya list without carveouts or special protections for timeshares.

We need you folks to do the right thing in the best interest of working common families. May God help you all.

Andrew Pamplona

andrewpamplona@gmail.com

Kahului, Hawaii 96732

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 8:15pm 07-05-25

From: Bob Ward <bobyboy49@gmail.com>

Sent: Saturday, July 5, 2025 12:16:17 PM (UTC-10:00) Hawaii

To: HLU Committee <HLU.Committee@mauicounty.us>

Subject: Bill 9

The Mayor was correct in predicting that his announced plans to implement an STR ban would lower prices. It has e.g. I've been following sales at Kamaole Sands since the proposed ban first surfaced. The prices have dropped at least 25%.

From the sales I've looked at, unfortunately none have been by a local buyer. All sales seem to have been to Mainlanders. These buyers don't plan to rent, they just want a second home on Maui, and now they can afford it.

Should we ban Kamaole Sands sales to Mainlanders so the locals are the only potential buyers?

Mahalo

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 6:57pm 07-05-25

Delaying implementation is not compromise — it's complicity. Every year of delay is a calculated betrayal of Maui's working families, done to protect investor profits and preserve political deniability. This isn't leadership — it's legislative cowardice in service of capital.

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 5:45pm 07-05-25

Listen to Stan Franco

Guest User

Location:

Submitted At: 4:28pm 07-05-25

Testimony in Strong Support of Bill 9

Submitted to the Maui County Council Housing and Land Use Committee

Aloha Chair Kama and Esteemed Councilmembers,

I write in strong support of Bill 9, which would phase out short-term vacation rentals (STVRs) operating in the Apartment District—specifically A-1 and A-2 zoned properties—across Maui County.

Response to Common Concerns from the Property Management Industry

It has been suggested that this bill will not alleviate the affordable housing crisis and that there are already many units available for rent in areas like West Maui. Others have expressed concern that Bill 9 will harm local property management companies and their employees.

While I acknowledge that any policy shift creates economic impacts, these objections miss the greater issue: Maui's housing market is structurally distorted by the misuse of apartment-zoned properties for transient accommodations, and restoring those properties to their intended residential use is a necessary first step toward long-term solutions.

1. Inventory Without Accessibility Means Nothing

Claiming that many units are available ignores the reality of price, location, and lease terms. Units that are technically "available" but priced for tourists or part-time residents are not available to working local families, k_puna, or young professionals. Bill 9 helps reorient the market by reclaiming housing from speculative, short-

term use and returning it to the long-term rental pool.

2. Zoning Law Exists to Serve the Public Good

Apartment Districts were never meant to function as hotel zones. The long-standing misapplication of these zones for STVRs has enriched a few while displacing many. No business is entitled to a profit from an unlawful or grandfathered use, especially when that use contributes directly to the housing crisis we now face.

Bill 9 does not outlaw short-term rentals across the island—it simply enforces appropriate land use. It restores consistency and fairness to Maui's planning system.

3. Short-Term Rentals Drive Long-Term Housing Out of Reach

The core issue is that STVRs in apartment zones artificially inflate real estate values and remove homes from residential use. This increases rental prices, reduces availability, and puts additional strain on infrastructure, traffic, and emergency services.

Reversing this trend won't happen overnight, but Bill 9 lays the foundation for rebuilding a housing market that actually serves local needs, not just visitor demand.

4. The Transition is Manageable—The Status Quo is Not

This bill includes a reasonable phase-out period to allow businesses and owners to adapt. The County must be clear-eyed about priorities: the short-term economic inconvenience of a few cannot outweigh the long-term survival of the many.

Conclusion

Bill 9 is not a silver bullet. But it is a long-overdue correction to a system that has privileged profits over people, and tourism over community stability. If we are serious about addressing affordable housing, we must stop allowing Apartment-zoned lands to be used as de facto resorts.

Please pass Bill 9. Restore zoning integrity. Prioritize housing for residents.

Mahalo for your time and commitment to Maui's future.

Respectfully,

John Leialoha
Wailuku Resident

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 2:21pm 07-05-25

This bill is not about affordable housing, it's about providing a legal solution to an unattainable housing goal.

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 7:46am 07-05-25

This bill is not about affordable housing.

Guest User

Location:
Submitted At: 4:58pm 07-04-25

Aloha. My name is lonelle newman and I am part owner of a small property management company located in west maui. I do not believe that this bill as written will alleviate the issue of affordable housing for local residents. There are many units available for rent on Maui and specifically West maui as of today. Please do not pass this

bill as it will devastate My company and my employees livelihood. Mahalo for your thoughtful consideration.



To: Maui County Council Housing and Land Use Committee

Date: July 22, 2025

Re: Review of Mayor Bissen's revised version of Bill 9 (2025), Continued

Aloha Chair Kama and HLU Members,

Thank you for listening to the extensive past testimony provided on Bill 9. We appreciate the opportunity to submit additional facts for your review.

The goal of MVA's testimony is to provide the HLU committee with additional facts and information that help to demonstrate that our Ma'alaea Community is unique.

Ma'alaea's History:

Prior to 1888	'Maalaea Village' history of Hawaiian and Japanese fishing village
1888	Maui's first hotel and café at Ma'alaea Harbor
1930's	Ma'alaea General Store served our community as it still does today.
1950's	Ma'alaea Small Boat Harbor
1950's – 70's	Original owners of the 20 parcels of land completed development and business ventures for Ma'alaea. Today, many lots developed retained the original ownership of the land, such as Milowai. In 1975 William and Wendell Crockett constructed Milowai.
1990's	Ma'alaea harbor Shops began its development with the goal to provide "the feeling of a historic fishing village", with low-rise buildings, mix of small Maui businesses featuring merchandise, restaurants and services catering to residents and visitors including Maui Ocean Center and Pacific Whale Foundation headquarters.
Today	Ma'alaea remains a quiet village, close-knit community amongst our residents who value its long history and quiet peaceful atmosphere and sense of place.

Ma'alaea Community is active and determined to maintain its sense of place:

Ma'alaea Village Association (MVA)'s purpose remains strong to our 200+ members with the purpose to preserve the uniqueness and sense of place of Ma'alaea Village and its rural ocean-oriented lifestyle.

- MVA assists in the protection of our land and marine resources;
- MVA is an official 'adopt a harbor' sponsor at Ma'alaea Small Boat Harbor;
- MVA promotes Ma'alaea businesses to enhance our community sustainability;
- MVA collects and disseminates information of common concern to our community and county, state and federal government.

MVA is currently working with local and federal government entities to stop the use of (24) injection sewage treatment plants. MVA's 'Ma'alaea Waste Group' is not only tackling wastewater contamination, but mitigating wildfire risk by establishing a green belt fire break. The R1 water will be used as irrigation in place of the water used by Ma'alaea's ten condominium properties with mix of residents and visitors to support ecological restoration upland.

MVA is committed to supporting and assisting in implementing the DLNR/DOFAW 5,000 acre 'forest reserve' at the Ma'alaea Village junction of West, South and Central Maui made possible through preservation of Ma'alaea Mauka/Pohakea. Ma'alaea history book proceeds are dedicated to 'restoration of Ma'alaea Bay'. We support the implementation and monitoring of our historic roads and paths, such as Lahaina Pali Trail. MVA supports the restoration of Puu Hele, and efforts to implement and develop sand dunes preservation of Haycraft Park / Ma'alaea Bay.

In closing, Ma'alaea Village, like Maui itself, is a special place. We take pride in our history and share our history and environmental work for the benefit of our residents and visitors.

Mahalo,

Tanci M. Mintz

MVA President, Tanci M. Mintz