

Sept. 22, 2025, 1:30 p.m.

Kalana O Maui Building

To: Maui County Council Committee on Water and Infrastructure

Tom Cook, Chair

Yuki Lei Sugimura, Vice Chair

From: Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

Jonathan Helton, Policy Analyst

RE: Bill 122 (2025) — A BILL RELATING TO FACTORY-BUILT HOUSING

Aloha Chair Cook, Vice Chair Sugimura and other members of the Committee,

The Grassroot Institute of Hawaii **supports** [Bill 122 \(2025\)](#), which would create a regulatory framework for the construction of factory-built one- and two-family dwellings throughout Maui County.

Currently, Maui County has no set process for permitting or inspecting manufactured housing, which acts as a deterrent for potential builders. Bill 122 (2025) could provide certainty to anyone seeking to install manufactured housing on Maui, Molokai or Lanai, while still ensuring home quality and the public's safety.

For example, the Harvard University Joint Center for Housing Studies recently found that the quality of manufactured housing has steadily improved since the 1980s as regulations and market practices have changed.

According to the 2024 study: "The share of manufactured homes built in the previous decade deemed inadequate (that is, exhibiting a range of structural inadequacies, such as poorly functioning systems or significant maintenance problems) fell consistently from the 1980s through the first part of the 2000s, differing little from site-built homes after the improvements in the 1990s (which also showed improvement in quality over time)."¹

¹ Christopher Herbert, Alexander Hermann, Daniel McCue and Chadwick Reed, "[A Review of Barriers to Greater Use of Manufactured Housing for Entry-Level Homeownership](#)," Harvard University Joint Center for Housing Studies, January 2024, p. 13.

In other words, allowing prefabricated homes would give Maui residents access to more good-quality housing without jeopardizing local public health or safety standards.

Furthermore, manufactured housing would not threaten the livelihoods of Maui’s on-site home construction workforce. The state as a whole is suffering from a shortage of qualified construction workers — including carpenters, plumbers and electricians² — and allowing more factory-built housing would be an innovative way to increase housing supply without placing undue strain on the labor pool.

As Bill 122 (2025) bill progresses, Grassroot would welcome further dialogue about how to meet the housing needs of all Maui County residents.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Jonathan Helton
Policy Analyst
Grassroot Institute of Hawaii

² [“Hawai’i Skilled Trades Workforce Analysis,”](#) Hawaii Chamber of Commerce, May 2023.