

January 31, 2023

Rep. Troy N. Hashimoto, Chair
Rep. Micah P.K. Aiu, Vice Chair
Committee on Housing

Rep. Nicole E. Lowen, Chair
Rep. Elle Cochran, Vice Chair
Committee on Energy & Environmental Protection

Friday, February 3, 2023

10:35 A.M.

Via Videoconference



RE: **HB1247** Relating to Development Projects (**Oppose**)

Dear Chairs Lowen & Hashimoto, Vice Chairs Cochran & Aiu, and Members of the Committees,

The Chamber of Sustainable Commerce (CSC) testifies in opposition to HB1247, which exempts qualified housing development projects from the Hawaii Environmental Protection Act and erodes other processes and procedures that are in place to ensure we do not further degrade our environment simply to pad the profits of a few real estate developers/investors.

As business owners who believe we can strengthen our economy without hurting employees, consumers, communities or the environment, we urge this committee to defer HB1247. We can continue to build the affordable housing we need to in Hawaii without these overly broad, sweeping exemptions to our environmental safeguards.

Instead of circumventing these important laws and administrative rules to save time, lawmakers should allocate more funding to the government offices with the greatest backlog so they can recruit and retain workers to process the work developers rely on to build affordable housing.

Alternatively, consider amending this broadly titled bill to effect a moratorium on all luxury development so those types of projects no longer slow down the processing of affordable housing projects; lift the moratorium on luxury only after we have built all the affordable housing supply we need.