



KĀNE'OHE NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD NO. 30

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION • 925 DILLINGHAM BOULEVARD, SUITE 160 • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96817
PHONE (808) 768-3710 • FAX (808) 768-3711 • WEBSITE <http://www.honolulu.gov/nco>

Resolution to Support Establishing an Empty Homes Tax in Honolulu

WHEREAS, the Kāne'ohe Neighborhood Board No. 30 serves as a citizens' advisory board dedicated to enhancing effective citizen participation in government decisions, as outlined in the City and County of Honolulu's Neighborhood Plan of 2008; and

WHEREAS, Hawai'i is experiencing a long-standing affordable housing crisis; and

WHEREAS, as a result of this housing crisis, Hawai'i continues to experience out-migration, with many residents leaving Hawai'i due to the high cost of living and the lack of affordable housing; and

WHEREAS, despite our elected officials' many attempts at addressing our long-standing housing crisis, most indicators suggest our housing crisis is getting worse, not better;¹ and

WHEREAS, Governor Josh Green stated in his [2024 State of the State address](#) that "building alone won't solve our housing crisis – we need to find new ways to make buying or renting a home more affordable in Hawai'i" and "a challenge of this magnitude requires multiple solutions – there is no silver bullet;" and

WHEREAS, in line with Governor Josh Green's statements, many housing experts acknowledge that unaffordable housing/rental prices are caused by both (A) limited supply (driven by existing barriers to build) and (B) excessive demand (exacerbated by outside/global demand) and that any solution will require multiple parts that address both factors; and

WHEREAS, despite the pressing need from local residents for housing, [The Hawai'i Housing Factbook 2025](#) noted that demand for housing from out-of-state buyers continues to account for a significant number of housing transactions;² and

WHEREAS, in addition to this significant demand from out-of-state buyers, it is further believed that thousands of existing units remain vacant on O'ahu,³ with a significant portion being owned by outside investors; and

WHEREAS, Honolulu City Council [Bill 46 \(2024\)](#) seeks to address the impact these vacant housing units have on our unaffordable housing/rental prices (as one potential component of a multi-part solution to our housing crisis) by establishing an empty homes tax on O'ahu; and

WHEREAS, over recent years, there has been broad public support among O'ahu residents

¹ The [2019 Hawai'i Housing Planning Study](#) identified a critical need for over 22,000 additional housing units for local families on O'ahu, and the recently released [2025 Hawai'i Housing Planning Study](#) updated the housing need to over 25,000 units.

² [The Hawai'i Housing Factbook 2025](#), page 17, states that "In 2024, out-of-state buyers accounted for 20% of the 6,835 single-family home sales and 31% of condominium transactions statewide."

³ As one estimate, the recent statistics from the U.S. Census estimated over 34,000 vacant units on O'ahu.



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for the concept of establishing an empty homes tax in Honolulu;⁴ and

WHEREAS, in line with this broad public support, the City Council has made multiple attempts in the past five years to adopt an empty homes tax (suggesting continued support from City Council leadership to explore such an initiative); and

WHEREAS, an empty homes tax being proposed in [Bill 46 \(2024\)](#), could have the following impacts:

- Discouraging out-of-state demand and investor speculation on our housing units (including the practice of purchasing housing units and keeping them vacant while taking advantage of low property taxes and high appreciation potential)
- Returning vacant units back to the residential/rental housing market by incentivizing property owners to rent or sell to local residents
- Generating revenue for local governments to support the construction of affordable housing; and

WHEREAS, the current version of [Bill 46 \(2024\)](#) includes various exemptions to mitigate potential harms to local residents who may have a valid reason for owning additional housing units they need to leave vacant;⁵ and

WHEREAS, as of the current date, seven (7) O'ahu Neighborhood Boards have adopted a resolution in support of [Bill 46 \(2024\)](#) to establish an empty homes tax in Honolulu, including:

1. [Downtown-Chinatown Neighborhood Board No. 13](#) (September 2024)
2. [Makakilo/Kapolei/Honokai Hale Neighborhood Board No. 34](#) (October 2024)
3. [Ala Moana/Kaka'ako Neighborhood Board No. 11](#) (November 2024)
4. [Pearl City Neighborhood Board No. 21](#) (November 2024)
5. [McCully-Mō'ili'ili Neighborhood Board No. 8](#) (March 2025)
6. [Makiki/Lower Punchbowl/Tantalus Neighborhood Board No. 10](#) (April 2025)
7. [Mililani Mauka/Launani Valley Neighborhood Board No. 35](#) (September 2025); and

WHEREAS, while [Bill 46 \(2024\)](#) will not, by itself, resolve the housing crisis, it represents a crucial part of a broader strategy to address our affordable housing crisis; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED that the Kāne'ohe Neighborhood Board No. 30 stands in solidarity with other O'ahu Neighborhood Boards that have adopted resolutions in support of establishing an empty homes tax in Honolulu; and

⁴ According to a recent survey by [Ward Research Incorporated](#), 74% of O'ahu residents support the idea of taxing residential properties that sit vacant at a higher rate than occupied homes in order to encourage their rentals to local residents (with only 18% opposing and 9% replying "Don't know/Need more information").

⁵ Including exemptions for units subject to long-term rentals, owners/occupants requiring long-term medical care or who are residing in an assisted living facility, units that are being renovated under a valid building permit, units that are owned or occupied by a member of our armed forces who are on active duty requiring residing outside of O'ahu, etc.



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BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Kāne'ōhe Neighborhood Board No. 30 supports the concepts contained within the current draft of [Bill 46 \(2024\)](#); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Mayor of the City and County of Honolulu, the Honolulu City Council Members, and all Neighborhood Boards.

The resolution WAS ADOPTED; [YES VOTES]-[NO VOTES]-[ABSTAIN VOTES] (Aye: [...]; Nay: [...]; Abstain: [...])

[Chair name and signature, if standard board practice]