

From: [Cook, Vaughn G.T.](#)
To: [Planning WPC Testimony](#)
Cc: [Darrow, Jeffrey W.](#)
Subject: Testimony on Bill 154 - from Japanese Chamber of Commerce & Industry of Hawaii
Date: Monday, June 29, 2026 4:41:47 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[2026.06.29 Testimony in Opposition to Bill 154 - to Pl\(4183926.3\).pdf](#)
Importance: High

Aloha,

Please see attached.

Mahalo for your consideration.



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Japanese Chamber of Commerce & Industry of Hawaii

June 29, 2026

Via Email: WPCtestimony@hawaiicounty.gov

Windward Planning Commission
County of Hawai'i
25 Aupuni Street
Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

Re: Bill 154 An Ordinance Amending Chapter 25, Articles 1, 5, and 7, of the Hawai'i County Code 1983 (2016 Edition, As Amended), Relating to Commercial Parking Lots and Garages - OPPOSITION

Dear Members of the County of Hawai'i Windward Planning Commission:

I provide this testimony **IN STRONG OPPOSITION TO BILL 154 RELATING TO COMMERCIAL PARKING LOTS AND GARAGES** on behalf of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce & Industry of Hawai'i (JCCIH). JCCIH's mission is "[t]o promote the well-being of our community through business and personal relationship" and we have been representing the interests of our 300+ business and individual members through education and advocacy. As President of JCCIH, our members prioritize Economic Development, Infrastructure, and Housing among other issues. Two of JCCIH's priorities are:

Infrastructure:

*We support committing **financial investments** that address our island's current and future energy, waste management, water, **transportation** and broadband infrastructure.*

Housing & Homelessness:

*We support development of **affordable housing** for both ownership and rentals, and initiatives to help address homelessness issues including **mental health** and **substance abuse**.*

JCCIH STRONGLY OPPOSES BILL 154. This Bill proposes to remove commercial parking lots and garages as permitted uses in a variety of land use districts – mostly commercial. Respectfully, the case has **NOT** been made that Bill 154 will not harm the economic interests of our members and residents by limiting the availability of parking and prohibiting the free market from operating.

This Bill 154 will negatively affect the ability of Downtown Hilo and other commercial districts where space is limited and walkability depends on accessible parking options to thrive. By prohibiting new privately operated commercial parking lots and garages, Bill 154 would effectively remove opportunities to create additional parking SUPPLY, further constraining an already limited resource of parking spaces. Such action will DISCOURAGE customers and others from visiting our commercial districts and local businesses, hinder efforts to revitalize our town center, and create real barriers for families simply trying to attend their children's activities in downtown Hilo and other commercial districts around the Island.

The revitalization of Downtown Hilo and the efforts of creating additional housing there through the work some of our members are doing to amend the building codes to make Hilo a true live/work/play downtown will be hurt by this Bill. ***We will need additional parking for increased housing. ALSO, WE ARE SUFFERING FROM INADEQUATE PARKING ALREADY.*** This bill will take away options. The dynamics of Downtown Hilo and other similar commercial districts are different than what is going on in Kailua Village. This Bill will hurt us. **WE DO NOT SEE ANY UPSIDE TO THIS BILL.**

If the issue is a lack of affordable parking in Kailua-Kona (or any other part of the Island), the solution is NOT to ban commercial parking. The solution is to **INCREASE** the number of parking spots. Banning commercial parking will DECREASE the number of parking spots and increase the premium people are willing to pay for any available private parking and, thus, driving up the cost of parking. It is simple economics 101.

We therefore STRONGLY OPPOSE Bill 154 and urge the Windward Planning Commission to not support this measure. However, in the alternative, we recommend that Bill 154 be amended to apply ONLY to Kailua Village (or other area of concern) and not to other areas of the Island such as Downtown Hilo.

Mahalo for considering our testimony,



Vaughn G. T. Cook

President of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce & Industry of Hawai'i

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