



SONHawai'i

Save O'ahu's Neighborhoods Hawai'i

Why SONHawai'i? Why now?

The problem

O'ahu's coastline neighborhoods are under siege from **illegal hotel-like operations** in their midst. The growing transient population these businesses bring has already caused the deterioration of our residential lifestyle, as well as more traffic, parking problems, noise, crime, escalating property tax values and rates, and the loss of community.

The general public has the impression of a B&B as an elderly person renting out a room in an old house – making just enough to get by. The truth is that short-term vacation rental owners may be **investors or even a Mainland business hui**. Even if someone needed additional income from their home, they should first look at legal alternatives such as long-term rentals, which would help the housing shortage.

*And yet the Honolulu City Council wants to **open all of O'ahu's residential areas to the industry** -- thereby taking even more homes and rooms off the residential market -- by legalizing additional bed-and-breakfast homes (B&Bs).*

A bit of history

The limit on B&Bs was set with the 1989 grandfather act. This legalized approximately 160 B&Bs and hundreds of Transient Vacation Units (TVUs) -- essentially vacant, furnished homes -- by issuing them **Nonconforming Use Certificates (NUC) to operate**.

All B&Bs must have an NUC to operate legally. TVUs need an NUC to operate in residential areas; however, they do not require an NUC if they are in areas zoned "**Resort**" and "**Resort Mixed Use**."

According to the City Department of Planning and Permitting (DPP), there are currently **60 island-wide B&Bs and 942 TVUs with NUCs**.

The number of illegal B&Bs and TVUs, however, has been increasing noticeably since the 1990's, causing homeowners to protest the commercialization of their neighborhoods. A Hawaii Tourism Authority (HTA) Accommodation Study estimated all O'ahu short-term vacation rentals--legal or not--at 102 B&Bs and 1,821 TVUs. It is clear to observers and neighbors, however, that the number of illegal short-term rentals -- especially along O'ahu's coastline -- far exceeds the HTA estimates.

There is a cry from *all parts of the island* to **organize and fight back**.

What about enforcement?

Under the Land Use Ordinance (LUO), the Department of Planning & Permitting (DPP) is responsible for enforcement against illegal short-term rentals. Due to a variety of problems -- including political interference from the Harris administration, under-staffing, working hours, and departmental enforcement policies -- the DPP has not been able to project the image of an effective agency. This led to the **scourge of illegal rentals**, which gave elected representatives an excuse to push legalization this summer. But under new leadership and vision, the DPP has again become active and enforcement is increasing.

What is the city council proposing now?

This summer the council passed two resolutions (*both now under review by the DPP*):

1) 05-186 will allow advertising regulations against unlicensed TVUs. **SONHawaii supports 05-186**.

2) 05-187 repeals the 1989 ban on B&Bs. This bill will encourage immediate island-wide mass permitting and will so overload the DPP with new business and regulatory tasks that its effectiveness will be crippled. **SONHawaii opposes 05-187**.

So the need for a continuing organization is apparent. Even if we were to successfully bring the number of B&Bs and TVUs on O'ahu down to its legal limit, the financial incentive to operate illegally is too great. We must **win the current fight against 05-187** and establish a permanent framework to ensure lasting, stable residential neighborhoods.

What can we do to preserve a residential way-of-life?

The battle to win back our neighborhoods is far from over. SONHawai'i and other community groups must provide the political will and catalyst for enforcement -- primarily from the city administration and council. Political will is created by educating people. People who will, in turn, **advise their elected representatives how to act**. This can only be accomplished by educating the public about the severe nature of the problem and how it ultimately impacts us all.

ORGANIZATION:

SONHawai'i is the acronym for **Save O'ahu's Neighborhoods Hawai'i**. SONHawai'i will soon become an enduring non-profit corporation.

ACTIVITIES:

PUBLIC EDUCATION AND LOBBYING –

Educate the public, the Honolulu City Council and administration, and the Hawai'i State Legislature on issues.

RESPONSE EDUCATION –

Provide accurate and compelling responses to the legalization lobby's stated positions and testimony.

COORDINATION –

Contact, educate, and solicit the support of other groups and organizations.

GOVERNMENT AGENCY/BUSINESS ORGANIZATION WATCHDOG –

Observe and convince government agencies (such as the HVCB) and business organizations (such as the Honolulu Board of Realtors) to stop legitimizing and promoting illegal operators through membership and free advertising.

WEB SITE –

A web site will be established to educate the public on short-term rentals, enforcement, provide links, and encourage network activities.

FREE MEDIA –

All forms of free media will be explored, including print and broadcast outlets, the 'Olelo channel, and other community forums.

YARD SIGNS –

Provide free yards signs in affected areas indicating that operators of illegal rentals and their patrons are breaking the law and are not welcome in the neighborhood.

INFORMATION DEVELOPMENT –

Develop reliable information sources about the depth and complexity of the problem.

POLICY –

Develop policy guidelines for the council, administration, permitting, and enforcement. Work with the DPP, understanding their outlook and concerns, to help formulate effective enforcement policies and procedures.

LEGAL –

Recruit legal assistance to oversee SONHawai'i operations, activities, and policy recommendations.

AID ENFORCEMENT –

Work with O'ahu neighborhood organizations to facilitate enforcement island-wide.

YOU CAN HELP:

JOIN COMMITTEES ABOVE!

Contact us at: sonhawaii@hawaii.rr.com

And visit us soon at website www.sonhawaii.org

(under construction)

IF YOU DON'T STOP IT NOW – NO ONE WILL



“E Mālama
i ka Nohona
Kaiāulu o O‘ahu”
Save O‘ahu’s Neighborhoods