



STATE OF HAWAII

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY
1002 NORTH SCHOOL STREET
POST OFFICE BOX 17907
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

Statement of
Chad K. Taniguchi
Hawaii Public Housing Authority
Before the

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

February 19, 2008, 9:00 3:30 p.m.
Room 325, Hawaii State Capitol

In consideration of
H.B. 1984
RELATING TO PUBLIC HOUSING

The Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) strongly supports this measure to create a safe environment for public housing residents.

HPHA policy currently prohibits the consumption of alcohol in common areas of the public housing projects in its lease agreement with each resident. When residents and/or their guests violate this rule, project managers issue a writ of violation letter to the resident. Upon receipt of the violation letter managers may schedule a meeting with the resident to reinforce the importance of HPHA's policy. If the resident commits a second violation the manager may now refer the resident for eviction based on a violation of the lease agreement.

HPHA's policy, however, is insufficient to handle situations in which there are large numbers of residents and/or guests drinking in common areas that are shared by all residents. HPHA managers and supporting staff are only on-site during normal working hours and not during the late night and weekend time periods when parties typically take place. Security guards who are present during late nights and weekends are fearful or incapable of reprimanding a large group of intoxicated individuals, as the possibility of violence is increased with the consumption of alcohol. Unlike police officers, security guards do not carry weapons nor do they have arresting powers. This bill will enable law enforcement to enter public housing projects, which are not categorized as public land, and assist with residents who are publicly consuming alcohol.

While HPHA believes that this bill is necessary, HPHA acknowledges that project managers must improve their enforcement of existing rules prohibiting drinking in common areas. HPHA will take the necessary steps to carry out appropriate action, such as issuing violation warnings and initiating eviction proceedings, with residents who violate their lease agreement. The combined effort of HPHA staff, HPHA's privately contracted security guards, and law enforcement officers will help to create a family and community atmosphere at public housing projects.

000060

Strong Support for HB1984

Relating to Public Housing

Tuesday, February 19, 2008

3:30 pm

To: Rep. Tommy Waters, Chair, and Members,
House Committee on Judiciary

Dear Chair Waters, Vice Chair Oshiro, and Members,

My name is Genevive [REDACTED], and I am a resident of Mayor Wright Homes. I am testifying today in strong support of HB1984. I am asking for safety for my family and all the people who live in Mayor Wright Homes.

I am 80 years old with a disabled son. Gangs have taken over my son's wheelchair ramp with their public drinking. They occupy the ramp every night and all day on weekends when we have no management, and I am terrified to confront them. Why should I have to say Excuse me, please, to gangs who do not belong here so my son can use his wheelchair ramp?

Please help stop the public consumption of alcohol on the sidewalks and common areas of Mayor Wright Homes. Please pass HB1984 so that all the residents of Mayor Wright can live in safety and peace.

Thank you for allowing me to testify.

Genevive [REDACTED]
Mayor Wright Homes

[REDACTED]
Honolulu, HI 96817

000067

Strong Support for HB1984
Relating to Public Housing
Tuesday, February 19, 2008
3:30 pm

To: Rep. Tommy Waters, Chair, and Members,
House Committee on Judiciary

Dear Chair Waters, Vice Chair Oshiro, and Members,

My name is Shirleen [REDACTED], and I am a neighbor from outside of Mayor Wright Homes. I am testifying today in strong support of HB1984. I am asking for safety for myself and for the community surrounding Mayor Wright Homes.

We have gangs that go both inside and outside Mayor Wright. When they are outside, their drinking, fighting, and loud disturbance goes into the early morning hours. They take everything from our yards, and they rob our cars. Please help the residents of Mayor Wright Homes and the surrounding community. Please stop the public consumption of alcohol on the sidewalks and common areas of Mayor Wright Homes and the illegal gang behavior that goes with it.

Please pass HB1984 so that the entire Mayor Wright neighborhood can live in safety and peace.

Thank you for allowing me to testify.

Shirleen [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Honolulu, HI 96817

000068

Strong Support for HB1984
Relating to Public Housing
Tuesday, February 19, 2008
3:30 pm

To: Rep. Tommy Waters, Chair, and Members,
House Committee on Judiciary

Dear Chair Waters, Vice Chair Oshiro, and Members,

My name is Daniel L. [REDACTED], and I live near to Mayor Wright Homes. I am testifying today in strong support of HB1984. I am asking for safety for myself and all the people who in or near in Mayor Wright Homes.

When we call the police, the gangs run into Mayor Wright, but when the police go to Mayor Wright, the gangs just leave and use the outside streets again. We have public drinking, visible drug use, and gangs that take over our streets and parking structures. We need to stop public consumption of alcohol on the sidewalks and common areas so we can take back our streets from these gangs.

Please pass HB1984 so that we can all begin to live in safety and peace.

Thank you for allowing me to testify.

Daniel L. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Honolulu, HI 96817
[REDACTED]

000069

Strong Support for HB1984
Relating to Public Housing
Tuesday, February 19, 2008
3:30 pm

To: Rep. Tommy Waters, Chair, and Members,
House Committee on Judiciary

Dear Chair Waters, Vice Chair Oshiro, and Members,

My name is Binasita [REDACTED], and I am a resident of Mayor Wright Homes. I am testifying today in strong support of HB1984. I am asking for safety for my family and all the people who live in Mayor Wright Homes.

I have a paraplegic son, and gang members beat him one day with his own crutches. They left fractures and even punched me when I tried to intervene, then they broke my windows. These same gang members also beat my 9 year old nephew bad with a baseball bat, and they have beaten other of my neighbors as well. I have a restraining order, but these gang members are still on the property.

Please help us to stop the public consumption of alcohol on the sidewalks and common areas of Mayor Wright Homes, so we can stop the gangs from terrorizing our community. Please pass HB1984 so that all the residents of Mayor Wright can live in safety and peace.

Thank you for allowing me to testify.

Binasita [REDACTED]
Mayor Wright Homes
[REDACTED]
Honolulu, HI 96817

000070

Strong Support for HB1984

Relating to Public Housing

Tuesday, February 19, 2008

3:30 pm

To: Rep. Tommy Waters, Chair, and Members,
House Committee on Judiciary

Dear Chair Waters, Vice Chair Oshiro, and Members,

My name is Cardy [REDACTED] I am a member of the Kalihi-Palama Neighborhood Board and a neighbor of Mayor Wright Homes. I am testifying today in strong support of HB1984. I am asking for safety for our entire community as well for all the people who live in Mayor Wright Homes.

Gang activity is a tremendous problem in this area. Gang drinking, drugging, and fighting moves from corner, going all the way down to Banyon Street. I strongly support stopping the public consumption of alcohol on the sidewalks and common areas of Mayor Wright Homes as a good beginning to stopping the gang activity that uses Mayor Wright property as a safe haven.

Please pass HB1984 so that our entire community can begin to live in safety and peace.

Thank you for allowing me to testify.

Cardy [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Honolulu, HI 96817
[REDACTED]

C00071

Strong Support for HB1984

Relating to Public Housing

Tuesday, February 19, 2008

3:30 pm

To: Rep. Tommy Waters, Chair, and Members,
House Committee on Judiciary

Dear Chair Waters, Vice Chair Oshiro, and Members,

My name is Fia, and I am a resident of Mayor Wright Homes. I am testifying today in strong support of HB1984. I am asking for safety for myself and all the Mayor Wright Homes community.


A crowd of gang members gathers here every night. They sit and climb on cars and leave bottles, cigarettes, and graffiti. We have no protection from their noise, drinking, and vandalizing our vehicles. Please stop the public consumption of alcohol on the sidewalks and common areas of Mayor Wright Homes, so we can stop the gang behavior.

Please pass HB1984 so that all the residents of Mayor Wright can live in safety and peace.

Thank you for allowing me to testify.

Fia

Mayor Wright Homes


Honolulu, HI 96817

000072

Strong Support for HB1984

Relating to Public Housing

Tuesday, February 19, 2008

3:30 pm

To: Rep. Tommy Waters, Chair, and Members,
House Committee on Judiciary

Dear Chair Waters, Vice Chair Oshiro, and Members,

My name is Fetu [REDACTED], my wife is Eleanor, and we are residents of Mayor Wright Homes. We are testifying today in strong support of HB1984. We are asking for safety for our family, for all of Mayor Wright Homes, and for the entire community surrounding Mayor Wright.

Gang drinking, fighting, late-night noise, and intimidation make it impossible to sleep at night and make our community unsafe to live in. My neighbors are terrorized, and my wife has nightmares and asthma attacks at night. Police say this is public housing on private property, so it is a matter for security, then security does nothing. Even if police stop the gang activity one night, they just move outside to city streets, and they come back in the next night. My neighbors are terrified of gang retribution, so that people are afraid to speak out.

We need the standards and the tools to rid our entire community of this gang violence. We need the police to be able to do their job on Mayor Wright property, and we need real and accountable security. We need HB1984. Please help us to stop the public consumption of alcohol on the sidewalks and common areas of Mayor Wright Homes, so we can begin to stop gang activity throughout our entire community, both inside and outside Mayor Wright. Please pass HB1984 so that our entire community can live in safety and peace.

Thank you for allowing us to testify.

Fetu & Eleanor [REDACTED]
Mayor Wright Homes

[REDACTED]
Honolulu, HI 96817

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Strong Support for HB1984
Relating to Public Housing
Tuesday, February 19, 2008
3:30 pm

To: Rep. Tommy Waters, Chair, and Members,
House Committee on Judiciary

Dear Chair Waters, Vice Chair Oshiro, and Members,

My name is Leonard [REDACTED], and I am a resident of Mayor Wright Homes. I am testifying today in strong support of HB1984. I am asking for safety for myself and for all the Mayor Wright Homes community.

I was beaten on the head and arms by gang members with pipes. I was seriously injured and missed work. Now the gang members know me, and they surround me and threaten me regularly. We have public drinking, trespassing, and lots of drugs here. We have people on our property lying down and sleeping on stairways, sometimes for days from drugs.

If we could stop the public consumption of alcohol and drugs on the sidewalks and common areas of Mayor Wright Homes, this would help stop the illegal gang behavior that often comes from public drinking. Please pass HB1984 so that all the residents of Mayor Wright can live in safety and peace.

Thank you for allowing me to testify.

Leonard [REDACTED]
Mayor Wright Homes
[REDACTED]
Honolulu, HI 96817

000074

Strong Support for HB1984

Relating to Public Housing

Tuesday, February 19, 2008

3:30 pm

To: Rep. Tommy Waters, Chair, and Members,
House Committee on Judiciary

Dear Chair Waters, Vice Chair Oshiro, and Members,

My name is Randy [REDACTED], my wife is Aosy [REDACTED], and we are residents of Mayor Wright Homes. We are testifying today in strong support of HB1984. We are asking for safety for our family and for all the families who live in Mayor Wright Homes.

All the public drinking and lack of security creates a great problem here. Our nephews were beaten with baseball bats by two pickup truck loads of gang members and left lying on the ground in critical condition. Gangs use Mayor Wright as a safe haven—these criminals are still loose, there have been no arrests.

Stopping the public consumption of alcohol will help us to stop these gangs from hanging around here. Please pass HB1984 so that all the residents of Mayor Wright can live in safety and peace.

Thank you for allowing me to testify.

Randy [REDACTED]
Aosy [REDACTED]
Mayor Wright Homes
[REDACTED]
Honolulu, HI 96817

000075

Strong Support for HB1984
Relating to Public Housing
Tuesday, February 19, 2008
3:30 pm

To: Rep. Tommy Waters, Chair, and Members,
House Committee on Judiciary

Dear Chair Waters, Vice Chair Oshiro, and Members,

My name is Awleen Paul, my husband is Francis [REDACTED] and we are residents of Mayor Wright Homes. We are testifying today in strong support of HB1984. We are asking for safety for ourselves and all the people who live in Mayor Wright Homes.

I had to get a restraining order against several gang members after they repeatedly threatened my husband and me with Micronesian racial slurs, chased my husband with a sword, and attacked me with kicks and punches. I am epileptic, and I even went into shock and had a seizure after one attack. The police know who these gangs are, but they are still on the property.

We are active church members, do not believe in violence, and we have done nothing to deserve this. We are terrified and confused by this criminal activity. We do not know who to rely on.

Please stop the public consumption of alcohol on the sidewalks and common areas of Mayor Wright Homes to help us get rid of these gangs. Please pass HB1984 so that all the residents of Mayor Wright can live in safety and peace.

Thank you for allowing us to testify.

Awleen [REDACTED]
Francis [REDACTED]
Mayor Wright Homes
[REDACTED]

Honolulu, HI 96817
[REDACTED]

000076

Strong Support for HB1984

Relating to Public Housing

Tuesday, February 19, 2008

3:30 pm

To: Rep. Tommy Waters, Chair, and Members,
House Committee on Judiciary

Dear Chair Waters, Vice Chair Oshiro, and Members,

Our names are Rina [REDACTED], Nancy [REDACTED], and Ceimomi [REDACTED], and we are neighbors of Mayor Wright Homes. We are testifying today in strong support of HB1984. We are asking for safety for our neighborhood and for all the Mayor Wright Homes community.

We are elderly residents who live near to Mayor Wright Homes, and we are losing our property. We have gang activity every night in front of our apartments with their drinking and fighting and loud noise. When the police come, the gangs go into Mayor Wright. When the police leave, the gangs come back to our city streets. There are never any arrests.

Please stop the public consumption of alcohol on the sidewalks and common areas of Mayor Wright Homes to help our entire community stop the gang behavior that comes from public drinking. Please pass HB1984 so that all of us can live in safety and peace.

Thank you for allowing us to testify.

Rina [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Honolulu, HI 96817

Nancy [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Honolulu, HI 96817

Ceimomi [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Honolulu, HI 96817

000077

Strong Support for HB1984
Relating to Public Housing
Tuesday, February 19, 2008
3:30 pm

To: Rep. Tommy Waters, Chair, and Members,
House Committee on Judiciary

Dear Chair Waters, Vice Chair Oshiro, and Members,

My name is Rose, and I am a resident of Mayor Wright Homes. I am testifying today in strong support of HB1984. I am asking for safety for all the families who live in Mayor Wright Homes.

I am over 70 years old, and I have to carry an oxygen tank with me. The loud noise, drinking, and fighting in the yard awaken me every night. My sons say that I am not safe here alone, and my family has to take me out for visits to get me away from the stress. I have attempted to address this problem with management, but this leads nowhere.

Please help us to stop the public consumption of alcohol on the sidewalks and common areas of Mayor Wright Homes. Please pass HB1984 so that all the residents of Mayor Wright can live in safety and peace.

Thank you for allowing me to testify.

Rose
Mayor Wright Homes


Honolulu, HI 96817

C00078

Strong Support for HB1984

Relating to Public Housing

Tuesday, February 19, 2008

3:30 pm

To: Rep. Tommy Waters, Chair, and Members,
House Committee on Judiciary

Dear Chair Waters, Vice Chair Oshiro, and Members,

My name is Marino [REDACTED], my wife is Judy, and we are residents of Mayor Wright Homes. We are testifying today in strong support of HB1984. We are asking for safety for ourselves and all the people who live in Mayor Wright Homes.

A cousin and I were attacked and punched repeatedly by two known gang members in the parking lot. My wife witnessed the whole thing from the third floor. More gang members were on the way when neighbors ran out, stopped them beating us, and called 911. We are terrified of these gangs. Everybody knows who they are, but there have been no arrests.

If we could stop the public consumption of alcohol on the sidewalks and common areas of Mayor Wright Homes, that would help stop the gang behavior that often comes from public drinking.

Please pass HB1984 so that all the residents of Mayor Wright can live in safety and peace.

Thank you for allowing us to testify.

Marino & Judy [REDACTED]
Mayor Wright Homes

[REDACTED]
Honolulu, HI 96817

000079

Strong Support for HB1984
Relating to Public Housing
Tuesday, February 19, 2008
3:30 pm

To: Rep. Tommy Waters, Chair, and Members,
House Committee on Judiciary

Dear Chair Waters, Vice Chair Oshiro, and Members,

My name is David [REDACTED] and I am a resident of Kukui Gardens. I am testifying today in strong support of HB1984. I am asking for safety for my family and for this entire neighborhood.

We have elderly and Asian residents getting harassed, robbed, mugged, or beaten almost every day waiting on busses, and the gangs are always seen running back into Mayor Wright Homes. There are never any suspects, never any arrests, just police reports of these incidences that are hard for my neighbors to file due to language barriers.

We need to do everything that we can to deny a safe haven to gangs in Mayor Wright Homes. Please stop the public consumption of alcohol on the sidewalks and common areas of Mayor Wright Homes, to help deny the gangs safe haven there. Please pass HB1984 so that all the residents of this area can live in safety and peace.

Thank you for allowing me to testify.

David [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Honolulu, HI 96817
[REDACTED]

000080

Strong Support for HB1984
Relating to Public Housing
Tuesday, February 19, 2008
3:30 pm

To: Rep. Tommy Waters, Chair, and Members,
House Committee on Judiciary

Dear Chair Waters, Vice Chair Oshiro, and Members,

I am Keondorie [REDACTED], and I am a resident of Mayor Wright Homes. I am testifying today in strong support of HB1984. I am asking for safety for myself, my daughter Joanna, and all the people who live in Mayor Wright Homes.

I am 65 years old with a heart condition, and I am terrified of the gangs that have taken over my stairs and front porch. They drink and smoke there, and the noise and smoke come into my apartment. They harass my daughter and other family and friends who try to visit me.

If we could stop the public consumption of alcohol on the sidewalks and common areas of Mayor Wright Homes, we could stop the illegal or inappropriate behavior that often comes from public drinking. Please pass HB1984 so that all the residents of Mayor Wright can live in safety and peace.

Thank you for allowing me to testify.

Keondorie [REDACTED]
Joanna [REDACTED]
Mayor Wright Homes

[REDACTED]
Honolulu HI 96817
[REDACTED]

000081

Strong Support for HB1984

Relating to Public Housing

Tuesday, February 19, 2008

3:30 pm

To: Rep. Tommy Waters, Chair, and Members,
House Committee on Judiciary

Dear Chair Waters, Vice Chair Oshiro, and Members,

My name is Precy [REDACTED], and I am a neighbor in support of Mayor Wright Homes. I am testifying today in strong support of HB1984. I am asking for safety for our entire community as well as the people who live in Mayor Wright Homes.

Many gangs in this area go back and forth between our city streets and Mayor Wright Homes. If we can stop the public consumption of alcohol on the sidewalks and common areas of Mayor Wright Homes, we can begin to stop all the gang activity by removing the places where they do it.

Please pass HB1984 so that all the residents of this area can live in safety and peace.

Thank you for allowing me to testify.

Precy [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Honolulu, HI 96817
[REDACTED]

C00082