

Sen. Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Sen. Less Ihara Jr, Vice-Chair
Committee on Human Services & Housing (HSP)

Kanani Kaaiawahia Bulawan
Kanaka Maoli, Private Citizen, Ex-Tenant to Public Housing

March 11, 2008 2:30pm Rm: 01 (Senate)

NOT SUPPORT - HB2735: Relating to Public Housing; Security Appropriation

Aloha Chair Chun Oakland, Vice Chair Ihara Jr. and members of the committee:

My name is Kanani Kaaiawahia Bulawan. I'm a Kanaka Maoli, a Private Citizen and an ex-tenant to public housing. I'm here testifying **NOT IN SUPPORT** to **HB2735 relating to Public Housing, Security Appropriation**, allowing HPHA to increase private security services in public housing primarily for Mayor Wright Housing.

My testimony provides experiences as I've introduced who I am. First, as a Kanaka Maoli or what you would call a private citizen, I'm concerned and appalled to accept the fact that up until now the laws in place which addresses public safety would not apply or be limited to enforce in public housing communities. How can this be if we accept that public (subsidized) housing is responsible for housing qualified public citizens, the communities would not be defined as "Public Property"?

Second as my experience when I lived in Mayor Wright Housing back in 1958-1980, there has always been some form of "gang activity" in the community. The illegal activities were monitored and aided by law enforcement for any and all violations of law whether the incident was during "business" or "non-business" hours, most importantly on public housing property or on open streets. What has changed since that time? The bill reports that this was a Weed and Seed community, why has it not been enforced? Making a measure of this sort will only allow the management to avoid the core problem that is happening ALL AROUND THE AREA AND COMMUNITIES IN WHICH THE LEVEL OF PROVERTY IS HIGH. Whether or not these housing communities have private security or public law enforcement support, the core issue is how do these services enforce laws that keep our

community safe? There will never be enough funds to afford any type of extended security systems other than community-based group initiatives as like what the Weed and Seed program offered. The leverage and authority in public housing is the management and how serious they are in the enforcement of rules and violations, implementing forms of action that includes evictions and possible persecution. The public has the right to be safe in decent and healthy neighborhoods.

In recap, if public housing is for the betterment of its qualified citizens and should be given safe, decent and healthy housing why isn't that the priority and enforcement an issue? Earlier testimonies offered by residents of the housing community, the neighbors of the street and the director of Public Housing all indicate that there is a need to increase security services. If this housing community is in need, what are the conditions and situations of other housing communities of the same qualified population? This will set a preference for all housing communities to request and obtain additional appropriations for security services. Again even with these increase security services, what is the power to follow up and make immediate arrest? The measure DOES NOT address this.

Maybe this measure should be amended to include a process in which the security services will have powers to enforce arrest, trespass orders and possibilities of eviction.

The bill only identifies concerns and possible solution about illegal activities in the housing community; it DOES NOT identify the concerns and solutions in addressing the barriers to assuring we have a healthier community and thereby reducing the need for continued government interventions. The management of Public Housing needs to assure they are able to enforce measures that can lead to evictions and allow that authority to the present security contractor.

Thank you for allowing me to submit my testimony and request you NOT TO SUPPORT this measure. For more information I can be contacted at 783-9302.

Mahalo,

Strong Support for HB 2735, HD 2

Relating to Public Housing

March 11, 2008

2:30 pm

To: Human Services and Public Housing Committee
Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senator Les Ihara, Vice Chair

Dear Chair Chun, Vice Chair Ihara, and Committee Members,

My name is Alyn L.A. Vasquez, and I am a resident of Mayor Wright Housing for twelve years. I raised my three children in the project. One of my children is a soldier with the Stryker Brigade, stationed in Iraq; he is on his third deployment. Another child is a HPD Police Officer who is also part of the Air National Guard deploying this week. I also have a daughter whom is a Legislative Aide here at the Capitol.

I have been seeing a lot of gang activities in Mayor Wright Housing. There are public displays of drinking and fighting that goes on within the housing. The neighbors are intimidated and feel unsafe in their own homes. Please help us clean up our neighborhood so that we can feel safe in our own homes again.

I come before you today as I have in the past to lobby for Mayor Wright Housing in support for HB 2735, HD2. Additional security with arresting powers will help to make our neighborhood a safer place to live.

Thank you for allowing me to testify.

Alyn L.A. Vasquez
Mayor Wright Homes Resident
Neighborhood Board Member 15 Kalihi/Palama