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LATE

Committee on Ways and Means

SB 2555 SD1 Relating To Sustainability

Testimony of Katherine P. Kealoha
Interim Director of the Office of Environmental Quality Control
February 22, 2008

1 **Office's Position:** The Office of Environmental Quality Control (OEQC) appreciates the intent
2 of the bill but respectfully opposes this measure.

3 **Fiscal Implications:** None at this time.

4 **Purpose and Justification:** SB 2555, Relating to Sustainability, amends Chapter 26 by creating
5 a new section establishing a Department of Planning and Sustainability composed of the
6 following attached agencies: the Agribusiness Development Corporation, the Commission on
7 Water Resource Management, the Renewable Energy Division in DBEDT, the Hawaii
8 Community Development Authority, the Land Use Commission, the Office of Environmental
9 Quality Control, and the Office of Planning. The purpose of the new department would be to
10 address issues regarding long-range planning of the State, to coordinate policies and actions
11 relating to state planning and sustainability, and to provide a comprehensive sustainability
12 agenda for the State.

13 The OEQC supports the concepts of sustainability and coordinated planning. However,
14 we oppose this bill due to the time, effort, and cost of creating a new department. Past
15 experience indicates that the planning and implementation of a new department requires

1 additional funds that are not included in this bill or the Executive Supplemental Budget Request.

2 We ask the legislature to support the Executive's Budget.

3 The responsibility of protecting and developing agriculture, land and natural resources,
4 water and renewable resources, are already within the scope of the existing departments. Better
5 collaboration between agencies is more cost effective than structural reorganization. Therefore,
6 the Legislature's goal of sustainability can be accomplished by working together within our
7 existing organizational structure.

8 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 2555 SD1.

Waikiki Health Center

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2225, SD2: RELATING TO HOUSING

LATE

Hearing: Friday, February 12, 2008; 11:00 AM; Conference Room 211

Dear Chair Baker, Vice Chair Tsutsui and members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. I am Darlene Hein the Program Director for Waikiki Health Center's Care-A-Van Program. Hawaii continues to experience a severe housing shortage and homelessness. Although some progress has been made it is important that we continue to ensure that funds are available to provide immediate shelter, long term affordable housing and the services needed to help individual and families successfully move into long term stable housing.

Although we are in strong support of SB 2225 we suggest the following changes.

Amend SD2 to allocate 65% of the conveyance tax and repeal the sunset date to the Rental Housing Trust Fund. Adequate funds to create a much larger number of affordable rental units is needed this year

Amend SD2 to clarify the intent of the \$32,000,000 for shelters in Section 7: we suggest a change in wording, replacing "on the islands of Oahu and Hawai'i", with the wording: "including \$20 million for a shelter on Oahu, and \$12 million for the Kaloko project on the island of Hawai'i."

It is important that while we work on creating housing, we have in place the support services. We strongly support the \$5.3 million for outreach and support services, as well as the allocations to public housing. Without adequate funding, these programs will lack the capacity to serve the large numbers of individuals and families who are homeless in Hawai'i. New shelters will be opening in FY 2009 and need funds to operate.

The passage of SB 3225 will help provide needed resources to create immediate shelter, create low income rentals and provide needed services for individuals and families who are homeless. Please pass SB2225 out of committee.

Mahalo,

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