

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR



CHAD K. TANIGUCHI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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

LATE TESTIMONY

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

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & PUBLIC HOUSING

February 5, 2008, 1:15 p.m.
Room 016, Hawaii State Capitol

In consideration of
S.B. 3060

RELATING TO HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY EVICTIONS BOARDS

The Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) strongly supports S.B. 3060, an Administration bill, which would allow HPHA evictions boards to hold an eviction hearing without the public housing tenant member of the eviction board present, so long as a quorum is met.

Section 356D-93 (b), Hawaii Revised Statutes, states that the tenant member of the eviction board must be in attendance at every eviction hearing. If the tenant member is absent and all other eviction board members are present, the hearing cannot proceed.

Currently, it is difficult to find public housing tenants who are willing to serve on the evictions boards. This reluctance stems from fear of potential repercussions, such as retaliation, acted out by fellow public housing tenants who appear before the board. This has been the case amongst close-knit communities living in public housing projects on the neighbor islands.

Consequently, eviction hearings have been delayed for months due to the inability to find a public housing tenant to serve on an eviction board. Consequently, a tenant member of an Oahu evictions board has been frequently called upon to serve as a replacement at hearings on neighbor islands --- a practice that occurs at a cost to the State. Oftentimes during these time delays, public housing tenants awaiting a hearing stop paying rent, thereby exacerbating the already bad tenant delinquency problem.

This bill will not change the requirement that every eviction board must have a member who is a public housing tenant. HPHA acknowledges the value of the tenant member on the board. This bill, however, is a necessary step to eliminating time delays in conducting eviction hearings and will create a cost savings for the Hawaii Public Housing Authority, which is operating at a deficit.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Handwritten notes:
2/11/08
1:15 p.m.
Room 016
HPHA



**SB 3060 Relating to Hawaii Public Housing Authority Evictions
Boards**

Committee on Human Services and Public Housing
Committee on Judiciary and Labor

February 5, 2008

1:15 pm

Room 016

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs supports the purpose and intent of SB 3060.

The growing affordable housing problem is one of the most critical issues faced by our communities, especially our Native Hawaiian communities. This issue seems to have many of our families struggling to find adequate housing and to make ends meet.

As you are aware, public housing does help to fill this need. Public housing does need to operate efficiently and timely. The timely operations in eviction hearings is critical to its' success.

OHA recognizes that physical solutions by themselves will not solve social and economic problems, but neither can economic vitality, community stability, and environmental health be sustained without a coherent and supportive physical framework.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to provide this testimony.