



STATE OF HAWAII

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY
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Statement of
Chad K. Taniguchi
Hawaii Public Housing Authority
Before the

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & HOUSING

March 13, 2008 9:30 a.m.
Room 329, Hawaii State Capitol

In consideration of
S.B. 3172
RELATING TO RENTAL ASSISTANCE

The Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) provides the following comments on S.B. 3172:

Pursuant to Act 223, 2007, the HPHA increased the income limits for participation in the Rent Supplement Program (RSP) on January 1, 2008. In addition, the participation in the RSP was broadened by increasing the \$160 limitation on the subsidy amount to \$230 per month. Due to these changes, the HPHA projects that the \$1,000,000 appropriated for the program will be fully expended during the fiscal year with the current number of 394 participants plus about 15 more new participants by the end of Fiscal Year 2008. Challenges in previous years to expend RSP funds have been resolved.

HPHA has concerns regarding the provision in this bill allowing qualified applicants up to one hundred eighty days to secure a dwelling unit. This will make it difficult for HPHA to efficiently expend RSP funds, which was a particular concern of the Legislature in the past. In addition, it would create a level of uncertainty as to when funds would need to be available and when HPHA would be expected to start expending funds. HPHA will spend unnecessary staff time and the problem of unexpended funds will rise again.

Please also note that in H.B. 2500 HD1, Relating to the State Budget, the operating budget for the RSP has been reduced by approximately \$312,000. This reduction in operating funding will further complicate HPHA's ability to carry out the provisions in this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



SB 3172
Relating to Rental Assistance
House Committee on Human Services & Housing

March 13, 2008

9:30 am

Room 329

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs supports the purpose and intent of SB 3172 (SSCR2683).

The Hawaii Housing Policy Study Update, 2006 confirmed while most Hawaiians looking to move would prefer to buy their next home, most may face significant challenges because of their relatively low income per household member. However, Hawaiian households would be willing to accept a multi-family dwelling if a single family dwelling was not available in their price range. Until then, Hawaiians are more likely to be renters.

There is a disconnect between the time there is an increase in their income places them ineligible for public housing and being able to find an affordable rental in the private market place. There are an insufficient number of affordable rentals to meet the needs of this group and more time is needed to be able to make decisions on the different types of changes that will affect the family when looking for a place to rent.

We recognize 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. In this example, the framework is giving the family a realistic amount of time to find a qualified rental dwelling.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to provide this testimony.

-----Original Message-----

From: Joel Fischer [mailto:jfischer@hawaii.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2008 3:46 PM
To: HSHtestimony; Rep. Karl Rhoads
Subject: SB3172; HSH; 9:30; 3/13; Rm 329
Importance: High

SB3172, Relating to Rental Assistance
HSH; Chair, Rep Shimabukuro

PLEASE PASS THIS BILL.

We all understand just how incredibly difficult the rental market is in Hawai'i. Expecting low-income people to immediately find a rental is unbelievably unrealistic and callous.

This bill adds common sense to the law by providing a much more realistic deadline for finding a rental.

Thank you very much to Sen Chun-Oakland and the other introducers for this excellent bill.

Aloha, joel

Dr. Joel Fischer, ACSW
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"It is reasonable that everyone who asks justice should DO justice."
Thomas Jefferson

"There comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular, but one must take it because one's conscience tells one that it is right."

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

"Never, never, never quit."
Winston Churchill