

HB 1692

HAWAII STATE SENATE
THE TWENTY-FIFTH LEGISLATIVE, REGULAR SESSION OF 2009

WRITTEN TESTIMONY
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Chair: Donna Mercado Kim Vice Chair: Shan Tsutsui
And Members of Ways and Means Committee

DATE: Friday, April 3, 2009
TIME: 9:00 am
PLACE: Conference Room 211
State Capitol, 415 South Beretania St.
Honolulu, Hawaii

In Support of HB 1692 Relating to PUBLIC HOUSING

I am Flor Martinez of KNDI radio testifying in strong support of HB 1692

Public Housing remains one of the few resources to reduce homelessness in the State. In an effort to minimize the challenging shortage due to the increasing demand of public housing, there should be a rule to mandate the limit of terms in transitional tenancy. A five year limit is reasonable length of lease time to tenants who are working towards economic stability and eventually be able to afford a market rent unit or for the purchase of an affordable unit. A support system of sustainability is absolutely necessary to help tenants during transition period with economic vitality, community stability and environmental health In addition to physical framework

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Friday, April 3, 2009 9:00 am Rm 211

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1692

Chair Donna Mercado Kim, Vice Chair Shan Tsutsui, and members of the Ways and Means Committee

Thank You for the opportunity to testify in strong support for HB 1692.

I am Ilalo Parayno, a retired educator and spent 41 years with DOE as a teacher and administrator.

In this challenging time of economic crisis, every effort to build more affordable housing is not feasible to solve generational dependence to public housing. This bill is a viable approach necessary not only to address this challenge but also to provide assistance to working individuals to help prepare them for the transition. Public Housing has been occupied by same families for generation. Given this convenience, disabled them to strive harder to become self sufficient. Without imposing conditional limit to their length of occupancy will not provide them incentive to become self supporting and will deter their upward economic mobility.

This bill is intended for transitional public housing with the exemptions of truly needy individuals such as mental and/or physically disabled individuals, or retired for medical conditions for such reasons that they are incapacitated to improve their living conditions. Otherwise, occupants who remain in the transitional public housing for more than three generations will unfairly deny those 14,000 deserving individuals equal access the use of public housing.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 1692.

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

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Thank You for the opportunity to testify in strong support for HB 1692.

I am Dr. Inam Rahman, a medical doctor practicing in Hawaii for 15 years.

The intent of this bill is to impose limit of occupancy to transitional public housing and does not impact those individuals such as mental and/or physically disabled individuals, or retired for medical conditions for such reasons that they are incapacitated to improve their living conditions. The purpose of public housing is to give a chance to those who are in need to become self sufficient and eventually will become economic self reliant to be able to afford market housing.

This is a measure that will break the cycle of generation to generation living in public housing that is intended for transition.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 1692.

Inam Rahman, MD
Director, Doctors Inc.
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Honolulu, Hi 96814

HB1692 - 5 year limit – public housing – support

WAM

March 3rd – 9:45 am, rm. 211

Good Afternoon Chair Mercado-Kim and members of the Committee,

I support HB 1692. As a social worker I know that Poverty is passed on through many generations. Unless the causes of poverty are addressed, it will continue. By allowing families to prolong their stay at public housing generation after generation, without a clear incentive plan that includes job and life skills training, and psychological support to move on to market housing, the cycle of poverty will continue.

HB1692 provides the "stick" part of this process. By making a clear boundary that, unless the person is eligible for elderly or disabled housing, able-bodied individuals will be required to become motivated to overcome barriers to escaping poverty.

In the long run this bill will save the State millions in services to the homeless and for subsidies to Public Housing.

This is only the "stick" portion of a comprehensive program to increase public housing resident's ability to move on to market housing. A bill appropriating the "carrot" of services will be required to complete this program.

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Kanani Kaaiawahia Bulawan

Date: April 2, 2009

To: Sen. D. Mercado Kim, Chair Ways And Means Committee
Sen. S. Tsutsui, Vice Chair Ways And Means Committee

Cc: Rep. Karen Awana, District Representative
Rep. Maile Shimabukuro, District Representative
Sen. Colleen Hanabusa, District Senator

Hearing: April 3, 2009 9:45am Rm: 211

Measure: HB1692HD2: RELATING TO HOUSING

Aloha and good morning Chair, Vice Chair and Committee members:

As I've previously submitted testimony on this measure, I would like to ask for your **FULL SUPPORT to HB 1692HD2**. The issue here is to give all families the responsibility to be part of a housing community and not a project.

Public housing was never meant to be permanent, rather it was meant to be "affordable" so that residents would have the opportunity to gain leverage in securing permanent housing that could include homeownership. The difficulty in achieving this is no one is being held accountable for their time, resources and talent. The stay in "affordable" housing should be limited and reviewed based on a plan to secure permanent housing. There will be a group of individuals and families that will clearly be identified through this process which will need long-term stable housing such as the elderly/disabled and other "special need" groups. The majority of families that enter public housing will eventually be able to secure permanent housing or ownership.

Everyone needs to earn the opportunity to be part of this community by the way they participate and comply with the safety and wellness of the neighborhood. Once this is achieved, permanent housing can be as real as owning their home in a planned, active and secured community.

Mahalo,
Kanani Kaaiawahia Bulawan