

# LATE TESTIMONY

STATE OF HAWAII  
OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES  
TESTIMONY ON H.B. 464, RELATING TO STATE VETERANS' HOME  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION, BUSINESS &  
MILITARY AFFAIRS

February 19, 2009

Good morning Chair Angus McKelvey, Vice-Chair Isaac Choy, and members of the House Committee on Economic Revitalization, Business and Military Affairs.

I am Mark Moses, Director of the Office of Veterans Services (OVS). I appreciate this opportunity to support the intent of HB 464, which seeks to establish a veteran' gift account to be administered by the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation (HHSC). The measure also requires that the account comply with reporting requirements for non-general fund information, as long as its implementation does not impact or replace the priorities set forth in the Executive Biennium Budget for Fiscal Years 2009-2010.

Although we support the intent, we cannot support the measure as written, and ask the committee to consider the following changes to the present measure. The name of the fund should directly relate to the home, therefore the fund should be called the state Veterans' Home Gift Account. This would prevent the public and veterans from assuming that the account was for other purposes.

Another suggestion is to have the account administered by the East Hawaii Regional Board. The Legislature caused HHSC to form regional boards with increased responsibilities for facilities in their area. Since the East Hawaii Regional Board currently has responsibility for many aspects of the Yukio Okutsu State Veterans Home, this board would be better suited to respond to the needs of the home.

Finally, we are concerned that the gift account will not yield sufficient revenues to cover the cost of administering the fund, this has been the case with other funds which seek donations from the general public.

If however, the Legislature wishes these funds to be used for the benefit of veterans statewide, HRS 363-2 (4) provides that OVS "Administer funds allocated for the office, and apply for, receive, and disburse grants and donations from all sources for veterans programs and services provided under this chapter". HB 687 HD1, heard on February 17, attempts to further clarify responsibilities of OVS relating to the Home.

Thank you for allowing me to present the Veterans' perspective. I will respond to any questions.