

**LATE**

STATE OF HAWAII  
OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES  
TESTIMONY ON S.B. No. 615, RELATING TO STATE VETERANS' HOME  
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH  
FEBRUARY 11, 2009

Good afternoon Chair David Ige, Vice-Chair Josh Green, and members of the Senate Committee on Health.

I am Mark Moses, Director of the Office of Veterans Services (OVS). I appreciate this opportunity to support the intent of SB 615, which seeks to establish a veteran' gift account to be administered by the Hawaii health systems corporation. 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.

As we support the intent we would 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 Hawaii Health Systems Corporation 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 able to respond to the needs of the home.

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 attempts to further clarify responsibilities of OVS relating to the Home which was heard on January 30, 2009.

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