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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 07, 2010 8:43 PM  
**To:** HSGtestimony  
**Cc:** kananikb2@hawaii.rr.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB2318 on 2/10/2010 9:00:00 AM  
**Attachments:** HB2318 021010.doc

Testimony for HSG 2/10/2010 9:00:00 AM HB2318

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: oppose  
Testifier will be present: Yes  
Submitted by: Kanani Kaaiawahia B.  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [kananikb2@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:kananikb2@hawaii.rr.com)  
Submitted on: 2/7/2010

Comments:  
I strongly OPPOSE w/COMMENTS

*Kanani Kaaiawahia Bulawan*

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**TESTIMONY – OPPOSE w/ COMMENTS**  
**HB 2318: RELATING TO THE HOMELESS;**  
**HOUSING FIRST PILOT PROGRAM**

**TO:** Rep. R. Cabanilla, Chair, Rep. P. Chong, Vice Chair, and members of House Committee on Housing

**HEARING: Wednesday February 10, 2010 9:00 AM CR: 325**

Aloha Chair Cabanilla, Vice Chair Chong, and members of the committee:

I'm Kanani Kaaiawahia Bulawan, a homeowner resident of Waianae and the retired executive director of Waianae Community Outreach, a non-profit agency managing the emergency homeless shelter in Kalaeloa in addition to providing homeless outreach services to those on the leeward coast. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill.

I need to **STRONGLY OPPOSE this bill and offer comments for consideration**. The issue is providing a path in which the most vulnerable "Chronic" homeless individuals and families may obtain housing while they create appropriate "wrap-around" services (the housing first model).

The measure calls for a pilot program and setting aside funds that would be taken from funds already reserved for homeless services. There are 2 major reasons for my opposition.

1. Parks for homeless special fund – **NEED NEW MONEY TO SUPPORT THIS**  
Our state is in a financial crisis, programs are being cut that already have capacity and experience in providing education, health, human and housing services. A fund of this nature will come out of the current budget for homeless services making it more difficult for programs to survive.
2. Housing first pilot program – **ALREADY BEING USED WITH SUCCESS**  
There are several agencies that use the housing first model in sheltering the homeless. I encourage you to visit the Onelau'ena (HOPE for a New Beginning) shelter in Kalaeloa and experience the housing first model there. They have been using it for the past 3 years and have been successful. The families and individuals will tell you that this model works and is most appropriate for the "chronically" homeless (houseless) as well as culturally sensitive.

Mahalo for extending time to hear my concerns and again ask that this bill be **OPPOSED**.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2010, CR 325  
IN SUPPORT OF HB 2318-RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS

I am Flor Martinez, a radio broadcaster for 35 years and a retired Department Foreign Affairs worker.

Homelessness is one of the nation's most serious problems. While it is often the result of interwoven systemic and personal problems, the primary cause of homelessness among families is the growing gap between housing costs and income. The emergency shelter system is able to accommodate only a small fraction of the growing number of homeless families in need. Families are forced to live in their cars, in garages, in other places unsuitable for human habitation or they move from place to place with their children, staying intermittently with friends and families. The effects of homelessness extend to depression, mental illness, and child neglect. While emergency shelters are unable to provide the intensive long term assistance which homeless families require in order to stabilize their lives and transitional housing programs do provide such assistance, families are however more responsive to service interventions from a stable, permanent housing base. An alternative to the current emergency shelter and transitional housing is housing first. The methodology is premised on the belief that vulnerable and at risk homeless families are more responsive to interventions and social services support after they are in their own housing rather than while living in temporary transitional facilities or housing programs. With permanent housing these families can begin to regain the self-confidence and control over their lives they lost when they became homeless. This bill will provide an alternative solution to homelessness that is a nationwide serious problem.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify

Homelessness is attributed by number of factors to include, welfare reform, high rates of domestic violence, declining purchasing power of low-wage jobs, and decrease in availability of affordable family housing. According to US HUD, we are experiencing a period when worst case housing needs are at an all time high. Although there is a reduction in chronic homelessness in some communities, other communities have exploding rates of increase of homelessness and the growing segment of the homeless population are families with children. Emergency shelters and transitional housing are utilized to provide vital access to services for families in crisis, they fail to address the long term needs of homeless families. Linkages to permanent housing support services to retain housing and construction of resources and services available in the community at large are indispensable to ending and preventing family homelessness. An alternative solution to this problem is Housing First Methodology also known as rapid re-housing.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2010, CR 325  
IN SUPPORT OF HB 2318-RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS

I am Linda Guting, a carehome operator for 30 years and have provided home to several homeless.

Homelessness is attributed by number of factors to include, welfare reform, high rates of domestic violence, declining purchasing power of low-wage jobs, and decrease in availability of affordable family housing. According to US HUD, we are experiencing a period when worst case housing needs are at an all time high. Although there is a reduction in chronic homelessness in some communities, other communities have exploding rates of increase of homelessness and the growing segment of the homeless population are families with children. Emergency shelters and transitional housing are utilized to provide vital access to services for families in crisis, they fail to address the long term needs of homeless families. Linkages to permanent housing support services to retain housing and construction of resources and services available in the community at large are indispensable to ending and preventing family homelessness. An alternative solution to this problem is Housing First Methodology also known as rapid re-housing. Housing First methodology has been proven to be a practical means to ending and preventing family homelessness and has been adapted by organizations throughout the United States through Beyond Shelter's institute for Research Training and Technical Assistance and the national Alliance to End Homelessness. The housing first approach provides a link between emergency shelter and transitional housing systems that serve homeless families and the mainstream resources and services that can help these families begin to regain self-confidence and control over their lives they lost when they became homeless.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 08, 2010 9:47 PM  
**To:** HSGtestimony  
**Cc:** th3news@live.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HB2318 on 2/10/2010 9:00:00 AM  
**Attachments:** Testimony - hb2318 -JG.doc

Testimony for HSG 2/10/2010 9:00:00 AM HB2318

Conference room: 325  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: Yes  
Submitted by: Jessica Garcia  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [th3news@live.com](mailto:th3news@live.com)  
Submitted on: 2/8/2010

Comments:

## House Bill 2138 – Housing First Pilot Project

My Name is Jessica, I am a MSW student at UH Manoa and I am a case manager at a local homeless shelter. I am here to testify in support of House Bill 2318. Working with clients in the homeless community can be challenging especially because they do not always have financial stability, which ultimately prohibits clients from gaining permanent housing. Permanent housing opportunities for homeless clients are rare. Many of the clients at my shelter have been staying there for more than year. In the year, they have applied to Hawaii Public Housing to get an apartment, and many of the transitional shelters on the island. It is a very difficult and long process to get permanent housing. Often clients lose faith in the system because they have to wait a long time and because they do not qualify for housing at some transitional shelters. Due to the long waiting process, they may leave the shelters and live on the streets or move in with family or friends. When they move in with family or friends, they face overcrowding and eviction and then they are forced back on the street or in an emergency shelter. It is a cyclical process, which leaves the client homeless for a long time.

The housing first pilot project addressed in House bill 2138, presents the opportunity for homeless clients to be housed immediately. I believe this pilot project is not only a good idea but beneficial to the homeless population, especially to clients who have substance abuse or mental health issues.

In the pilot design, clients are immediately moved from the street an apartment, and in the pilot program there are services offered for clients to participate in, and specifically in home case management services which allow for an individual to gain help from the organization, and other agencies, if needed. Research about programs such as the housing first pilot project have been proven to show that clients are more willing to not only seek out services but comply with services if they have their own home. This aspect of the program can be especially utilized when working with clients who

have substance abuse or mental health issues. Again, providing in home case management services is a very important component in the design of the program.

Housing first pilot programs have been successful in cities such as Seattle Washington, Juneau Alaska, and the state of Rhode Island to name a few. While I recognize that this is not the mainland, I believe that it is an opportunity for Hawaii to develop a Housing program that not only provides a home and community services, but an opportunity to shape the Housing First Pilot program to fit the individual needs of homeless clients in Hawaii.

Again, I want to emphasize that I am in support of this bill and I hope that the pilot project is a success. I would like to ask for House Bill 2318 pass and that there is substantial monetary investment in the Housing First Pilot Project which will result in improvement our community, and improvement in the lives of homeless clients in Hawaii.



WRITTEN ONLY

TESTIMONY BY GEORGINA K. KAWAMURA  
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE  
STATE OF HAWAII  
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING  
ON  
HOUSE BILL NO. 2318

February 10, 2010

RELATING TO THE HOMELESS

House Bill No. 2318 adds a new section to Chapter 184, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to develop a Housing First 5-year pilot program to address the needs of the chronically homeless with disabilities, including addictions and mental illness; creates the Parks for Homeless special fund within the State treasury; and appropriates an undetermined amount from the special fund to pay for program costs.

As a matter of general policy, this department does not support the creation of any special fund which does not meet the requirements of Section 37-52.3 of the Hawaii Revised Statutes. Special or revolving funds should: 1) reflect a clear nexus between the benefits sought and charges made upon the users or beneficiaries of the program; 2) provide an appropriate means of financing for the program or activity; and 3) demonstrate the capacity to be financially self-sustaining. It is difficult to determine whether the fund will be self-sustaining.

Furthermore, given the State's current financial situation, it does not appear fiscally prudent to establish the Housing First pilot program and special fund if adequate resources are not available to fund any of the initiatives which may be forthcoming.

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**From:** Dong, Lanz [ldong@honolulu.gov]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 09, 2010 8:22 AM  
**To:** HSGtestimony  
**Cc:** Morikawa, Debbie Kim; Kaito, Gail M.; Wong, Dina L; Ishida, Keith; Miyagi, Deborah K Y; Parker, Lisa P  
**Subject:** HB 2318 Wednesday, February 10, 2010 at 9:00 am Room 325 of the State Capitol  
**Attachments:** HB 2318.PDF

Please find comments on **HB 2318, related to the Committee on Housing**. This is for the hearing to be held on **Wednesday, February 10, 2010 at 9:00 am in Conference Room 325 of the State Capitol**.

**To:** Honorable Rida Cabanilla, Chair, and Members of the Committee on Housing  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

**From:** Deborah Kim Morikawa, Director  
Department of Community Services  
City and County of Honolulu

**Copies:** one (1)

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES  
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

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MUFI HANNEMANN  
MAYOR

DEBORAH KIM MORIKAWA  
DIRECTOR

ERNEST Y. MARTIN  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

February 10, 2010

The Honorable Rida Cabanilla, Chair,  
and Members of the Committee on Housing  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813.

Dear Chair Cabanilla and Members:

Subject: House Bill 2318

House Bill 2318 establishes a five-year Housing First pilot program to be developed by the Hawaii Public Housing Authority and the Department of Human Services for homeless individuals who are chronically addicted or mentally ill. House Bill 2318 also establishes in the State treasury the "parks for homeless special fund" as a means of providing the necessary funds for the Housing First pilot program. The City Department of Community Services (DCS) strongly supports House Bill 2318.

Housing First and permanent supportive housing is a key strategy in our nation's efforts to end chronic homelessness. National studies and the experience of other municipalities indicate that Housing First initiatives are not only a more humane way to respond to the needs of chronic homeless persons, but are also a cost-effective approach. Housing First helps residents achieve stability and transition towards greater independence, and has been shown to reduce: (1) "street" homelessness; (2) arrests of people who are homeless for status crimes (loitering, public urination, or public intoxication); (3) emergency room visits and costs; and (4) incarceration days and costs.

The proposed establishment of a five-year Housing First pilot program is timely, given the number of chronically homeless persons on Oahu. The City's proposed River Street Residences dedicates a City-owned property in downtown Honolulu for the development of a permanent rental housing project incorporating the "housing first" model. While still in the public comment phase, I am hopeful that this project will be supported by the community and will be allowed to proceed. For more information on this project please visit the following website at <http://www.honolulu.gov/dcs/homeless.htm>.

The Housing First approach has been a missing element in our community's efforts to end chronic homelessness and is one that homeless providers have long advocated for. The Department of Community Services appreciates the opportunity to provide this testimony and we respectfully request your support of House Bill 2318.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Deborah Kim Morikawa".

Deborah Kim Morikawa  
Director



**TESTIMONY- SUPPORT INTENT of HB 2318: RELATING TO THE HOMELESS**

TO: **Representative Rida Cabanilla, Chair**, Representative Pono Chong,  
Vice Chair, and Members, House Committee on Housing

FROM: Pamela Menter, Chair, Partners in Care Hawaii

HEARING: **Wednesday, February 10, 2010** 9:00 am; CR 325

Chair Cabanilla, Vice Chair Chong, and members of the Committee on Housing:

I thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this housing bill. I am Pamela Menter, Chair of Partners in Care, Oahu's coalition of homeless service providers and other stakeholders in combating homelessness. Partners in Care supports the intent of this bill, given that the Housing First model is a successful and well-proven approach that effectively reduces homelessness, crime, and taxpayer expenditures (i.e. for medical services and incarceration).

In the interest of providing further clarification for this bill, I offer the following two suggestions:

1) With regard to Sec. 3 (b) (3): "*Continued tenancy shall not be dependent on participation in services.*" An understandable concern would be whether tenants will have adequate skills to maintain their tenancy without being evicted. Therefore I recommend the following addition: "*Support services, however, will focus on promoting tenants' ability to function responsibly in that role, to successfully maintain their continued tenancy.*" Because supportive services are a crucial aspect of Housing First, this additional information addresses the above concern.

2) Regarding Sec. 3 (b) (4): "*a chronically homeless individual means a homeless person who has an addiction or mental illness, or both;*" This is actually incorrect; according to HUD, a chronically homeless individual refers to a homeless person who has a "disabling condition." The statement in the bill could be revised as follows: "*The definition of a chronically homeless individual includes a homeless person who has an addiction or mental illness, or both.*"

**Partners in Care continues, however, to stress the importance of ensuring that any new homeless programs or services are funded by monies that are not currently utilized by established programs or services.** Those that are in place are doing an excellent job despite extremely limited resources; it would be disastrous for any of them to face additional cuts.

We certainly support and appreciate the Committee's intent to develop a Housing First pilot program with this bill. Nonetheless we must urge that such a program is funded in a way that will not deplete any of those resources allocated to existing homeless programs.

Thank you for considering these concerns.