

**From:** Patrick Koh [patkoh01@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, January 25, 2010 11:49 PM  
**To:** Rep. Rida Cabanilla  
**Subject:** Re: Emailing: HB2319.doc

House Committee on Housing  
Wednesday, January 27, 2010 at 11:00 am CR 325

Aloha Chair Cabanilla, Vice Chair Pono Chong and members of the Housing Committee

I strongly support H.B. No. 2319, as it will increase the vacancies of public housing to those who are truly in need, prevent "homesteading", encourage upward economic mobility, as well as provide a way to access the current tenant's income so as to determine their continued eligibility in this much-needed program.

Sincerely,  
Patrick Koh  
2115A Gertz Lane  
Honolulu, HI. 96819  
808-847-4588

*Kanani Kaaiawahia Bulawan*

---

**TESTIMONY – OPPOSE AS WRITTEN HB 2319: RELATING TO HOUSING**

TO: **Rep. Rida Cabanilla, Chair**, Rep. P. Chong, Vice Chair, and Members, House Committee on Housing

HEARING: **Wednesday, January 27, 2010, 11:00 am; CR 325**

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this housing bill. I'm Kanani Kaaiawahia Bulawan, a homeowner resident of Maili, a former houseless individual, a former public housing tenant and a retired executive director of an organization that primarily services homeless and at risk of homelessness individuals and families in the Leeward Community. I **OPPOSE** this bill which would create a 5 year limit for all "state public housing except in certain cases".

Although I agree with the concerns and intent of this bill, I cannot support this without consciously considering the process in which this will be achieved. I offer suggestions to this measure that include a "re-certification of eligibility" after a period of 3-5 years. During this recertification, a review of income, assets and expenses should be conducted. In addition to this a statement or plan of seeking permanent housing is outlined within a timeframe assuring "upward economic mobility from low-to-moderate income" so that there is a clear conscience decision of moving out of public housing. This would also address the process of increasing rent with no cap on the amount of rent that would be paid at 30% of income. I can also agree that public housing was not meant to be permanent housing or generational for that matter but rather "affordable" while developing alternatives for more permanent housing.

Currently our public housing system does not allow for this "re-certification" review process. It is not set up to determine what "certain cases" would be exempt and how people in public housing would have the ability to relocate to other housing as there is limited inventory for permanent housing state wide. A plan for "transition" needs to be developed with input from HPHA, residents, and the community including the homeless service providers before such a measure to limit a resident in public housing can be implemented. Moreover, state public housing already has set aside for the "certain cases" such as the elderly and the disabled.

I commend the committee and chair for taking on such a difficult and complex issue. I urge you to revise this bill, work with the HPHA, the residents and the community to develop the process and future options to address "long-term" public housing stays. Mahalo for giving me this time and for hearing my concerns.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
THE TWENTY FIFTH LEGISLATIVE, REGULAR SESSION OF 2010

WRITTEN TESTIMONY  
COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

Chair: Rida Cabanilla

Vice Chair: Pono Chong

And members of the Housing Committee

Date: Wednesday, January 27, 2010

Time: 11:00 am

Place: Conference Room 325

State Capitol, 415 South Beretania St.  
Honolulu, Hawaii

In Support of HB 2319  
Relating to Public Housing

I am Flor Martinez a resident of Hawaii for 35 years a broadcaster for KNDI radio. In this time where there is a shortfall in revenues, and the resources to diminish the high demand for public housing, increases in the waiting list to nearly 14,000 and limits the availability of public housing units. This bill will limit lengthy tenancy periods by occupants staying for more generations in the same public housing unit that diminishes the chance of qualified individual on the wait list.

There are 96,648 invisible homeless, 12,600 unsheltered homeless, 18,623 homeless household and 262,021 homeless at risk and only 6,300 public housing units available. Imposing the tenancy limit will provide equal opportunity to provide these people to public housing. Transitional housing should prepare tenants to be more responsible and accountable of time and resources. It should address cause of poverty through incentive plan jobs, and life skills training to provide incentive to able bodied individuals to motivate them to overcome barriers to escape poverty. Eventually to prevent passing poverty through many generation and ultimately will gain leverage in securing permanent housing that could include ownership.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify

LINDA LINGLE  
GOVERNOR



BARBARA E. ARASHIRO  
ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY  
1002 NORTH SCHOOL STREET  
POST OFFICE BOX 17907  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

Statement of  
**Barbara E. Arashiro**  
Hawaii Public Housing Authority  
Before the

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING**

January 27, 2010 11:00 A.M.  
Room 325, Hawaii State Capitol

In consideration of  
**H.B. 2319**  
**RELATING TO HOUSING**

The Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) appreciates the intent of H.B. 2319, which would limit to 5 years the time that certain low income persons could reside in state public housing, but cannot support this bill as written, in the absence of funding for self-sufficiency support services for residents who are not able to afford market rate rentals.

HPHA supports the concept that public housing should be transitional housing, except where the resident is elderly or disabled. For many families currently in public housing, though, this bill would result in homelessness soon after its effective date. Many non-elderly families have already lived in state public housing more than 5 years, and this bill appears to prohibit renewing the annual lease the next time it is due. That does not allow time for the families to prepare for the loss of subsidized housing.

Many families in public housing are financially unable to afford rent anywhere other than public housing, and are without the employability and social skills to compete in the current job market. In order to change the circumstances that create this dependency, adequate funding for financial and social self-sufficiency services must first be made available to the families, and the 5 year limit should be gradually phased in to allow families time to avail themselves of those services.

With those services in place, and phasing in the implementation for current residents, HPHA could support a 5 year limit on occupancy of state public housing.



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

**TESTIMONY- OPPOSE HB 2319: RELATING TO HOUSING**

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

FROM: Betty Lou Larson, Housing Programs Director, Catholic Charities Hawaii

HEARING: **Wednesday, January 27, 2010**, 11:00 am; CR 325

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this housing bill. I am Betty Lou Larson, the Housing Programs Director at Catholic Charities Hawaii. We are also a member of Partners in Care. Catholic Charities Hawaii opposes this bill which would impose a 5 year limit for all public housing except for people who are elderly, disabled, or retired for medical reasons.

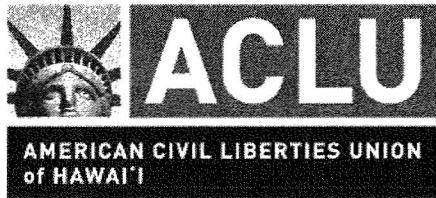
While there are many concerns about public housing, this draconian measure should be a last step, not a first step to address these long-standing issues. In order to break the cycle of generation after generation living in public housing, first there must be a concerted effort and adequate funding to provide the services needed to move families onto market housing. If there is no affordable housing for people at 15% to 30% to 40% of median income, where would they go? There must be a plan and adequate programs implemented before a measure such as a 5 year limit should be considered. In these tough economic times, we understand that funding for programs to address this issue would not be available. **We suggest a Task Force to work on the complicated issues involved.**

Development of such a plan needs time and input from HPHA, residents, and the community, including the homeless service providers. Catholic Charities Hawaii, which has many programs that assist both homeless persons and those at risk to prevent homelessness, would be interested in participating in discussions, as would Partners in Care (Oahu continuum of service providers, government agencies, and persons concerned about homelessness).

There are many other issues that would need to be addressed in an overall plan. For example, Catholic Charities Hawaii would support measures to increase rents as incomes increase, with no cap on the amount of rent that would be paid at 30% of income. This would encourage families to move out if their incomes increase to where they could afford a market unit. We also would support that once families have reached a high level of income they should be counseling and assisted to move out. However, families may not be stable and may have wide swings in income, so care must be taken in developing the administrative rules to allow for stability in income, before forcing a family out of housing and possibly into homelessness. These and other issues should be addressed in a comprehensive plan.

We commend the Committee for taking on such a difficult and complex issue. However, we urge you defer this bill, until an overall plan be developed and services initiated before measures like a 5 year limit are considered. We urge the legislature to work with the HPHA, the residents and the community to developed future options to address these complicated issues. Thank you for hearing our concerns.





Committee: Committee on Housing  
Hearing Date/Time: Wednesday, January 27, 2010, 11:00 a.m.  
Place: Room 225  
Re: Testimony of the ACLU of Hawaii in Opposition to H.B. 2319, Relating to Housing

Dear Chair Cabanilla and Members of the Committee on Housing:

The American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii (“ACLU of Hawaii”) writes in opposition to H.B. 2319, which seeks to restrict state low income housing leases to no more than five years, unless otherwise excepted.

This bill severely and unnecessarily punishes poor families. In this time of high and rising unemployment and housing prices, we should not be considering ways to evict public housing tenants, some of our most vulnerable citizens. Evicting these already low-income families will stretch our homeless resources to the breaking point and cost us much more in the long run. Hawaii would be better served by providing support to individuals and families seeking to transition out of public housing units.

The mission of the ACLU of Hawaii is to protect the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the U.S. and State Constitutions. The ACLU of Hawaii fulfills this through legislative, litigation, and public education programs statewide. The ACLU of Hawaii is a non-partisan and private non-profit organization that provides its services at no cost to the public and does not accept government funds. The ACLU of Hawaii has been serving Hawaii for over 40 years.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Laurie A. Temple  
Staff Attorney  
ACLU of Hawaii

American Civil Liberties Union of Hawaii  
P.O. Box 3410  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96801  
T: 808.522-5900  
F: 808.522-5909  
E: [office@acluhawaii.org](mailto:office@acluhawaii.org)  
[www.acluhawaii.org](http://www.acluhawaii.org)



**TESTIMONY- OPPOSE HB 2319: RELATING TO HOUSING**

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, January 27, 2010**, 11:00 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 opposes this bill which would impose a 5 year limit for all public housing except for people who are elderly, disabled, or retired for medical reasons.

**The first order of attention should focus on enabling families currently in public housing to move into affordable market housing (15% to 30% of median income) that must be made available** to them. This is the crux of the problem. It is most important for Legislators to create this solution by implementing a plan – including funding - and adequate programming to address this goal.

This bill proposes a last-ditch desperate measure that should be a **last, rather than first**, step to address a long-standing issue.

Partners in Care is very willing to provide time and input, hopefully together with HPHA, residents, and the community to support a task force to work on resolving this complex issue.

We very much appreciate the Committee taking on such a difficult mission. However, **we urge you to defer this bill** until a more comprehensive overall plan can be developed and services initiated before measures like a 5 year limit are considered. We urge the legislature to work with the HPHA, the residents and the community to develop future options that will address these complicated issues. Thank you for considering these concerns.



*Building  
houses,  
building  
hope*

HB 2319: Relating to Housing  
House Committee on Housing  
Wednesday, January 27, 2010 11:00 a.m.  
Conference Room 329

#### TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION

Everyone has a home in which they can thrive. That is the vision that Hawaii Habitat for Humanity holds for the people in our state. A home in which people can thrive does not need to be a single family house, it does not need to be a middle class condominium. It can be a studio apartment with a shared kitchen where a single person can come home and feel safe. It can be a one bedroom apartment where a young couple is raising their child or an ohana unit behind the home of an older couple.

For many people public housing is that home where they can thrive. Where they can raise their children with a sense of stability and rootedness. This is particularly true in Hawaii where there is a wide and growing gap between income and basic living expenses for many people. Where, according to a study on economic well being published by the Aloha United Way in 2007, 23 of the most common occupations, such as salespeople, food preparers and servers, secretaries, security guards, maintenance and repair workers and even managers of retail sales workers do not pay enough to cover a family's basic needs.

That is why we need more affordable housing. Housing expenditures comprise roughly 40% of the expenditures of urban residents in Hawaii. But we don't somehow increase the supply of low income affordable housing by setting a five year time limit on tenant rental in State housing projects. And we will not meet this bill's stated purpose of "breaking the vicious cycle of poverty" by uprooting families and sending them into a housing market where they have no hope of being able to afford the rents.

This bill will, in the worst of economic times, evict very low income tenants, most of them families with children, from the only housing they can afford to rent. It will result in increased and unnecessary homelessness. It will result in family trauma and in the state having to build many more family shelters.

If the state wishes to set time limits on tenure in public housing it must be done in a thoughtful and well planned manner. It must be correlated with increasing affordable housing for low and very low income renters and it must be related to realistic time frames and incentives. To do otherwise will cause great hardship for people, most of whom have no alternatives.



Habitat for Humanity works toward the elimination of substandard housing and homelessness. We believe that everyone should have a simple, decent and affordable place to live, a place where they can thrive. Let us work together to make that possible.

Kathleen Hasegawa  
Executive Director  
Hawaii Habitat for Humanity Association  
1164 Bishop St., Suite 510  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

1164 Bishop Street  
Suite 510  
Honolulu, HI 96813  
(808) 538-7676 Tel