

From : Curtis J. Kropar, Executive Director - Hawaiian Hope  
Date : March 9th, 2010  
Re : HR 62 and HCR 114 - Homeless Safe Zones.

Summary : This letter represent our full support and desire to establish "Homeless Safe Zones."

Hawaiian Hope is a technology based non profit organization with the objectives to address the parallel issues of homeless services and disaster management. Hawaiian Hope designs web based data management software to assist organizations to manage their facilities and day-to-day operations. We currently manage the data of SOME of the states largest homeless shelters and the personal data of over 5,800 homeless and formerly homeless individuals.

**Fact : There are more homeless than there is shelter capacity. Period.**

I have heard over and over "those homeless don't want to follow the rules and that is why they don't go to the shelters."

Quite bluntly, i am tired of hearing the same errorred statement over and over when i know for a fact that there is not enough capacity for the shelters to handle the entire population of homeless here on this island. While we have made significant progress over the past 3 years in opening shelters and getting people under a roof, when addressing the problem as a whole, the argument of "go to a shelter" is, for the most part, moot as there are not enough shelter beds for all of the homeless. Are ALL shelters at 100% capacity ? no. But having room for 25 when there are 200 in the area, leaves the option irrelevant for 150 people.

**Fact : Hostility does not help to solve the problems people have.**

I am tired of hearing the city and state creating hostile laws and rules that tell homeless where they can **NOT** go. Cant sleep in the park, cant sleep on the beaches, cant sleep in your car, cant sleep on benches.... and the most recent attempt to make being homeless illegal... cant sleep on the sidewalk.

We need to stop creating laws that penalize and tell people where they can not go and start assisting and telling people where it is **SAFE** to go. Its the **RIGHT** thing to do.

"Safe Zones" will help to address several issues :

- 1) People need a decent nights sleep. Official safe zones will allow people to sleep without purposely being roused.
- 2) Aid social workers in the ability to find their client. when a sweep occurs, people are scattered and it makes helping them exponentially more difficult. Safe zones will allow for case managers to know where their clients are.
- 3) sanitation. Establishing official locations for the homeless will aid in setting up sanitation.
- 4) stability. Fact. People are more productive when they are stabilized Knowing that your stuff is safe, your kids can sleep safely, and you are not going to get fines because you are poor, lends a lot to people re-establishing their stability. They can concentrate on progress and not spend time concentrating on dodging fines.
- 5) Address public concern and the beliefs that the very visible homeless populations in tourist areas are having a negative impact to tourism.
- 6) allows us to start working more closely addressing the core issues and not just dealing with the "symptoms" of being homeless.

We urge your immediate endorsement of this subject to create real progress in solving the problem of homelessness.

Housing Committee

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# LATE TESTIMONY

## Support of HCR 114 and HR 62

Good Morning, Chair Cabanilla, Vice-Chair Chong and Members of the Housing Committee,

This testimony is provided on behalf of the **Waikiki Neighborhood Board**, which last night voted 15 to 1 in support of HCR 114 and HR 62 to lead to the establishment of Safe Zones for homeless individuals. (The 1 who voted "with reservations" was concerned that Safe Zones could become "too popular.")

The Waikiki Neighborhood Board members are:

Jo-Ann Adams, Les A. Among, Helen Carroll, Raymond A. Gruntz, Jim Poole, Mary Simpson, Jeff Apaka, Louis Erteschik, Esq. (Vice Chair), Robert J. Finley (Chair), Walt Flood, Richard S. Personius, Charles K. Torigoe, Francine Dudoit-Tagupa, Jeffrey D. Merz, Michael Peters (Secretary-Treasurer), Chris Rector, and Mark Smith.

Homelessness has been a long-term problem, especially in the Waikiki area. State and City efforts to regulate homelessness away from our parks, beaches, and sidewalks— and into homeless shelters— were not successful. This compassionate, proactive effort to designate an area where they *may* stay overnight in a reasonably safe and supervised setting represents a short-term solution while we work together to find long-term solutions.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit comments in support of HCR 114 and HR 62.

Representative Tom Brower

D-23: Waikiki, Ala Moana, Kakaako