

SB 2417

June T. Shimokawa
3557A Kaimuki Avenue
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96816
(808) 732-6791
junets@clearwire.net

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To: Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Committee on Human Services
Hawai'i State Senate

From: June Shimokawa

**Re SB 2417 Making an Emergency Appropriation for the Department of
Human Services to Address the Budget Shortfall**

Chair Chun Oakland and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify **in support of SB 2417**. I am June Shimokawa and speak as a private citizen.

It would be **inhumane** not to put more General Funds into the General Assistance block grant during this time when more people are applying and found eligible for General Assistance cash assistance. This is Hawai'i's safety net for the population of 18 to 65 year old men and women.

Were there no cash assistance available, these persons would probably find a place to eat, but they will have no place to go, not even homeless shelters where they are expected to pay something each month. **We will exacerbate our problem with homelessness.**

Since November 1, General Assistance grants have been reduced from \$450 to \$300 a month. If one turns over \$90 to a Homeless Shelter, that leaves him or her with \$210 on which to live for 30 days, unless you have to use most of that for medicine.

We believe in a caring society. I urge immediate passage of this Bill.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.