



**TESTIFIER: Laura Manis**

Hawaii's Voice for a Better Future

SB 2473, SD1  
(SSCR2368)  
Status

**RELATING TO HOUSING.**

Allows grandchildren of elderly housing project residents to temporarily reside with the residents in certain family crisis situations. Affords residents evicted for raising grandchildren-in-crisis in their housing project units, priority status to return to project housing. (SD1)

**COMMITTEE ON HOUSING**

Rep. Rida Cabanilla, Chair

Rep. Pono Chong, Vice Chair

**STRONGLY SUPPORT**

Kokua Council supports this bill because we have learned from our members that the restrictions at elderly housing have caused grandparents who are suddenly faced with providing housing for their grandchildren in crisis situations, must make other housing arrangements.

Because of a shortage in affordable housing it often takes longer than the amount of time allowed under the present rules. One family was forced to live in their car.

We believe it would be in the best interest of all concerned if the time was extended to a more reasonable period.

This bill fits our mission to shape the well-being of our community and advocate for seniors.

Laura Manis  
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Hearing on: March 17, 2010 @ 9:20 a.m.

Conference Room 325

20 Copies Needed

**DATE:** March 16, 2010

**TO:** House Committee on Housing  
Rep. Rida Cabanilla, Chair  
Rep. Pono Chong, Vice Chair

**FROM:** Dennis Arakaki, Executive Director

**RE:** Strong Support for SB 2473 SD1, Relating to Housing

Honorable Chair Cabanilla, Vice Chair Chong and members of the House Committee on Housing, I am Dennis Arakaki, representing both the Hawaii Family Forum and the Hawaii Catholic Conference.

Hawaii Family Forum is a non-profit, pro-family education organization committed to preserving and strengthening families in Hawaii, representing a network of over 250 Christian churches. The Hawaii Catholic Conference is the public policy arm of the Roman Catholic Church in Hawaii, which under the leadership of Bishop Larry Silva, represents over 220,000 Catholics in Hawaii.

We are in strong support for this measure that provides a safety net for children when their parent or parents are not able to provide a safe home and a nurturing environment. In cases where a child is exposed to high risk situations of domestic abuse, child abuse, mental illness, drug abuse, financial instability and chronic homeless, grandparents not only provide a option for safe shelter but also a nurturing and loving relationship. Even if it is only to provide respite for the parent who is troubled, it may be a worthwhile investment to have the child stay with a grandparent.

As a parent of single mother struggling to raise a child, it is important that the child knows that there is family that can be there for them. It may not always be the case where the grandparent will welcome the grandchild into a peaceful home and quiet existence, but I am sure that many would prefer taking in the child than having to give them up to foster care or continue to live in a harmful environment. During these difficult economic times, temporary measures like these are valuable in providing options to families. I urge you to pass this measure.

Thank you for allowing me to testify and share my mana'o regarding this very important measure.

IN SUPPORT

Providing Testimony for the Record

TO: Committee on Housing: Representative Rida Cabanilla, Chair; Representative Pono Chong, Vice Chair; Representatives Jerry Chang, Denny Coffman, Sharon Har, Robert Herkes, Ken Ito, Chris Lee, Sylvia Luke, Hemina Morita, Rolan Sagunn, III, Corinne Ching, and Cynthia Thielen.

FROM: Patricia Urieff, MSW, Licensed Social Worker with thirty years of experience working with children and their families; parent; grandparent, Co-Chair for Legislative Appointed *Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Task Force, August 2008 through December 2009.*

**For Hearing on Wed. March 17, 9:20 AM, Room 325, at State Capitol, 415 South Beretania Street.**

**SB 2473, RELATING TO HOUSING.**

**Allows grandchildren of elderly housing project residents to temporarily reside with the residents in certain family crisis situations. Affords residents evicted for raising grandchildren-in-crisis in their housing project units, priority status to return to project housing. (SD1) (SSCR2368)**

Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Task Force 2009. Reports received showed that on all islands in Hawaii State, managers of public senior housing send Eviction Notices to eligible residents who through no fault of their own gets grandchildren-in-crisis who need care and the grandparents wants to provide care. (Depending on the circumstances, the grandchild could go into state custody and foster care with strangers.)

Research Finding from Committee, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Task Force 2009

Federal housing discrimination laws (24 CFR 100.300 et. seq.) exempt certain senior housing projects from familial status protections. This means that managers of qualified senior housing may choose to evict a grandparent who takes in a grandchild(ren)-in-crisis. Under federal guidelines, qualified senior housing projects have options (1) to evict a grandparent who gets a grandchild-in-crisis who needs care without any repercussions; or (2) managers can legally change policy and House Rules to allow the senior with grandchild-in-crisis to remain for a reasonable time to find new housing.

March 2009, GRGTF Focus Group: participants learned that a grandfather (eligible and living in senior public housing) had received an Eviction Notice, so he lives in his car with his grand-daughter.

**GRGTF Report to the Legislature June 2009, Recommendation. Housing:**

The 2010 Legislature is strongly encouraged to support legislation whereby managers for all Public Senior Housing and managers of all senior housing in Hawaii State that receive government funds

- change House Rules,
- stop sending *Eviction Notices*, and
- provide waivers that allow eligible seniors [who get a grandchild (ren)-in-crisis who needs care] to remain in their unit for a reasonable time needed to find new appropriate housing.