

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR



DENISE M. WISE
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY
1002 NORTH SCHOOL STREET
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

BARBARA E. ARASHIRO
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

Statement of
Denise M. Wise
Hawaii Public Housing Authority
Before the

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

February 2, 2011 8:30 A.M.
Room 325, Hawaii State Capitol

In consideration of
H.B. 1118
RELATING TO PUBLIC HOUSING

Madam Chair and Members of the House Committee on Housing, thank you for the opportunity to provide you with comments regarding House Bill 1118, relating to public housing.

The Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) appreciates the intent of this measure; however, we oppose enactment of the measure since it would be duplicative of existing public policy, would circumvent processes in place to consult with tenants in the development of house rules, and would codify a more permissive zero tolerance policy than preferred by the HPHA. While the HPHA appreciates legislative concern for increasing awareness of reporting criminal activity and encouraging citizen self-policing, we feel that house rules should be developed in partnership with our residents, and we have strong tenant support for a stricter lease termination policy than that proposed by this measure.

Currently, the HPHA requires all tenants to immediately report all observed criminal activity to the appropriate county public safety officials and security staff, where applicable. While all of our developments do not already possess house rules, some do, and the HPHA is in the process of working with each project to develop the most appropriate house rules for the community at large. These house rules would cover additional offenses including the reporting of criminal property damage, drug activity, and terroristic threatening. Adopting this measure would be duplicative of this, as well as current county public safety laws.

This measure also proposed to codify a zero tolerance policy that is more permissive than the HPHA's policy regarding drug dealing and drug use. The HPHA and its tenants favor the removal of such dangerous elements from their communities in an expeditious manner. Requiring the HPHA to await conviction for such activities, which

involves the lengthy criminal trial process, would permit the continued threat to health and safety posed by these activities.

The HPHA appreciates the opportunity to provide the House Committee on Housing with the agency's position opposing H.B. 1118. We respectfully request the Committee to hold this measure.
