



the
**Drug Policy
Forum**
of hawai'i

February 9, 2011

To: Rep. Rida Cabanilla, Chair
Rep. Pono Chong., Vice Chair and
Members of the Committee on Housing

From: Jeanne Y. Ohta, Executive Director

RE: HB898 Relating to the Housing Policy
Hearing: Wednesday, February 9, 2011, 8:30 a.m., Room 325

Position: Support

The Drug Policy Forum of Hawai'i, writes in support of this measure.

DPFH supports the housing first program as a very effective way to address the needs of the homeless, many of whom have substance use issues. This is a proven concept and assists in not only taking people off the streets, but once they have a stable place to live, can facilitate their decision to receive drug treatment or counseling.

Those with substance use issues are homeless because many shelters or programs require them to be substance free before they receive housing and yet, they cannot become substance free until they live in a stable environment.

In order to reduce the homeless population, we must at least start to implement the housing first program. The homeless issue is at a crisis point, we hope that the extension of these funds will facilitate an urgently needed program.

We urge the committee to pass this measure. Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony.

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Email to: HSGTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov
Hearing on: February 9, 2011 @ 8:30 a.m.
Conference Room # 325

DATE: February 7, 2011

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

FROM: Allen Cardines, Jr., Executive Director

RE: Strong Support for HB 898 Relating to Housing Policy

Honorable Chairs and members of the House Committee on Housing, I am Allen Cardines, representing the Hawaii Family Forum. Hawaii Family Forum is a non-profit, pro-family education organization committed to preserving and strengthening families in Hawaii, representing a network of various Christian Churches and denominations.

The Housing First model has been very successful on the Mainland. It has a good track record in assisting homeless people find access to permanent housing and then aid them in providing the services they need to keep them in housing while providing successful transition off the streets. We support this measure, but along with our community partners, suggest that you change the lapse date to allow time to implement this new concept in Hawaii.

Although we are not a social service provider, we are an educational organization that will continue to help educate people in our faith-based communities about the needs of our brothers and sisters across the state who need housing assistance.

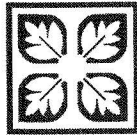
Over the last few years, we have committed ourselves to finding community partners who believe there is a permanent solution to homelessness. Our faith-based, private and public sector partners across the state have organized to work together to provide access to affordable housing, easier access to services, and create a workable plan that will one day end homelessness in Hawaii.

We believe that there are many ways to help solve the housing crisis in Hawaii. These are some of the things we strongly support:

- Ongoing collaboration with an entire network of public, private and faith-based organizations that unite around the goal of ending homelessness. No one single organization can do it by themselves. This is OUR Hawaii and we should all work together.
- Providing access to housing for low-income families, those mentally challenged, the elderly and the disabled.
- And finally, continued funding for these essential programs and offices that go to the very heart of the issue. This includes funding for prevention and crisis response programs that solve people's unique housing issues preferably before they become homeless.

HB 898 can help accomplish these goals. For that reason, we support passage of this bill.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 898: Relating to Housing Policy

TO: Representative Rida T. R. Cabanilla, Chair, Representative Pono Chong, Vice Chair, and Members, Committee on Housing

FROM: Betty Lou Larson, Legislative Liaison, Catholic Charities Hawaii

Hearing: Wednesday, 2/9/11; 8:30 am; Conference Room 325

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 898, which extends the lapse date of funds appropriated from the emergency and budget reserve fund ("Rainy Day Fund") for the housing first pilot program to December 31, 2011. Catholic Charities Hawaii strongly supports this bill, with one amendment.

Suggested Amendment: Change the lapse date of funds to December 31, 2012.

Changing the lapse date is needed to allow time to implement this new concept in Hawaii. The Housing First model has been very successful in many areas of the Mainland. It has a good track record in assisting homeless people to gain permanent housing and then provide the services needed to keep them in housing and successfully transition off the streets. Catholic Charities Hawaii promotes this model as a way to target the chronically homeless and assist them to transition to permanent housing.

Partners in Care, the Oahu coalition of homeless providers, government representatives and community stakeholders recently compared the public costs for an unsheltered homeless person vs. a resident in Supportive Housing, such as in a Housing First model. They found that the average public cost for an unsheltered homeless person is \$2,897 per month vs. the average public cost for a resident in supportive housing is \$605 per month. Public costs can be decreased by 79% by providing supportive housing with services.

This is an important bill to implement the Housing First model in Hawaii. We urge your support for this innovative strategy.

Thank you for hearing this bill and for your support to end the crisis in homelessness which is impacting on our neighborhoods, our parks, our economic centers, and especially the people who fall into homelessness.





HAWAII CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

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Email to: HSGTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov
Hearing on: February 9, 2011 @ 8:30 a.m.
Conference Room # 325

DATE: February 7, 2011

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

FROM: Walter Yoshimitsu, Executive Director

RE: Support for HB 898 | RELATING TO HOUSING POLICY

Honorable Chairs and members of the House Committee on Housing, I am Walter Yoshimitsu, **representing the Hawaii Catholic Conference**. The Hawaii Catholic Conference is the public policy voice for the Roman Catholic Church in the State of Hawaii, which under the leadership of Bishop Larry Silva, represents over 200,000 Catholics in Hawaii.

The Housing First model has been very successful in many areas of the Mainland. It has a good track record in assisting homeless people access to permanent housing and then aid in providing the services needed to keep them in housing and successful transition off the streets. We support this measure but suggest that you change the lapse date to allow time to implement this new concept in Hawaii.

The Hawaii Catholic Conference is committed to reducing poverty now and for the future. The provision of safe and affordable housing is an important part of any such effort. Often support services are necessary to enable an individual to make the transition from homelessness to a stable housing situation possible. Having said that, we acknowledge and recognize that the fiscal situation in our State and country is serious and that cuts in the budget are being made in light of these challenging facts.

The teaching of the church is clear on this issue: "...there is a growing awareness of the exalted dignity proper to the human person, since he stands above all things, and his rights and duties are universal and inviolable. Therefore, there must be made available to all men everything necessary for leading a life truly human, such as food, clothing, and shelter; the right to choose a state of life freely and to found a family, the right to education, to employment, to a good reputation, to respect, to appropriate information, to activity in accord with the upright norm of one's own conscience, to protection of privacy and rightful freedom even in matters religious." Gaudium Et Spes (5):

Based on our commitment to the dignity of the human person and to helping the least among us, we strongly support these measures. These bills, if passed, will move us in the right direction to end homelessness in Hawaii. Along with our community partners, Catholic Charities Hawaii and the Diocesan Office for Affordable Housing, we strongly urge your support. We leave the technicalities of the bills to their expertise.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.