

NEIL ABERCROMBIE  
GOVERNOR



PATRICIA McMANAMAN  
INTERIM DIRECTOR

PANKAJ BHANOT  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

**LATE**  
**Testimony**

March 10, 2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: Honorable John M. Mizuno, Chair  
House Committee on Human Services

FROM: Patricia McManaman, Interim Director

SUBJECT: **H.C.R. 44/H.R. 38 - STRONGLY URGING THE UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR AND THE UNITED STATES  
CONGRESS TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL FEDERAL AID TO THE  
STATE OF HAWAII FOR THE PROVISION OF VARIOUS STATE  
SERVICES**

Hearing: Thursday, March 10, 2011, 10:45 a.m.  
Conference Room 329, State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purpose of H.C.R. 44/H.R. 38 is to strongly urge the United States Department of the Interior and the United States Congress to provide additional federal aid to the State of Hawaii for the provision of various state services to migrants from the Compact of Free Association nations; deem migrants eligible to receive federally funded financial and medical assistance; and provide dialysis and chemotherapy centers in Micronesia and all areas within the Compact of Free Association Nations.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) strongly supports this resolution. Providing funding for services to citizens of the

Compact of Free Association nations is a federal responsibility which has been shifted to the states with significant consequences.

Due to its proximity to the Compact of Free Association nations, Hawaii has experienced a significant economic burden not shared by other states from this national commitment to provide opportunities and services agreed to by the United States government. The amount of funding provided by the federal government does not begin to compensate for the costs absorbed by the State of Hawaii.

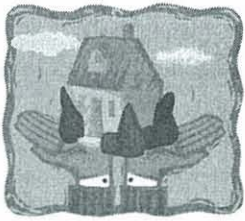
The cost to DHS alone to provide medical, financial, housing, and other social services to Compact citizens was over \$51.3 million in FY 2010. This included \$33 million for medical assistance, \$14 million for financial assistance, \$3.8 million for housing assistance and over \$439,000 for other social services.

Citizens of nations that are party to a Compact of Free Association (COFAs) with the United States, i.e. Federated States of Micronesia, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau, are considered non-immigrants and are ineligible for Medicaid and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) federal financial assistance. As a result, services to Compact citizens are mostly fully state-funded. An exception is that COFA children and pregnant women have since become eligible for federal medical assistance under the Children's Health Insurance Program.

Providing improved access to and scope of services available in the member nations of the Compact may allow a number of people who come here solely for the purpose of receiving life-saving treatments, such as dialysis, to remain in their country.

Increasing federal aid to provide services for the citizens from Compact of Free association Nations is long overdue.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.



# Weinberg Village Waimanalo

*"Families Moving Forward to a Better Life"*

**LATE  
Testimony**

## TESTIMONY- HCR 44 / HR 38 – STRONGLY SUPPORT

TO: Rep. John M. Mizuno, Chair  
Rep. Jo Jordan, Vice Chair  
And Members, Committee on Human Services

FROM: Holly Holowach, Director, Weinberg Village Waimanalo

**HEARING: Wednesday, 3/10/11, 10:45 AM; CR 329**

Dear Chair Mizuno, Vice Chair Jo Jordan, and members of the Committee on Human Services:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this Resolution. My name is Holly Holowach, Director of Weinberg Village Waimanalo, which is a transitional housing program for homeless families. My staff and I are also very active members of Partners in Care. **We strongly support this resolution urging the US Department of the Interior and the US Congress to provide federal aid to Hawaii for the provision of various state services to migrants from the Compact of Free Association Nations.**

I have been the Director of this shelter since 2003. We have 30 units of housing for 30 families. In FY2007, we took in our first Micronesian family. That year, we had three COFA families. In FY2008, we had a total of 10 families. In FY2009, we had 12 families and in FY2010, we had 19 families. So far, in FY2011, we have already taken in 16 COFA families and expect to take in several more. We currently have 65 families on the waiting list (255 individuals) and approximately 50% of those families are COFA migrants. My shelter is not unique. All of the other shelters on the island also have large COFA populations.

These families are willing to endure being in the program of a homeless shelter because they want to get into Public Housing, which to them is the equivalent of the American dream fulfilled. They are very nice families and do what is required willingly (for the most part) but they have much different issues and needs than our other local families.

Quite often they arrive in Hawaii with one or two children and leave other children and family members behind. Then when they get into the shelter, they send for them and a family of 3 becomes a family of 7 overnight. They continually bring over more and more family members and tell them how to use the homeless system to get assistance and housing. This adds to the cost of operating the shelter through added utilities, for example, and also stretches our resources thin and challenges the staff who must work with more people than anticipated.

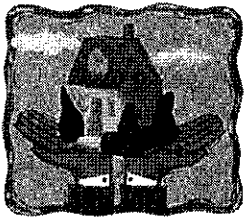
The parents and children do not speak or read English for the most part so they have a very hard time. Many of them also do not even read their own language so (for example) translating the rules into their language and asking them to read it does not guarantee that they will understand the rules.

The parents say they come to Hawaii because they want a better education for their children, but it is difficult for a child to be thrust into a new school when they can't even speak a word of English. The

*Holomua Na 'Ohana*

*41-490 Saddle City Road ~ Waimanalo, HI 96795*

*Phone: 808-259-6658 ~ Fax: 808-259-5303*



# Weinberg Village Waimanalo

*"Families Moving Forward to a Better Life"*

child is placed in the grade by their age so he or she might be put in 8<sup>th</sup> grade and expected to understand what is going on. They are expected to do well in science, for example, when they have no idea what the teacher is saying.

We have a Keiki Coordinator on staff that recognized the seriousness of the problem with the children and took it upon herself to talk to the teachers and get their books so she could help them with their homework. Since then, we have hired a part time tutor who devotes most of her time with the Chuukese children teaching them the basics they should already know. Recently, she learned that a 12 year old girl from Chuuk did not even know the English words "arm," "head," "leg" etc. so how could she be expected to understand more complicated things. These are bright adorable children who are placed in very difficult circumstances at a critical time in their growth cycle. They need devoted specialized attention. We are afraid that the children will get frustrated and fail and then turn to a life of crime and easy money (as some of the adults have done.)

We currently have one or two adults living in our shelter who can speak English because they lived in Guam a while. They are often willing to translate for the parents when we have serious issues to discuss, but that gives the other family no privacy when discussing confidential issues. It is very helpful to us, however. A full time translator would be ideal but at this time, it is cost prohibitive.

Many COFA people are willing to work, but lack the skills or training to get a job. They need to learn English first so they can speak to the employer and they need help finding a job and learning a skill. They attend the First To Work program through the welfare program and are willing to do what is asked but often don't understand what they are supposed to do and end up sanctioned so they lose funding. Work in our world is much different than the way they are raised in their culture. Most in Chuuk don't work at jobs. They fish, pound breadfruit in the morning and then spend the day together. So teaching them how to work must begin with the basics – starting with why they need to work. Many are taking jobs at fast food restaurants or as housekeepers or other menial labor at minimum wage which makes it extremely hard for them to afford to be self-sufficient and live independently. The rents so are high in Honolulu, that they will have a very hard time getting enough work to be able to afford rent. Public housing is the only option for most.

My shelter is only one of many who are struggling to help COFA families with limited funds. We do not have funding to hire translators, ESL teachers, and full time tutors for the parents and children who need so much.

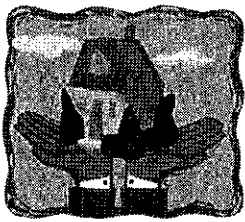
We urgently need Federal dollars in Hawaii so we can hire translators. We need to be able to hire English as Second Language teachers to have on site at the shelter to provide rigorous English lessons for both the parents and the children to get them up to speed. The needs that the COFA residents are much different than the needs of other people experiencing homelessness and we need more funding to accommodate their special needs.

I would like to suggest that some of those dollars, if received in federal aid, be given to the Department of Human Services Homeless Programs Office to disperse to the shelters to help us hire the necessary staff to help with these issues.

*Holomua Na 'Ohana*

*41-490 Saddle City Road ~ Waimanalo, HI 96795*

*Phone: 808-259-6658 ~ Fax: 808-259-5303*



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Hawaii is in the unique position of being a state more closely like the island home they come from in Micronesia so of course, the COFA families are going to choose to come to Hawaii. Because of the greater need, we must have more funding to help these people as they migrate. We also need money for more housing so we can house the COFA migrants as well as those other homeless who are struggling.

One other suggestion is that the COFA families receive help at home before they come to the United States. They should have some classes there to prepare them for what they can expect and what is needed once they are here. They also need help in getting the proper documentation such as birth certificates and social security cards before they come, which would be very beneficial once they arrive.

Thank you for your time today. I am pleased and grateful that you have made this resolution and strongly support your efforts.

Respectfully submitted,

*Holly Holowach*

Holly Holowach  
Director  
Weinberg Village Waimanalo  
A Program of Holomua Nā 'Ohana

*Holomua Na 'Ohana*

*41-490 Saddle City Road ~ Waimanalo, HI 96795*

*Phone: 808-259-6658 ~ Fax: 808-259-5303*

March 09, 2011

Barbara Tom  
98-1854 Mikinolia Place  
Aiea, HI 96701

The Honorable Representative John Mizuno, Chair  
The Honorable Representative Jo Jordan, Vice Chair  
And Members of the Committee

Dear Chair John Mizuno, Vice Chair Jo Jordon, and Members of the Committee,

Relating to HCR44/HR38: Strongly urging the United States Department of Interior, and United States Congress to provide additional Federal Aid to the State of Hawaii for provision of various State services to the migrants from the Compact of Free Association Nations; deem migrants eligible to receive Federally funded financial and medical assistance and provide dialysis and chemotherapy centers in Micronesia, and all areas within the Compact of Free association Nations.

My name is Barbara Tom and I am a Public Health Nurse working in the community with families, communities and Schools. I also Chair the Nations of Micronesia (NOM) Committee as well as serve as Advisor to the Micronesian Health Advisory Coalition (MHAC) and Micronesian Community Network (MCN). On behalf of these groups, I am writing in support of this Resolution, which will provide federal assistance to the COFA communities here in Hawaii and in their island nations. As a Community Health worker, I see first hand the needs of our Micronesian communities who are struggling with poverty, the need for health care and housing. Many come to Hawaii seeking employment, education, health care and many are even serving in our U.S. military forces in the Middle East. The Compact of Free Association Agreement creates a unique relationship between the U.S. and the COFA nations. It outlines financial support, grant support, political alliance and a military relationship with these nations. The agreement allows the United States military to have a powerful, strategic presence in the Pacific and allows FAS citizens to reside work and migrate freely between their home countries and the U.S. without visa, labor certificates or limitation of stay. These residents are considered non-immigrants or migrants from the FAS. Their status is similar to citizens in their ability to live, work and attend school in the United States.

The incidence of Cancers diagnosed and being treated in Hawaii, I believe, is directly related to the ionizing radiation resulting from the 67 atomic bomb testing conducted during the period of 1946 to 1958 in the Republic of Marshall Islands. The ionizing radiation resulting from the testing – equivalent in power to 7,200 Hiroshima bombs—have been associated with 26 different types of cancers.

For these reasons, I support this resolution to the United States Department of Interior and United States Congress to provide federal aid to Hawaii for financial

and medical assistance and provide dialysis and chemotherapy centers in Micronesia and all areas within the Compact of Free Association Nations.

Respectfully,

Barbara Tom  
Nations of Micronesia, Chair  
Micronesian Health Advisory Coalition, Advisor  
Micronesian Community Network, Advisor

Cc Representative Della Au Belatti  
Representative Faye P. Hanohano  
Representative Chris Lee  
Representative Dee Morikawa  
Representative Jessica Wooley  
Representative Ryan Yamane  
Representative Corinne Ching  
Representative Kymberly Marcos Pine

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**Sent:** Wednesday, March 09, 2011 10:19 PM  
**To:** HUS testimony  
**Cc:** gomama808@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for HCR44 on 3/10/2011 10:45:00 AM

**LATE**  
**Testimony**

Testimony for HUS 3/10/2011 10:45:00 AM HCR44

Conference room: 329  
Testifier position: support  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Carolyn Martinez Golojuch, MSW  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [gomama808@gmail.com](mailto:gomama808@gmail.com)  
Submitted on: 3/9/2011

**Comments:**

Please show our aloha by remembering that the US needs to offer medical assistance to those we have used in our efforts of scientific research. We risked their lives and good health and now have a responsibility to address their needs. To turn our back on them is irresponsible and dishonest to say the least. We have a moral obligation to care for them.