

LATE

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR



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

February 15, 2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Committee on Human Services

FROM: Patricia McManaman, Interim Director

SUBJECT: **S.B. 895 - RELATING TO HOUSING POLICY**

Hearing: Tuesday, February 15, 2011; 1:30 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purpose of S.B. 895 is to extend the lapse date of funds appropriated from the emergency and budget reserve fund for the Housing First Pilot program to December 31, 2011. The Legislature appropriated the funds for the program pursuant to Act 191, Session Laws of Hawaii 2010.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent of this bill to extend the lapse date of Act 191's appropriations for the Housing First Pilot program.

For this purpose, the Governor has also submitted for consideration, S.B. 1288, requesting an emergency appropriation from the emergency and budget reserve fund and make technical corrections to Act 191, Session Laws of 2010 to permit the awarding of funds to specified organizations. The bill also extends the lapse date of Act 191's appropriations from June 30, 2011 to June 30, 2012.

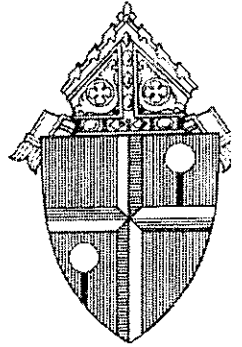
DHS recommends the approval of S.B. 1288 which corrects the language in Act 191 and extends the lapse date to June 30, 2012.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this bill.

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ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE STATE OF HAWAII

St. Stephen's Diocesan Center of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Honolulu
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Testimony of Kent Anderson
February 15, 2011, 1:30pm; Conference Room 016
Support for SB 895

Good Afternoon Committee Chair Suzanne Chun Oakland, Vice-Chair Les Ihara, Jr., and members of the Committee on Human Services. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of **SB 895**.

My name is Kent Anderson, and I am here on behalf of the Diocese of Honolulu. I serve as the newly appointed Housing Development Director for the Office of Affordable Housing for the Diocese. We are your partners and among your strongest supporters in providing supportive services and permanent housing opportunities for those at the lowest levels of income who are either homeless or dangerously close to becoming homeless. We have and will continue to be your partners because we know that the government cannot and should not be the sole caretaker for our whole community.

Homelessness will impact over 15,000 of our neighbors this year statewide. Many of the victims will be keiki and kupuna. Many working families are unable to make ends meet since we experience the highest housing costs in the country. According to HUD statistics, fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment is \$1,610. In order to afford this level of rent without paying more than 30% of income on housing, an employee must earn \$30.96/hr. Unfortunately, the average renter only earns \$12.89/hr in Hawaii. At this wage, two full time jobs are not sufficient to sustainably support a family. For minimum wage earners, the outlook is heartbreaking. A minimum wage earner would need to work 171 hours/week to support a family of four without any time off for sickness or vacation. An individual who could achieve this workload would be miraculous, especially since there are only 168 hours in a week.

We understand that times are tough right now; therefore, we must step forward to assist those most in need. Affordable housing is a basic need for our entire Ohana. It helps provide the basis of a healthy workforce, healthy children, healthy kupuna, and healthy economy. We ask that you prioritize your legislation to ensure that homeless services and affordable housing are priorities during this legislative session. We appreciate and highly applaud your past efforts and look forward to partnering with you to provide a home for each member of our Ohana.

SB895 will make a positive impact in reducing homelessness. Housing First has been proven to effectively house chronically homeless individuals- the most difficult and costly subpopulation to serve. Partners in Care, 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. Please support SB895 and help us create a stronger community. We urge your support for this essential bill.

Thank you again for this opportunity to testify. Please contact me at kentanderson@rcchawaii.org or by phone at 808-203-6718 if we may be of assistance.