

Date: March 1, 2011

To: Senate Committee on Human Services

Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair

Senator Les Ihara, Vice Chair

From: William Davis, HPU MSW student

I support Bill SB 897 and its' decree to end chronic homelessness in 10 years. I think it's an intelligent move for Hawaii to follow the federal government by duplicating the Fed's Interagency Council. This will bring much needed resources and funding into Hawaii. As a former Community Based Case manager, the one resource that was the hardest to secure for my clients was housing. Let's not forget the motivation behind the Interagency Council on Homelessness. It is a response to President Obama's and General Shinseki's promise to end homelessness for American Veterans. By 2015 the President wants all veterans who are homeless to have some form of permanent shelter. Our country is too powerful to have our veterans living on the streets.

There will be opposition to Bill SB897 and that makes for a stronger bill in the end. There will also be time to amend and take out parts that are ineffective and don't serve our unique community. But the opposition won't be able to downplay the bills' purpose to end chronic homelessness. We should be up in arms that Hawaii has 2 - 4,000 homeless children and that 6,000 people find themselves without shelter everyday.

What the bill hopefully addresses outside newer programs, vacancies and rentals; is the potential need for the construction and space for affordable homes and rentals, which are both vital. The community needs homes that are affordable. It's impractical if all our homes in Hawaii are 400,000 dollars and above. The days of instant credit, zero-money down and interest -only loans are over. And so should go the single-minded perspective of only building homes and rentals that profit the builder and not the citizens of this wonderful state. We need federal resources and the creativity found in the larger society. I support the spirit of SB897 and support the purpose as well. Thank you and please support this bill Hawaii.

Respectfully,

William Davis

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR



PATRICIA McMANAMAN.
DIRECTOR
PANKAJ BHANOT
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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

March 16, 2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Rida T.R. Cabanilla, Chair
House Committee on Housing

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

FROM: Patricia McManaman, Director

SUBJECT: **S.B. 897, S.D. 2 - RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS**

Hearing: Wednesday, March 16, 2011; 10:00 a.m.
Conference Room 325, State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purpose of S.B. 897, S.D. 2, is to establish the Hawaii interagency council on homelessness under the Department of Human Services for administrative purposes.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the overall concept of this bill as it includes initiatives supportive of our goals and objectives but we are concerned about the cost implications generated by this proposal.

President Obama has renewed the effort to empower the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness through which the State of Hawaii is affiliated via the Region 9 Federal governance.

The establishment of a Hawaii interagency council on homelessness will allow the State to collaborate with the jurisdictional Interagency Councils across the nation to continually fine tune the effort to end homelessness. The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness recommends that the States establish such a State agency by legislative action or executive order, or both.

The appointment of Marc Alexander as the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness, to spearhead homelessness collaborations across federal, State and County jurisdictions and with community and businesses partners, is an excellent starting point to revisit the State's Strategic Plan to End Homelessness and to provide the statewide collaboration needed to address homelessness issues through the backing of the Governor's Office.

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

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR



KAREN SEDDON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM
HAWAII HOUSING FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
677 QUEEN STREET, SUITE 300
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
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IN REPLY REFER TO:

Statement of
Karen Seddon
Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation
Before the

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES**

March 16, 2011 at 10:00 a.m.
Room 325, State Capitol

In consideration of
**S.B. 897, S.D. 2
RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS.**
and
**S.B. 900, S.D. 2
RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS.**

HHFDC **supports the intent** of S.B. 897, S.D. 2 and S.B. 900, S.D. 2, which both establish the Hawaii Interagency Council on Homeless. HHFDC is designated as a member of the Interagency Council in both bills, and is willing to serve in that capacity should either bill become law in its current form.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 897 SD2: RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS

TO: Representative Rida Cabanilla, Chair, Housing; and
Representative John Mizuno, Chair, Human Services, and
Members, Committees on Housing and Human Services

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

Hearing: Wednesday, 3/16/11; 10:00 a.m.; CR 325

Chair Cabanilla, Chair Mizuno, and Members of the Committees on Housing and Human Services:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 900 SD2, which would establish the Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness. I am Betty Lou Larson, Legislative Liaison for housing and homeless issues at Catholic Charities Hawaii. Catholic Charities Hawaii supports the intent of this bill, with the following amendments. We believe that SB 897, SD2 has the same content as SB 900, SD2.

Suggested Amendments:

1. Add the Office of Hawaiian Affairs and Department of Hawaiian Homelands.
2. Add the Leeward Housing Coalition.
3. Delete funding for administrative expenses.

This new Council is an exciting initiative to forge partnerships to end homelessness. It will work to form a unified plan to address homelessness across the State. All parts of our community need to be involved to resolve this sometimes overwhelming social problem. This Council will create one important process to form partnerships and linkages to achieve effective outcomes. It is not the only one, since business and other groups need to be involved but in other perhaps more informal ways.

We suggest that the Legislature delete the funding for administrative purposes. With very limited funds this year, we urge that the scarce funding available should focus on maintaining the direct services of homeless programs.

Thank you for hearing our testimony and especially for your concern and your support to end the crisis in homelessness. In these difficult economic times, we appreciate your dedication to continue to seek solutions to the homeless problems of our State.





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March 16, 2011

The Honorable Rida T.R. Cabanilla, Chair
House Committee on Housing

The Honorable John M. Mizuno, Chair
House Committee on Human Services
State Capitol, Room 325
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: S.B. 897, S.D. 2, Relating to Homelessness

HEARING: Wednesday, March 16, 2011, at 10:00 a.m.

Aloha Chair Cabanilla, Chair Mizuno and Members of the Joint Committees:

I am Myoung Oh, Government Affairs Director of the Hawai'i Association of REALTORS® ("HAR"), the voice of real estate in Hawai'i, testifying on behalf of its 8,500 members. HAR **supports** of S.B. 897, S.D. 2, establishing the Hawai'i Interagency Council on Homelessness under the Department of Human Services.

There are approximately 6,000 homeless living in Hawai'i, and it is of serious concern to many communities and residents throughout this State. Furthermore, the high cost of housing and living, here in the islands, may make it difficult for struggling families trying to make ends meet to be able to afford the opportunity to own, or even rent a home.

HAR has historically supported mechanisms to help increase the supply of low and moderate income affordable rental housing, such as the Rental Housing Trust Fund Program, which helps provide these opportunities.

HAR is supportive of the endeavor to create a Hawai'i Interagency Council. Moreover, HAR looks forward to assisting with the formation and coordination of a unified plan to help address homelessness in all counties, and assist in facilitating the acquisition of federal funding for homeless programs.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



Helping Hands Hawai'i

Wednesday, March 16, 2011
10:00 a.m.
Conference Room 325

To: Rep. Rida T.R. Cabanilla, Chair
Rep. Pono Chong, Vice Chair
House Committee on Housing

Rep. John M. Mizuno, Chair
Rep. Jo Jordan, Vice Chair
House Committee on Human Services

From: Helping Hands Hawaii – Written Testimony Only

Re: ✓ **SB897 SD2, RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS /
SB900 SD2, RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS**

We testify in regards to SB897 SD2, RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS and SB900 SD2, RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS, which would both establish the Hawaii interagency council on homelessness. Helping Hands Hawaii (HHH) *supports* both bills, *with suggested amendments*.

HHH is a 501(c)(3) non-profit social service agency, which was incorporated in 1974. HHH administers a variety of Behavioral Health and Human Services programs, which assist over 37,000 individuals and households each year.

Both our Behavioral Health and Human Services programs provide a wide range of services intended to prevent homelessness in Hawaii. Our agency provides case management services for adults with serious and persistent mental illness, including many who are currently homeless, and also provide case management specifically for Mental Health Kokua's Safe Haven Project in Chinatown. In addition, our agency also offers emergency financial assistance to help

individuals who are homeless to obtain and maintain long-term housing through our Emergency Assistance Fund and Homelessness Prevention & Rapid Re-Housing Program.

HHH supports both SB897 SD2 and SB900 SD2, which would both establish the Hawaii interagency council on homelessness. HHH believes that homelessness is a concern that affects every member of our community – either directly or indirectly – and therefore all segments of our community will need to be involved in order to develop and implement viable and compassionate solutions to the problem of homelessness. The proposed interagency council on homelessness will bring members of our community together and will help to foster collaborative solutions.

However, HHH would prefer that the Legislature pass SB 897 SD2, which does not include any appropriation for administrative expenses. In addition, HHH suggests the following amendments to SB897 SD2:

- Add the Governor’s Coordinator on Homelessness to the list of members; and
- Change the effective date to effective upon approval.

HHH believes that the newly appointed Governor’s Coordinator on Homelessness can and should play a lead role if the interagency council on homelessness is established. We also believe that the establishment of the council is important, and should be established quickly so that the council can begin to implement potential solutions to address the concerns of homelessness in our community.

In these difficult economic times, HHH recognizes that there is only a limited amount of State funds available, and that funds should be designated to maintaining existing direct services if at all possible. Although HHH understands the rationale behind including an appropriation for administrative expenses associated with the council in SB900 SD2, HHH also believes that the interagency council on homelessness would still be able to achieve its stated goals and purpose even if an appropriation is not included. The members of the interagency council on homelessness would be unpaid, and administrative expenses for travel costs could be limited by exploring alternate meeting options, such as videoconferencing or meeting via webinar.

Once again, HHH is in support of SB900 SD1 with the suggested amendment mentioned above.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



PARTNERS IN CARE
Oahu's Coalition of Homeless Providers

<http://www.partnersincarehawaii.org/>

COMMENTS IN SUPPORT OF SB 897, SD2: ESTABLISHING THE HAWAII INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS

TO: Representative Rida Cabanilla, Chair, Committee on Housing; Representative John Mizuno, Chair, Committee on Human Services; and Members, Committees on Housing and Human Services

FROM: Max Gray, Chair, Partners In Care Advocacy Committee

Hearing: **Thursday, 3/16/11; 10:00 AM; Room 325**

Chair Cabanilla, Chair Mizuno, and Members of the Committees on Housing and Human Services:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on SB 897, SD2, which establishes the Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness and makes an appropriation for travel expenses. Partners In Care supports the intent of this bill on the condition that no funds are reallocated from the budgets of current homeless services or programs. We also propose an amendment.

Suggested Amendments:

Add to the designated entities to sit on the Interagency Council: the Office of Hawaiian Affairs; Department of Hawaiian Homelands; Leeward Housing Coalition; Department of Land and Natural Resources; and the City and County of Honolulu Office of Housing.

More coordination among entities is needed to improve the delivery of homeless services in our state. Partners In Care, as a consortium of service providers from across O'ahu, advocates on behalf of a diverse population of homeless men, woman and children. It is among the entities that would be required to sit on a Hawaii Interagency Council. The U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness has recommended that the States establish similar bodies by legislative action or executive order, or both. The recent appointment by the Governor of Mr. Marc Alexander as the state Coordinator on Homelessness has helped to drive the discussion in the right direction. We applaud the state government's efforts to address the problem of homelessness. However, it is important that we do not misuse valuable funds in the pursuit of this ideal. Monies for current homeless programs must not be diverted to meet the needs of such a body.

We urge the Legislature to support the intent of this bill on the condition that funds are not diverted from other programs to meet the costs of a state Interagency Council.

Thank you for hearing this bill and for your support.