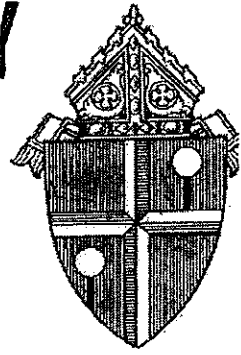


# LATE TESTIMONY



## ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE STATE OF HAWAII

St. Stephen's Diocesan Center of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Honolulu  
63 01 Pali Highway, Kaneohe, HI 96744 • Phone: (808) 203-6718

Testimony of Kent Anderson  
March 16, 2011, 10:00am; Conference Room 325  
Support Intent for SB 897, SD2

Good Morning Committee Chair Cabanilla, Committee Chair Mizuno, and Members of the Committees on Housing and Human Services. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of **SB 897, SD2**.

My name is Kent Anderson, and I testify 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.

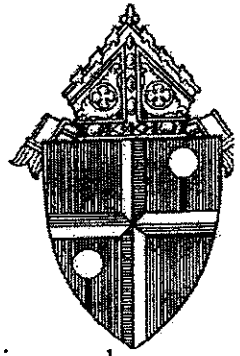
SB897, SD2 will establish the Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness to help create comprehensive plans to alleviate homelessness across our islands. As a member of the previous Interagency Council, I can attest that great progress can be made when appropriate representatives from essential departments and organizations come together for a shared goal. We will not solve our homeless problems unless we come together and work as one. The Hawaii Interagency Council will move us in the direction of unity and will make our collective efforts stronger than the sum of each individual part. We would like to suggest the following amendment:

1. Add the Office of Hawaiian Affairs and Department of Hawaiian Homelands.

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Thank you again for this opportunity to testify. Please contact me at [kentanderson@rcchawaii.org](mailto:kentanderson@rcchawaii.org) or by phone at 808-203-6718 if the Office of Affordable Housing may be of assistance.