

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR



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STATE OF HAWAII

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IN REPLY REFER TO:

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

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WATER, LAND AND HOUSING

February 3, 2011 at 1:15 p.m.
Room 225, State Capitol

In consideration of
S.B. 901 RELATING TO HOUSING.

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Solomon, and Members of the Committee on Water, Land and Housing,

The HHFDC ***supports the intent of*** S.B. 901, part of the Honolulu Urban Caucus's legislative package. S.B. 901 appropriates an unspecified amount of funds to create and fund a landlord liaison project similar to that which is currently in place in King County, Washington. The Department of Human Services (DHS) already runs a similar program using Federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds for TANF recipients. The landlord liaison project could expand these services to non-TANF families.

However, HHFDC prefers S.B. 912, a similar bill that makes the Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) the expending agency for the appropriation for this project. As an attached agency of DHS, the HPHA can draw upon the expertise already available within DHS's TANF program to administer the landlord liaison project.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



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February 2, 2011

The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senate Committee on Water, Land, and Housing
State Capitol, Room 225
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: S.B. 901 Relating to Housing

HEARING: Thursday, February 3, 2011 at 1:15 p.m.

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Solomon, and Members of the Committee:

I am Myoung Oh, Government Affairs Director, here to testify on behalf of the Hawai'i Association of REALTORS® ("HAR"), the voice of real estate in Hawai'i, and its 8,500 members in Hawai'i. HAR supports S.B. 901 which appropriates funds for the creation of a landlord liaison project.

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 believes that the landlord liaison project would help to facilitate a balanced approached between homeless clients and landlords through the creation of incentives for landlords to relax their screening criteria.

Lastly, by helping to increase the availability of rental housing for persons who face obstacles in moving from homelessness to permanent housing and persons with lower incomes who need to find affordable rental housing, HAR believes that the landlord liaison project is a creative solution to address the homeless issue in our State.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

