

My name is Philsenia Bertrand-Ramos and I am a graduate social work student. I also reside on the Waianae Coast. I am writing to support SB904.

I think the introduction of a program like this would put a dent in the homeless population here in Hawaii. I have had the opportunity to work at a homeless shelter for my undergraduate and it was dishearten to say the least. The struggles, pain and frustration faced by those human beings; I do not believe that anyone should have to go through this.

This program has been successful in other states. Based on my commitment to support the least fortunate in whatever way I can, I believe it is my civic duty and responsibility to support this bill. A program like this is a necessity in Hawaii. I strongly support and urge others to do the same.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Philsenia Bertrand-Ramos

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR



PATRICIA McMANAMAN.
DIRECTOR
PANKAJ BHANOT
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
P. O. Box 339
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March 16, 2011

MEMORANDUM

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

The Honorable Jerry L. Chang, Chair
House Committee on Water, Land, & Ocean Resources

FROM: Patricia McManaman, Director

SUBJECT: **S.B. 904, S.D. 2 – RELATING TO THE HOMELESS**

Hearing: Wednesday, March 16, 2011; 9:30 a.m.
Conference Room 325, State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purpose of S.B. 904, S.D. 2, is to require the Department of Human Services (DHS) to identify suitable properties for a housing first program that identifies affordable rental housing projects, including an initial housing first single resident occupancy affordable rental housing model project site in an urban core. This bill also requires DHS to report to the Legislature and the Governor.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent of a housing first program. DHS, however, must oppose this bill because the DHS Homeless Programs Office does not currently have the ability to meet the requirements of this bill.

The Homeless Programs Office does not have the staffing or the expertise to identify suitable properties for the housing first program and to conduct the required

feasibility and cost analysis for an initial housing first model housing project and report to the Legislature by December 1, 2011.

Staffing for the Homeless Programs Office was reduced from ten to three. This has resulted in the inability to produce reports, monitor contracts, keep up on shelter maintenance, and other essential functions.

The Homeless Programs Office is anticipating the addition of three new positions who will have to be trained so that the Homeless Programs Office can catch up on the HUGE backlog of work necessary to maintain its current programs.

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



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 904 SD2: RELATING TO THE HOMELESS

TO: Representative Rida Cabanilla, Chair, Committee on Housing, and Representative Jerry Chang, Chair, Committee on Water, Land & Ocean Resources, and Members, Committees on Housing and Water, Land & Ocean Resources.

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

Hearing: Wednesday, 3/16/11; 9:30 a.m.; CR 325

Chair Cabanilla, Chair Chang, and Members of the Committees on Housing and Water, Land & Ocean Resources.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 904, SD2, which would require the Department of Human Services to identify suitable properties for a Housing First program. I am Betty Lou Larson, Legislative Liaison for housing and homeless issues at Catholic Charities Hawaii. Catholic Charities Hawaii strongly supports this bill.

This initiative is also incorporated into SB 912, SD2, which is also being heard today.

Catholic Charities Hawaii supports the implementation of a Housing First model for Hawaii. These types of programs have been very successful in many areas of the Mainland. They have a good track record in assisting homeless people to gain permanent housing and then provide the services needed to keep them in housing and successfully transition off the streets. Catholic Charities Hawaii promotes this model as a way to target the chronically homeless and assist them to transition to permanent housing.

Partners in Care, the Oahu coalition of homeless providers, 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. (Public costs for homeless people include ER and hospitalization costs, law enforcement, substance abuse or other treatments, social services and outreach, etc.)

This is an important bill to implement the Housing First model in Hawaii. We urge your support for this innovative strategy. Thank you for hearing this bill and for your support to end the crisis in homelessness which is impacting on our neighborhoods, our parks, our economic centers, and especially the people who fall into homelessness.



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Aloha United Way



the
**Drug Policy
Forum**
of hawaii

March 16, 2011

To: Committee on Housing
Committee on Water, Land, & Ocean Resources

From: Jeanne Y. Ohta, Executive Director

RE: SB 904 SD2 Relating to the Homeless
Hearing: Wednesday, March 16, 2011, 9:30 a.m., Room 325

Position: Support

The Drug Policy Forum of Hawai'i writes in support of SB 904 SD2.

DPFH supports the housing first program as a very effective way to address the needs of the homeless, many of whom have substance use issues. This is a proven concept and assists in not only taking people off the streets, but once they have a stable place to live, can facilitate their decision to receive drug treatment or counseling.

Those with substance use issues are homeless because many shelters or programs available to them require them to be substance free before they receive housing and yet, they cannot become substance free until they live in a stable environment.

In order to reduce the homeless population, we must at least start to implement the housing first program.

We urge the committee to pass this measure. Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony.

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PARTNERS IN CARE
Oahu's Coalition of Homeless Providers

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

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 904, SD2: Relating to the Homeless

TO: Representative Rida Cabanilla, Chair, Committee on Housing, Representative Jerry Chang, Chair, Committee on Water, Land and Ocean Resources, and Members, Committees on Housing and Water, Land and Ocean Resources

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

Hearing: **Wednesday 3/16/11; 9:30 a.m., Room 325**

Dear Chair Cabanilla, Chair Chang, and Members of the Housing Committee and Water, Land and Ocean Resources Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 904 SD2, which would require the Department of Human Services to identify suitable properties for a Housing First program. Partners In Care strongly supports this bill.

This initiative is incorporated into SB 912, SD2, which is also being heard today.

The Housing First model has been very successful in many other states. It has a good track record in assisting homeless people to gain permanent housing and providing the services need to keep them in housing and successfully transition off the streets. Partners In Care promotes this model as a way to target the chronically homeless and assist them to transition to permanent housing.

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. Partners In Care 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.

Partners In Care urges the Legislature to support the intent of this bill. Thank you for hearing this bill and for your support.



HAWAII CATHOLIC CONFERENCE
6301 Pali Highway
Kaneohe, HI 96744-5224

Email to: HSGTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov
Hearing on: March 16, 2011 @ 9:30 a.m.
Conference Room #325

DATE: March 15, 2011

TO: House Committee on Housing House Committee on Water, Land & Ocean Resources
Rep. Rida Cabanilla, Chair Rep. Jerry Chang, Chair
Rep. Pono Chong, Vice Chair Rep. Sharon Har, Vice Chair

FROM: Walter Yoshimitsu, Executive Director

RE: Strong Support SB 904 SD2 Relating to the Homeless

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this measure. I am Walter Yoshimitsu, **representing the Hawaii Catholic Conference**. The Hawaii Catholic Conference is the public policy voice for the Roman Catholic Church in the State of Hawaii, under the leadership of Bishop Larry Silva.

We support this bill that requires the department of human services to locate suitable properties for a housing first program to implement affordable rental housing projects, including an initial housing first single-resident occupancy affordable rental housing model project site in an urban core. As written, the bill requires the department of human services to locate suitable properties for a housing first program to implement affordable rental housing projects, including an initial housing first single-resident occupancy affordable rental housing model project site in an urban core.

The Hawaii Catholic Conference is committed to reducing poverty now and for the future. The provision of safe and affordable housing is an important part of any such effort. Often support services are necessary to enable an individual to make the transition from homelessness to a stable housing situation possible. Having said that, we acknowledge and recognize that the fiscal situation in our State and country is serious and that cuts in the budget are being made in light of these challenging facts.

The teaching of the church is clear on this issue: "...there is a growing awareness of the exalted dignity proper to the human person, since he stands above all things, and his rights and duties are universal and inviolable. Therefore, there must be made available to all men everything necessary for leading a life truly human, such as food, clothing, and shelter; the right to choose a state of life freely and to found a family, the right to education, to employment, to a good reputation, to respect, to appropriate information, to activity in accord with the upright norm of one's own conscience, to protection of privacy and rightful freedom even in matters religious." Gaudium Et Spes (5):

Based on our commitment to the dignity of the human person and to helping the least among us, we strongly support these measures. These bills, if passed, will move us in the right direction to end homelessness in Hawaii. Along with our community partners, Catholic Charities Hawaii, Office for Social Ministry and the Diocesan Office for Affordable Housing, we strongly urge your support. We leave the technicalities of the bills to their expertise. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

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Email to: HSGTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov
Hearing on: March 16, 2011 @ 9:30 a.m.
Conference Room #325

DATE: March 15, 2011

TO: House Committee on Housing House Committee on Water, Land & Ocean Resources
Rep. Rida Cabanilla, Chair Rep. Jerry Chang, Chair
Rep. Pono Chong, Vice Chair Rep. Sharon Har, Vice Chair

FROM: Allen Cardines, Jr., Executive Director

RE: Strong Support for SB 904 SD 2 Relating to Homeless

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this measure. I am Allen Cardines, representing the Hawaii Family Forum. Hawaii Family Forum is a non-profit, pro-family education organization committed to preserving and strengthening families in Hawaii, representing a network of various Christian Churches and denominations.

The Hawaii Family Forum is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that was founded in 1997 by a group of leaders in the community that were (and are) deeply disturbed by the appearance of hundreds of Hawaii residents living on the streets of our beautiful state. Although we are not a social service provider, we are an educational organization that will continue to help educate people in our faith-based communities about the needs of our brothers and sisters across the state who need housing assistance.

Over the last few years, we have committed ourselves to finding community partners who believe there is a permanent solution to homelessness. Our faith-based, private and public sector partners across the state have organized to work together to provide access to affordable housing, easier access to services, and create a workable plan that will one day end homelessness in Hawaii.

We believe that there are many ways to help solve the housing crisis in Hawaii. These are some of the things we strongly support:

- Ongoing collaboration with an entire network of public, private and faith-based organizations that unite around the goal of ending homelessness. No one single organization can do it by themselves. This is OUR Hawaii and we should all work together.
- Providing access to housing for low-income families, those mentally challenged, the elderly and the disabled.
- And finally, continued funding for these essential programs and offices that go to the very heart of the issue. This includes funding for prevention and crisis response programs that solve people's unique housing issues preferably before they become homeless.

SB 904 SD2 can help accomplish these goals. For that reason, we support passage of this bill.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.