

LATE TESTIMONY



PARTNERS IN CARE
Oahu's Coalition of Homeless Providers

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

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 912, SD2 HD1: RELATING TO HOUSING

TO: Representative Marcus Oshiro, Chair, Representative Marilyn Lee, Vice Chair,
Committee on Finance

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

Hearing: **Wednesday 3/30/11; 11:00 AM; Room 308**

Chair Oshiro, Vice Chair Lee, and Members of the Committee on Finance,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 912, SD2 HD1, which funds the housing placement program, creates new affordable housing and improves existing affordable housing units, and launches a Housing First initiative. Partners In Care strongly supports this bill, with two important suggestions.

Suggestions:

1. Fund the Housing Placement Program at \$2 million per year.
2. Designate that funding to the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation would be **designated to the Rental Housing Trust Fund. We support a one-time appropriation of \$20 million to this program to create affordable rental housing.**

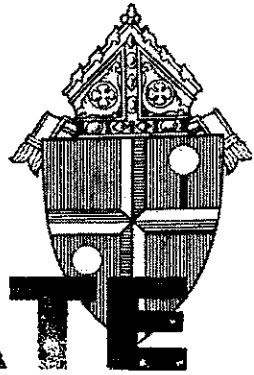
This bill would create an overall plan to address both prevention of homelessness and solutions to the very tough issue of the chronic homeless via the Housing first model. Creation of affordable rental housing must also be a key element to provide long-term solutions.

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. Our clients' success relies on their ability to locate adequate and affordable housing. Partners In Care urges the Legislature to consider the above suggestions along with our firm endorsement of SB912.

Thank you for your time and your support.

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE STATE OF HAWAII

St. Stephen's Diocesan Center of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Honolulu
6301 Pali Highway, Kaneohe, HI 96744 • Phone: (808) 203-6718



Testimony of Kent Anderson
March 30, 2011, 11:00 am; Conference Room 308
Support for SB 912, SD2, HD1

Good Morning Committee Chair Oshiro, Vice Chair Lee, and Members of the Committee on Finance.
Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of **SB 912, SD2, HD1.**

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.

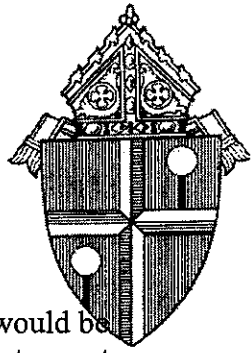
We understand that times are tough right now; therefore, we must step forward to assist those most in need. Affordable housing is a basic need for our entire Ohana. It helps provide the basis of a healthy workforce, healthy children, healthy kupuna, and healthy economy. We ask that you prioritize your 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.

SB912, SD2, HD1 will make a positive impact in reducing homelessness. HOPE Services, Inc. has been operating a very successful landlord liaison project for several years on the Big Island called Tenant Solutions. To date they have helped secure dozens of landlords who have added over 500 affordable rentals to the Big Island's affordable housing inventory. Hundreds of landlords statewide will be willing to dedicate their properties to low-income tenants with proper guidance and support specific to their needs. By increasing our affordable housing stock and reducing the flow of people falling into homelessness, other services can more efficiently assist the homeless to transition back to permanent housing. Whereas we support this bill, we'd like to suggest the following amendments:

1. Fund the Housing Placement Program at \$2 Million/year for prevention of homelessness.

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2. Designate that funding to the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation would be designated to the Rental Housing Trust Fund. We support \$20 million for this program to create affordable rental housing.

Please support SB912, SD2, HD1 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 the Office of Affordable Housing may be of assistance.