



**STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS**

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April 12, 2011

To: The Honorable John Mizuno  
Date: Thursday, March 14, 2011  
Time: 10:00 a.m.  
Place: Conference Room 329, State Capitol  
From: Mila Kaahanui, Executive Director  
Office of Community Services  
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations

**TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT**

**Re: SCR 150/SR90- Supporting the Community Services Block Grant program and strongly opposing budget cuts proposed by the President of the United States and members of the United States Congress.**

Good Afternoon Chair Mizuno, Vice-Chair Jordan and members of the committees, my name is Mila Kaahanui, Executive Director for the Office of Community Services (OCS) in the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations. OCS serves the state as the coordinating office for Low-income Persons, Immigrants, and Refugees, as well as the administrator of the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG). We appreciate the opportunity to testify in strong support of this measure.

We thank you for your consideration of this resolution to the members of Congress and the President supporting this important program. As you have no doubt heard from Community Action Agencies (CAA's) statewide, the CSBG program allows these agencies and other organizations to effectively tailor poverty-reduction programs for the unique needs of our State.

In addition to the history of the CSBG program, we would like to take this opportunity to augment your understanding of this program in OCS. This is perhaps best represented by a phrase from the original name of the program, "Economic Opportunity." In OCS CSBG, through leveraging of administrative funds, allows us to run Federal programs complimentary to the goal of economic self-security. For example, the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP), bringing free solar water heaters and other energy efficiency measures at no charge to qualified, low-income persons, the Senior Farmer's Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP), a program providing Seniors in our community fresh produce to augment their diets, The Emergency Food

Assistance Program (TEFAP), a program purchasing surplus agricultural commodities through the USDA for distribution through our neighborhood Food Banks, and the Employment Core and Creation Services for Refugees, a program providing Job Assistance and Entrepreneurship opportunities for qualified refugees. These are all worthy programs offered at no charge and staffed in whole or part by CSBG funds.

Additionally, CSBG funds allow OCS to fund necessary services in the community that effectively align with the Results-Oriented Management Accountability (ROMA) goals of CSBG. Over many years, OCS has had the privilege of working with countless agencies of varying sizes, all with ideas that attack the ongoing challenge of economic self-sufficiency and security in meaningful ways. OCS staff, funded by CSBG, write grants for programs that align with our mission, and manage these programs to ensure concrete deliverables and accountability to the Federal Government and other funding agencies.

Outside of OCS our partner agencies, the Community Action Agencies (CAA's) receive CSBG funds, which they use in business development training, micro-loan programs, social entrepreneurship, and other worthwhile programs. Since each CAA is unique, we will defer to their individual testimonies to describe their programs.

We thank you again for the opportunity to provide testimony and share the importance of this often overlooked grant, and will be available for questions should the committee need clarification on an any matter.

TESTIMONY OF  
ROBERT N.E. PIPER, ESQ., EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
HONOLULU COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM, INC.  
BEFORE THE  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES  
THURSDAY, APRIL 14, 2011  
CONF. RM. 329, STATE CAPITOL BLDG.

Good morning, Chair Mizuno, Vice Chair Jordan, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of Honolulu Community Action Program, Inc. (HCAP), the designated community action agency for the island of Oahu, I wish to express our appreciation to the Committee for considering SCR 150 SD 1, a measure supporting the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) program in Hawaii and opposing proposed budget cuts to the program.

The primary purpose of the CSBG program in Hawaii and throughout the nation is to address and alleviate the causes and conditions of poverty. For over four decades, Hawaii's community action agencies, including HCAP, Hawaii County Economic Opportunity Council, Maui Economic Opportunity, and Kauai Economic Opportunity, have been at the forefront of community-level efforts to fulfill the CSBG mission statewide. Our forty-five years of continuous presence and work in our respective communities have allowed us to develop trust and strong working relationships with community partners and the populations we are tasked to serve.

Federal CSBG funding allows community action agencies to provide and support a wide range of programs and services designed to assist families move towards self-sufficiency. HCAP's CSBG-supported programs include, but are not limited to, quality pre-school education through Head Start; transitional housing for homeless adults; asset-building tax preparation assistance for low-income working families; cost-saving energy efficiency devices, home energy audits, and conservation education through Weatherization Assistance Programs; a competency-based high school diploma curriculum for at-risk youth; mentoring for children of prisoners; employment training and placement for senior citizens; and emergency utility assistance or food assistance through the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance and Emergency Food Programs. Last year, with CSBG support, HCAP served over 18,000 individuals and 12,000 families in Oahu.

HCAP and its sister community action agencies are proud of our many years of service, and we remain committed to continuing our work on behalf of low-income families throughout the state. Finally, we are especially grateful for your recognition of the work we do, and we truly appreciate the strong expression of support as contained in the resolution before the Committee this morning.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SCR 150, SD1/ SSCR 1045: RELATING  
SUPPORTING THE COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM AND  
STRONGLY OPPOSING BUDGET CUTS PROPOSED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE  
UNITED STATES AND MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS**

**TO:** Representative John Mizuno, Chair; Representative Jo Jordan, Vice  
Chair, and Members, Committee on Human Services

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

**Hearing: Thursday, 4/14/11; 10:00 a.m.; CR 329**

Chair Mizuno, Vice Chair Jordan, and Members of the House Committee on Human  
Services:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on SCR 15, which opposed  
federal budget cuts to the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. I am  
Betty Lou Larson, Legislative Liaison for housing and homelessness issues at Catholic  
Charities Hawaii. Catholic Charities Hawaii strongly supports this resolution.

The federal funds that are blocked granted to the City and County of Honolulu as well  
as to the other Hawaii counties are utilized for important community services and  
facilities. The 10% of the funds which are designated for social services provide critical  
gap funding for many programs ranging from keeping frail seniors in the community to  
helping kids stay out of gangs and prevent crime.

CDBG also provides gap funding to build or renovate key community facilities to service  
the public. Affordable housing can be built with these funds, which is direly needed in  
Hawaii. The competition for these funds is already intense. There are many  
applications for these CDBG funds and most cannot be funded even at the current level  
of funding. If funding is reduced, this will have a severe impact on our community.

We urge you to support this resolution and to support the CDBG program which funds  
critical needs that impact so many of our state's residents.



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**Sent:** Tuesday, April 12, 2011 12:00 PM  
**To:** HUS testimony  
**Cc:** c\_pomponio@yahoo.com  
**Subject:** Testimony for SCR150 on 4/14/2011 10:00:00 AM

Testimony for HUS 4/14/2011 10:00:00 AM SCR150

Conference room: 329  
Testifier position: comments only  
Testifier will be present: No  
Submitted by: Cathleen Pomponio  
Organization: Individual  
Address:  
Phone:  
E-mail: [c\\_pomponio@yahoo.com](mailto:c_pomponio@yahoo.com)  
Submitted on: 4/12/2011

Comments:

Sirs:

I have been following the various reports concerning cuts to budgets and so forth, as well as submissions by the Senate that include cutting off constituents on Social Security, including those with disabilities. I am opposed to this measure as it causes grievous harm to individuals who are least able to defend themselves. I feel we are overly conservative and that this 'new' attitude is completely contrary to the beliefs of our country, whose basic aim is to give succor to those in need. At this time in Hawaii, I see many people who are living on the edge of society, this is not the sort of edge we want to see. Elderly people, people in wheelchairs and people recently discharged from clinics and hospitals with chronic health problems need to be able to count on the system that was put in place by good people. We should not try to counter those good measures that were carefully crafted to counter the growth of fascism during World War Two. Benefits are not excessive. Retirees are receiving just enough to cover their very basic needs such as food, clothing, housing costs and other items that consumers normally buy on a daily basis. Their funding has come from years of work in which they put their tax dollars into the system and is paid out to them from their home state budget. I consider myself to be budget conscious and spend very little myself. I make use of the health system very little, for eyeglasses and a dental checkup once in a while. But, I never begrudged those people who needed more when I worked nearly 40 years. I felt my tax dollars were well spent and want to continue to feel that way about our country. Please do not allow a few small minded people to change our system. Before we spend money on building a rocket system to send a few spoiled brats into space, before we build a railway system that shows little promise for many years, before we show our true bigoted colors to the world. Put Americans first, keep our Elders and our disabled safe and secure in this land of plenty.