

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR



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DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
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Statement of
Hakim Ouansafi
Hawaii Public Housing Authority
Before the

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

February 8, 2012 9:10 A.M.
Room 325, Hawaii State Capitol

In consideration of
House Bill No. 2143
Relating to Public Housing

Honorable Chair and Members of the House Committee on Housing, thank you for the opportunity to provide you with comments regarding House Bill No. 2143, relating to public housing.

The Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) supports enactment of this measure which would amend Section 356D-6, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), to provide the HPHA Resident Advisory Board (RAB) with more flexibility in nominating the resident member of the Board of Directors.

When a vacancy occurs for the resident member seat on the HPHA Board of Directors, Section 356D-6, HRS, requires the RAB to develop a list of interested, qualified individuals for consideration by the Governor for appointment to the Board. The current statutory section requires the RAB to provide the names of five individuals. In situations where there are not five interested individuals, the RAB is unable to provide a list to the Governor for consideration, which can cause the resident member seat on the Board of Directors to remain vacant for extended periods.

This, in turn, deprives the residents of their voice on the Board of Directors and endangers the receipt of Federal funds since the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires the Board of Directors to have a resident member. By amending the statute section to allow the RAB to submit a list of at least three but no more than five names to the Governor, the RAB is better positioned to provide the most serious, qualified, and interested candidates while still providing a diverse selection for the Governor's consideration. This statutory amendment has been requested specifically by the RAB to improve the fulfillment of their statutory functions.

The HPHA appreciates the opportunity to provide the House Committee on Housing with the agency's position regarding H.B. No. 2143. We respectfully request the Committee to pass this measure favorably, and we thank you very much for your dedicated support.