

# hawaii family forum

Email to: [FINTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:FINTestimony@Capitol.hawaii.gov)  
Hearing on: February 24, 2011 @ 1:30 p.m.  
Conference Room # 308

**DATE:** February 22, 2011

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

**FROM:** Allen Cardines, Jr., Executive Director

**RE:** Strong Support for HB 898 HD 1 Relating to Housing Policy

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony on this important bill. 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 Housing First model has been very successful on the Mainland. It has a good track record in assisting homeless people find access to permanent housing and then aid them in providing the services they need to keep them in housing while providing successful transition off the streets. We support this measure, but along with our community partners, suggest that you change the lapse date to allow time to implement this new concept in Hawaii.

Although we are not a social service provider, we are an educational organization that will continue to 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.

HB 898 HD1 can help accomplish these goals. For that reason, we support passage of this bill.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



**HAWAII CATHOLIC CONFERENCE**

6301 Pali Highway  
Kaneohe, HI 96744-5224

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**DATE:** February 22, 2011

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

**FROM:** Walter Yoshimitsu, Executive Director

**RE:** Support for HB 898 HD 1 | RELATING TO HOUSING POLICY

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify, 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.

The Housing First model has been very successful in many areas of the Mainland. It has a good track record in assisting homeless people access to permanent housing and then aid in providing the services needed to keep them in housing and successful transition off the streets. We support this measure but suggest that you change the lapse date to allow time to implement this new concept in Hawaii.

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 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.



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 898, HD1: Relating to Housing Policy**

TO: Representative Marcus R. Oshiro, Chair; Representative Marilyn B Lee, Vice Chair, and Members, Committee on Finance

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

**Hearing: Thursday, 2/24/11; 1:30 pm; CR 308**

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 898, HD1, which extends the lapse date of funds appropriated from the emergency and budget reserve fund ("Rainy Day Fund") for the housing first pilot program to December 31, 2012. Catholic Charities Hawaii strongly supports this bill. .

With the delay in the release of these funds, more time is needed to begin the implementation of this new concept in Hawaii. The Housing First model has been very successful in many areas of the Mainland. It has 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 include medical costs for ER visits and hospitalizations, substance abuse treatments, social services including outreach to the homeless, etc.)

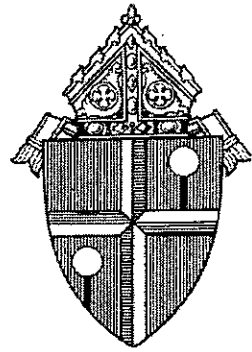
This is an important bill to implement the Housing First model in Hawaii. We urge your support for this innovative strategy.

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.



# 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  
February 24, 2011, 1:30pm; Conference Room 308  
Support for HB 898, HD1

Good Afternoon Committee Chair Marcus R.Oshiro, Vice-Chair Marilyn B Lee, and members of the Committee on Finance. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of **HB 898**.

My name is Kent Anderson, and I am here 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.

HB898 will make a positive impact in reducing homelessness. Housing First has been proven to effectively house chronically homeless individuals- the most difficult and costly subpopulation to serve. Partners in Care, 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. Please support HB898 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](mailto:kentanderson@rcchawaii.org) or by phone at 808-203-6718 if the Office of Affordable Housing may be of assistance.



PARTNERS IN CARE  
Oahu's Coalition of Homeless Providers

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

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**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 898: EXTENDING THE LAPSE DATE ON FUNDS FROM THE EMERGENCY AND BUDGET RESERVE FOR HOUSING FIRST PILOT PROJECT**

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

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

Hearing: Thursday, 2/24 1:30 pm, Room 308

Chair Oshiro, Vice Chair Lee and Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 898 which extends the lapse date of funds appropriated from the emergency and budget reserve fund for the housing first pilot program to December 31, 2011. Partners In Care supports this bill with the caveat that the new lapse date is **extended to June 30, 2012**. This date is selected to coincide with other concurrent legislation that proposes an extension of the deadline.

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. However, more time is needed to take advantage of the opportunity to implement the Housing First model. Thank you for hearing this bill and for your support.

# Helping Hands Hawai'i

Thursday, February 24, 2011

1:30 p.m.

Conference Room 308

To: Rep. Marcus Oshiro, Chair  
Rep. Marilyn Lee, Vice-Chair  
House Committee on Finance

From: Helping Hands Hawaii – Written Testimony Only

Re: **HB898 HD1, RELATING TO HOUSING POLICY.**

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We testify in *strong support* of HB898 HD1, RELATING TO HOUSING POLICY.

Helping Hands Hawaii is a 501(c)(3) non-profit social service agency, which was incorporated in 1974. HHH administers a variety of Behavioral Health and Human Services programs, which assist over 37,000 individuals and households each year.

Both our Behavioral Health and Human Services programs provide a wide range of services intended to prevent homelessness in Hawaii. Our agency provides case management services for adults with serious and persistent mental illness, including many who are currently homeless, and also provide case management specifically for Mental Health Kokua's Safe Haven Project in Chinatown. In addition, our agency also offers emergency financial assistance to help individuals who are homeless to obtain and maintain long-term housing.

HHH strongly supports HB898 HD1 and feels that it is critical that funding appropriated for the Housing First Project in Hawaii does not lapse. Housing First has been proven effective in other parts of the nation in addressing the needs of the chronically homeless population. We believe that this model will help to make a difference in Hawaii as well.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.