

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR



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LATE TESTIMONY

Statement of
Hakim Ouansafi
Hawaii Public Housing Authority
Before the

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

March 21, 2012 9:00 A.M.
Room 325, Hawaii State Capitol

In consideration of
House Concurrent Resolution 89
Urging Hawaii Public Housing Authority to Apply for
A Choice Neighborhoods Grant

Honorable Chair and Members of the House Committee on Housing, thank you for the opportunity to provide you with comments regarding House Concurrent Resolution 89, urging the Hawaii Public Housing Authority to apply for a Choice Neighborhoods grant.

The Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) respectfully opposes this measure because we are already in the process of applying for a Choice Neighborhood Planning grant, and thus this measure is unnecessary. As mentioned in the resolution, the HPHA, as the sole public housing authority (PHA) for the State of Hawaii, is among those considered eligible applicants for the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative (CNI) family of grants, which include both implementation and planning grants. Under the 2012 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA), eligibility was expanded to include PHAs, local governments, tribal entities, nonprofits, and for-profit developers that apply jointly with a public entity. Out of the \$110,000,000 being made available this year for implementation grants, HUD anticipates making only four to five awards of approximately \$30,000,000 to housing authorities and other eligible applicants. As such, an application for this grant program is getting more competitive every year.

Under the FY 2011 NOFA, the HPHA submitted an application that was among 71 applicants that met the threshold criteria for a CNI Planning grant. Unfortunately, due to federal fiscal constraints, only thirteen planning grants were awarded. Without receiving this vital funding, the HPHA has been unable to undertake the necessary steps to develop the required Transformation Plan that supports the application for an implementation grant. HUD anticipates awarding as many as twenty planning grants under the FY 2012 NOFA. Therefore, the HPHA is focusing efforts on obtaining a

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Planning Grant to develop a Transformation Plan that will be submitted for a full implementation grant.

The HPHA appreciates the opportunity to provide the House Committee on Housing with the agency's comments opposing H.C.R. 89. We thank you very much for your dedicated support.