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NAMI Hawaii State

Hawaii's Voice on Mental Illness
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Testimony in Support of SB2118 RELATING TO THE HOMELESS

Committees on Human Services and Health
Monday, February 6, 2012 3 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

Aloha Senators,

The National Alliance on Mental Illness, Hawaii State Chapter, supports this bill which would provide much needed funding for mental health services, clean and sober housing and the Rental Housing Trust Fund.

Conditions relating to mental illness, alcohol and drugs and homelessness are often found together. People in mental pain and confusion often treat their illness through alcohol and street drugs if they do not receive medications through a doctor. Due to the huge cuts to mental health services 3 years ago we are seeing many more people out on the streets with these co-occurring illnesses. Clean and sober housing provides the stable housing that helps many to be able to break the cycle.

The need for a triage center has been discussed by homeless service providers for years. It is a key missing program needed to help certain people with mental illnesses or substance addictions to stay out of hospitals and prisons and to begin the path to wellness. Please support this bill and the triage center pilot program.

Mahalo

Kathleen Hasegawa
Executive Director