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Hawaii State

Hawaii's Voice on Mental Illness
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Testimony in Support of SB2319 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 Rental Housing Trust Fund, as the key mechanism to build affordable and sometimes special needs housing, is the most effective tool in our tool box to create affordable housing in Hawaii. Thank you for providing funding to the Rental Housing Trust Fund.

In addition to these vital programs funding is needed for homeless prevention, rental assistance and also matching funds for shelter plus care grants which bring much needed federal money to Hawaii.

Mahalo for supporting these bills.

Kathleen Hasegawa
Executive Director