

LATE

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR



PATRICIA MCMANAMAN
INTERIM DIRECTOR
PANKAJ BHANOT
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

February 15, 2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services

The Honorable Clayton Hee, Chair
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

FROM: Patricia McManaman, Interim Director

SUBJECT: **S.B. 896 – RELATING TO THE HOMELESS**

Hearing: Tuesday, February 15, 2011; 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purpose of S.B. 896 is to establish a homeless job training program to be managed by the Department of Human Services.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services supports the intent of this bill as it includes initiatives supportive of our goals and objectives but we are concerned about the cost implications generated by this proposal and the impacts it may have to the priorities in the Executive Biennium Budget.

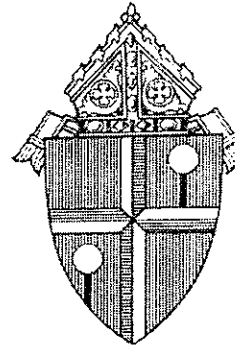
Currently, the statewide network of homeless provider agencies access job readiness and other employment programs offered through the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, the Counties and other agencies fostering employment. The collaboration is active and it works. The homeless providers support employment efforts as the path to housing stability and economic independence. However, the

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development of job training programs within the Homeless Programs service delivery is outside the area of expertise of Homeless Programs Office staff.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this bill.

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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 15, 2011, 1:15pm; Conference Room 016
Support for SB 896

Good Afternoon Committee Chairs Suzanne Chun Oakland, Clayton Hee, and members of the Committee on Human Services and Committee on Judiciary and Labor. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of **SB 896**.

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.

SB896 will make a positive impact in reducing homelessness. Employment assistance is consistently listed as one of the top needs of homeless individuals and families. The proposed program will provide the tools and experience to help homeless individuals help themselves. We are particularly excited about the housing component that provides needed stability to ensure that assisted individuals continue to be successful long after they leave the program. Please support SB896 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 or by phone at 808-203-6718 if we may be of assistance.

Kanani Kaaiawahia Bulawan

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TESTIMONY IN STRONG SUPPORT OF SB 896: RELATING TO THE HOMELESS

TO: Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair, Senator Les Ihara, Vice Chair,
and Members, Committee on Human Services

Senator Clayton Hee, Chair, Senator Shimabukuro, Vice Chair, and
members, Committee on Judiciary and Labor

FROM: KananiKaaiawahia Bulawan.

Hearing: Tuesday, 2/15/11; 1:15 p.m.; CR 016

Aloha and good afternoon, Chairs, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committees on
Human Services and Judiciary and Labor:

My name is KananiKaaiawahia Bulawan, I'm a resident of Waianae and the retired
executive director for Waianae Community Outreach a non-profit organization serving
the homeless population, both unsheltered on the Leeward Coast and sheltered in the
Emergency shelter located in Kalaeloa.

I'm in **STRONG SUPPORT of SB896**. This makes sense in terms of reaching the goal
of securing permanent housing for the homeless.

Many of the individuals that come into the shelters with their families lack job-skills and
work experience. Most are unemployed or under-employed, challenged with
dependable child-care, and have very low confidence in themselves. They want to earn
their keep, want to be responsible for making better choices but find the skills they lack
makes the difference between building self-awareness and building assets that will
encourage securing housing.

This measure will give them the opportunity to work for what they have and put away
what they need to transition and secure housing. In addition, this allows them the job-
skills, work experience and the pride of being able to "give-back" to the community by
contributing to public projects. This program works as it can be demonstrated by
Waianae Community Outreach and the members who are currently participating in the
shelter services. An account is established, they deposit a minimum of \$50.00 up to
40% of their net income, and this is used for transitional purposes only.

I commend Senator Chun-Oakland and all of you for your commitment in making a life-
long difference to families experiencing homelessness and giving them the opportunity
to breaking this cycle.

Mahalo for all you do and who you all are.