

SB 900



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February 24, 2011

The Honorable David Y. Ige, Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
State Capitol, Room 211
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: S.B. 900, S.D. 1, Relating to Homelessness

DECISION MAKING: Friday, February 25, 2011, at 9:00 a.m.

Aloha Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani and Members of the Committee:

I am Myoung Oh, Government Affairs Director, submitting comments on behalf of the Hawai'i Association of REALTORS® ("HAR"), the voice of real estate and its 8,500 members. HAR **supports** S.B. 900, S.D. 1, establishing the Hawai'i Interagency Council on Homelessness under the Department of Human Services.

There are approximately 6,000 homeless living in Hawai'i, and it is of serious concern to many communities and residents throughout this State. Furthermore, the high cost of housing and living, here in the islands, may make it difficult for struggling families trying to make ends meet to be able to afford the opportunity to own, or even rent a home.

HAR has historically supported mechanisms to help increase the supply of low and moderate income affordable rental housing, such as the Rental Housing Trust Fund Program, which helps provide these opportunities.

HAR is supportive of the endeavor to create a Hawai'i Interagency Council. Moreover, HAR looks forward to assisting with the formation and coordination of a unified plan to help address homelessness in all counties, and assist in facilitating the acquisition of federal funding for homeless programs.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit comments.





CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

COMMENTS (with Amendments) for SB 900 SD1: Relating to Homelessness

TO: Senator David Ige, Chair, Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair, and Members, Committee on Ways and Means

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

Hearing: Friday, 2/25/11; 9:00 a.m.; CR 211

Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on SB 900 SD1, which would establish the Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness. I am Betty Lou Larson, Legislative Liaison for housing and homeless issues at Catholic Charities Hawaii. Catholic Charities Hawaii supports the intent of this bill, with the following amendments:

Suggested Amendments:

1. Add the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness to the list of members.
2. The Council should be designated to report to the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness, and the Coordinator should report to the legislature.
3. Delete funding for administrative expenses.

The newly appointed Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness has been tasked by the Governor to bring together the government entities that are listed in the bill, as well as the providers represented by the continuum of care collaborations across the state, businesses and others concerned about homelessness. The Coordinator should be the lead facilitator for this new Council and report to the Governor and Legislature.

All parts of our community need to be involved to resolve this sometimes overwhelming social problem. This Council will create one important process to form partnerships and linkages to achieve effective outcomes. It is not the only one, since business and other groups need to be involved but in other perhaps more informal ways.

We urge the Legislature to delete the funding for administrative purposes. With very limited funds this year, we urge that the scarce funding available should focus on maintaining the direct services of homeless programs. The purposes of this Council can be achieved without additional funding being appropriated for the administrative expenses of this Council.

Thank you for hearing our testimony and especially for your concern and your support to end the crisis in homelessness. In these difficult economic times, we appreciate your dedication to continue to seek solutions to the homeless problems of our State.



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applying the laws and regulations relating to the environmental review process as it applies to a particular proposed action. Even in that function, the OEQC's legal role and powers are very limited. Most of OEQC's processing of environmental review documents is routine and should not generate significant operating costs.

Other State and county agencies in Hawai'i face budgetary constraints similar to those faced by the OEQC. The imposition of filing fees is neither necessary nor justified. For the reasons indicated herein, DDC respectfully **opposes** SB699 SD1.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Very truly yours,



Collins Lam, P.E.
Director

CDL:WB:hm



PARTNERS IN CARE
Oahu's Coalition of Homeless Providers

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

COMMENTS IN SUPPORT OF SB 900: ESTABLISHING THE HAWAII INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS

TO: Senator David Ige, Chair, Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair, and Members, Committee on Ways And Means

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

Hearing: **FRIDAY, 2/25/11; 9:00 AM; Room 211**

Dear Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Ways And Means Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on SB 900 which establishes the Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness and makes an appropriation for administrative expenses. Partners In Care supports the intent of this bill on the condition that no funds are appropriated for this purpose.

More coordination among entities is needed to improve the delivery of homeless services in our state. 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. It is among the entities that would be required to sit on a Hawaii Interagency Council. The U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness has recommended that the States establish similar bodies by legislative action or executive order, or both. The recent appointment by the Governor of Mr. Marc Alexander as the state Coordinator on Homelessness has helped to drive the discussion in the right direction. We applaud the state government's efforts to address the problem of homelessness. However, it is important that we do not misuse valuable funds in the pursuit of this ideal. Monies for current homeless programs must not be diverted to meet the needs of such a body.

Partners In Care suggests that the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness be appointed to this body. We urge the Legislature to support the intent of this bill on the condition that funds are not diverted from other programs to meet the costs of a state Interagency Council.

Thank you for hearing this bill and for your support.