

NEIL ABERCROMBIE  
GOVERNOR



DENISE M. WISE  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY  
1002 NORTH SCHOOL STREET  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

BARBARA E. ARASHIRO  
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

Statement of  
**Denise M. Wise**  
Hawaii Public Housing Authority  
Before the

**SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES**

February 3, 2011 1:15 P.M.  
Room 016, Hawaii State Capitol

In consideration of  
**S.B. 912**  
**RELATING TO HOUSING**

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Madam Chair and Members of the Senate Committee on Human Services, thank you for the opportunity to provide you with **comments** regarding Senate Bill 911, relating to intoxicating liquors.

The Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) respectfully request the Committee to **amend this** measure to refer appropriation of funds made to the Department of Human Services (DHS). Pursuant to Act 89 of the 2010 Hawaii Session Laws, the Homeless Programs Section was transferred from HPHA to the Benefit, Employment, and Support Services Division (BESSD) of DHS effective July 1, 2010. The Homeless Programs Section currently manages a Housing Placement program which provides landlord liaison services.

The HPHA appreciates the opportunity to provide the Senate Committee on Human Services with the agency's position regarding S.B. 912. We respectfully request the Committee to amend this measure appropriately.

## Aloha United Way

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Aloha United Way

February 1, 2011

Senate Committee on Human Services  
Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair  
Thursday, February 3, 2011 at 1:15 P.M.  
Conference Room 016

### **SB 912: Relating to Housing: Written Testimony in Support**

Dear Chair Chun Oakland, Vice Chair Ihara and Committee Members:

Aloha United Way **strongly encourages your favorable consideration** of SB 912 which establishes a landlord liaison program within the Hawaii Public Housing Authority.

The landlord liaison program is modeled after a similar project in Seattle and encourages landlords to make rental properties more available to low-income families by providing incentives and guarantees to landlords that lower their normal screening standards for potential renters. The program includes continuing support to the tenants and provides a rapid response communication link for the landlord to quickly address problems.

The lack of affordable rentals is one of the key factors in Hawaii's homeless problem. Solving the homeless problem will require a comprehensive set of solutions; however, it is clear that proving adequate numbers of affordable housing units is one of the key steps.

SB 912 provides an excellent start on a comprehensive set of programs that will help us to address the homeless problem. Aloha United Way stands ready to assist in the implementation of the landlord liaison project by offering the services of Aloha United Way 211 as the communications hub for the project. Aloha United Way strongly encourages favorable consideration of this important legislation.

Sincerely,



**Susan Doyle**  
President & Chief Professional Officer

**GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER. LIVE UNITED.**

February 2, 2011

**The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair**  
Senate Committee on Human Services  
State Capitol, Room 016  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

**RE: S.B. 912 Relating to Housing**

**HEARING: Thursday, February 3, 2011 at 1:15 p.m.**

Aloha Chair Chun Oakland, Vice Chair Les Ihara, Jr. and Members of the Committee:

I am Myoung Oh, Government Affairs Director, here to testify on behalf of the Hawai'i Association of REALTORS® ("HAR"), the voice of real estate and its 8,500 members in Hawai'i. HAR supports S.B. 912 which appropriates funds for the creation of a landlord liaison project.

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 believes that the landlord liaison project would help to facilitate a balanced approach between homeless clients and landlords through the creation of incentives for landlords to relax their screening criteria.

Lastly, by helping to increase the availability of rental housing for persons who face obstacles in moving from homelessness to permanent housing and persons with lower incomes who need to find affordable rental housing, HAR believes that the landlord liaison project is a creative solution to address the homeless issue in our State.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

**TESTIMONY (with Amendment) IN SUPPORT OF SB 912: Relating to Housing**

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

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

**Hearing: Thursday, 2/3/11; 1:15 p.m.; CR 016**

Chair Chun Oakland, Vice Chair Ihara, and Members of the Committee on Human Services:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 912, which would provide funding for a landlord liaison project. Catholic Charities Hawaii strongly supports this bill with one amendment:

Suggested Amendment-Section 2, lines 9-10: The sums appropriated shall be expended by the Department of Human Services/Homeless Programs Office (HPO). This is suggested since a landlord liaison project could build upon the Housing Placement Programs which are already being funded by the Homeless Programs Office, utilizing TANF funds. HPO has also administered federal ARRA funds for the Homeless Prevention Rapid-rehousing Program (HPRP). Approximately \$6 Million dollars has been received for this State-wide program over the past 2 years. However, these federal funds end 8/31/11 and no further funding is expected. The great reduction in funding to prevent homelessness can further exacerbate homelessness in Hawaii.

Catholic Charities Hawaii has been operating the Housing Placement Program for 6 years. In FY 10, 240 families were assisted to prevent homelessness. A major component in the ongoing success of this program has been the relationships developed with landlords. Catholic Charities Hawaii now works with many landlords who will take a risk on one of our clients, knowing that case management and other services can be provided to assist the families to successfully remain in housing. Landlord liaison is key to linking people to permanent housing. In the first year of its HPRP funding, Catholic Charities Hawaii implemented the program and prevented homelessness for 308 persons in 116 households. These programs are highly successful.

Unfortunately, before the federal funds for HPRP, many people could not be assisted since they did not have children or meet the income eligibility for TANF. With funding for a landlord liaison project, others facing homelessness could also be assisted. **We urge your support for \$2 million dollars per year for landlord liaison services to prevent homelessness.** By reducing the flow of people falling into homelessness, other services can then assist the homeless to transition back to permanent housing.





**HAWAII CATHOLIC CONFERENCE**

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Hearing on: February 3, 2011 @ 1:15 p.m.

Conference Room #016

**DATE:** February 3, 2011

**TO:** Senate Committee on Human Services  
Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair  
Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair

**FROM:** Walter Yoshimitsu, Executive Director

**RE:** Strong Support for SB 897 Relating to Homelessness  
Strong Support SB 904 Relating to the Homeless  
Strong Support SB 912 Relating to Housing

Honorable Chairs and members of the Senate Committee on Human Services, I am Walter Yoshimitsu, **representing the Hawaii Catholic Conference**. The Hawaii Catholic Conference is the public policy voice for the Roman Catholic Church in the State of Hawaii, which under the leadership of Bishop Larry Silva, represents over 200,000 Catholics in Hawaii.

The Hawaii Catholic Conference is committed to reducing poverty now and for the future. The provision of safe and affordable housing is an important part of any such effort. Often support services are necessary to enable an individual to make the transition from homelessness to a stable housing situation possible. Having said that, we acknowledge and recognize that the fiscal situation in our State and country is serious and that cuts in the budget are being made in light of these challenging facts.

The teaching of the church is clear on this issue: "...there is a growing awareness of the exalted dignity proper to the human person, since he stands above all things, and his rights and duties are universal and inviolable. Therefore, there must be made available to all men everything necessary for leading a life truly human, such as food, clothing, and shelter; the right to choose a state of life freely and to found a family, the right to education, to employment, to a good reputation, to respect, to appropriate information, to activity in accord with the upright norm of one's own conscience, to protection of privacy and rightful freedom even in matters religious." Gaudium Et Spes (5):

Based on our commitment to the dignity of the human person and to helping the least among us, we strongly support these measures. These bills, if passed, will move us in the right direction to end homelessness in Hawaii. Along with our community partners, Catholic Charities Hawaii, Office for Social Ministry and the Diocesan Office for Affordable Housing, we strongly urge your support. We leave the technicalities of the bills to their expertise.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

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