

**Board of Directors**

Sherry Broder, Esq.
David Derauf, M.D.
Naomi C. Fujimoto, Esq.
Patrick Gardner, Esq.
John H. Johnson
Nathan Nelson, Esq.
David J. Reber, Esq.

Executive Director

Victor Geminiani, Esq.

Testimony of Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
Supporting HB 1621 Relating to Public Accommodations
House Committee on Human Services
Scheduled for Hearing Tuesday, January 28, 2014, 1:15 PM, Room 329

Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) law firm created to advocate on behalf of low income individuals and families in Hawai'i on civil legal issues of statewide importance. Our core mission is to help our clients gain access to the resources, services, and fair treatment that they need to realize their opportunities for self-achievement and economic security.

Thank you for an opportunity to testify in **strong support** of House Bill 1621, which would prohibit discriminatory practices in public accommodations against people who are homeless, receiving public assistance, or receiving unemployment benefits.

Everyone in our community deserves the dignity of equal treatment regardless of their income source or housing status. This bill is particularly necessary because people experiencing homelessness are subject to frequent degradation, whether it be harassment on the street, widespread negative attitudes, attacks on their property, or even brutal violence. Passing this legislation is an opportunity for our state to take a stand against discriminatory practices where homeless and other low-income people receiving assistance are excluded from accessing our public accommodations, such as grocery stores or health clinic.

This bill is an important step toward recognizing the dignity of some of our most vulnerable residents who are struggling to make ends meet or just survive. They should be protected from discriminatory practices that can further a sense of isolation and hamper their efforts to get by and participate in society. We should be proactive in our response to discriminatory treatment and recognize that, like other groups who have historically struggled for equally treatment, the disenfranchised victims of economic inequality should be treated just like anyone else.

Again, thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HB 1621.

kobayashi1-Joni

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Friday, January 24, 2014 11:42 AM
To: HUS testimony
Cc: mendezj@hawaii.edu
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB1621 on Jan 28, 2014 09:30AM*

HB1621

Submitted on: 1/24/2014

Testimony for HUS on Jan 28, 2014 09:30AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Javier Mendez-Alvarez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

kobayashi1-Joni

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, January 27, 2014 7:20 PM
To: HUS testimony
Cc: robertscottwall@yahoo.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1621 on Jan 28, 2014 09:30AM

HB1621

Submitted on: 1/27/2014

Testimony for HUS on Jan 28, 2014 09:30AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Scott Wall	Community Alliance of Mental Health	Support	No

Comments: to: House Committee on Human Services Aloha Rep. Carroll and members of the committee, On behalf of the Community Alliance for Mental Health along with United Self Help we offer our support for HB1621. We believe that HB1621 will help level the playing field for our most vulnerable population. Scott Wall VP/Legislative Advocate Community Alliance for Mental Health

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov



HAWAI‘I CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION

830 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 411 HONOLULU, HI 96813 · PHONE: 586-8636 FAX: 586-8655 TDD: 568-8692

January 28, 2014
Rm. 329, 9:30 a.m.

To: The Honorable Mele Carroll, Chair
Members of the House Committee on Human Services

From: Linda Hamilton Krieger, Chair
and Commissioners of the Hawai‘i Civil Rights Commission

Re: H.B. No. 1621

The Hawai‘i Civil Rights Commission (HCRC) has enforcement jurisdiction over Hawai‘i’s laws prohibiting discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, and access to state and state funded services. The HCRC carries out the Hawai‘i constitutional mandate that no person shall be discriminated against in the exercise of their civil rights. Art. I, Sec. 5.

H.B. No. 1621, if enacted, would amend HRS Chapter 489 to add protection against discrimination in public accommodations on the basis of homelessness. The HCRC offers these comments on the bill.

The HCRC opposes discrimination and disparate treatment against people because they are poor or homeless. Regardless of socio-economic class, all of Hawai‘i’s people should be accorded respect and dignity, equal opportunity, and equal protection of law. People should not be denied access to goods, services, or accommodations based on discriminatory reasons. It

should be recognized and acknowledged that these proposed protections, while they may overlap with existing protected bases (e.g., disability) that are disparately impacted by discrimination against the poor, are different in kind from the other protected bases in our civil rights / non-discrimination laws (race, ancestry, sex, etc.). For this reason, this would be a significant amendment to our civil rights law, likely bringing in numerous complaints of discrimination that will substantially add to HCRC caseload, requiring additional enforcement resources, investigator and attorney positions.