

HB 530

Measure Title: RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS.
Report Title: Homelessness Awareness Month
Description: Designates November as homelessness awareness month.
Companion:
Package: None
Current Referral: HMS/TEC
Introducer(s): CABANILLA, HAR, ICHIYAMA, OSHIRO



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

TESTIMONY IN **SUPPORT** OF HB 530: RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS

TO: Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair, Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair, and Members, Committees on Human Services and Technology and the Arts

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

Hearing: Tuesday, April 2, 2013; 1:15 pm; CR 016

Chair Chun Oakland, Vice Wakai, and Members, Committee on Human Services and Technology and the Arts:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 530, which designates November as Homeless Awareness Month. I am Betty Lou Larson, Legislative Liaison for housing and homeless issues at Catholic Charities Hawaii.

Homelessness impacts on the people of Hawaii in many ways – in their neighborhoods, around their businesses, in tourist areas, and among their friends or family member who may face homelessness. This complex issue requires greater collaboration and coordination if we are to end homelessness in Hawaii. Synergy is growing to identify critical strategic goals and initiatives to focus on ending homelessness. All parts of our community need to be involved to resolve this sometimes overwhelming social problem.

Partners in Care has promoted community awareness for over 10 years targeting the month of November especially since this coincides with national efforts during November. Other coalitions on the Neighbor Islands also often plan activities in November for homeless awareness and education.

By declaring November as Homeless Awareness Month, this will bring added community attention to what is being done to end homelessness. It will promote public awareness of homelessness as a significant societal, public health and welfare, and affordable housing shortage problem.

We urge your support for HB 530 and for community awareness of homelessness. We all must work together to solve the complex problem of homelessness.

Thank you for hearing HB 530 and for your concern and dedication to finding solutions to this difficult societal issue.



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Testimony of Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice

Supporting SB 515 Relating to Housing

Senate Committee on Human Services

Senate Committee on Technology and the Arts

Scheduled for Joint Hearing Tuesday, April 2, 2013, 1:15 PM, Room 016

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 **support** of House Bill 530, which would designate November as Homelessness Awareness Month.

The impact of homelessness is devastating for the individuals and families who struggle to survive without permanent housing. Homeless children are at greater risk of foster care placement, lowered academic achievement, and physical and mental injury. Individuals experiencing mental health problems or substance abuse disorders are often unable to address these challenges without stable housing. The suffering experienced by anyone without a permanent home is immeasurable.

For our entire community, we face a terrible cost as a people. Each individual experiencing homelessness challenges what we have historically valued as an island community and deeply undermines the spirit of aloha. We also know that by failing to ensure the health and well-being of all members of our community, we incur significant financial costs, estimated at up to \$40,000 per individual. But any of these costs pale in comparison to the harms befalling individuals experiencing homelessness.

We have seen increased attention to the homelessness crisis, but this very complex problem requires greater public education to help our community move to a solution. A Homelessness Awareness month will draw attention to this critical issue and promote greater understanding of the challenges and needs of people experiencing homelessness, ultimately helping restore the basic dignity and well-being of some of our community's most vulnerable citizens.

Again, thank you for providing us with an opportunity to testify in strong support of HB 530.



Community Alliance for Mental Health

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To: The Hawai'i State Senate Committees on Human Services & Technology and the Arts
Re: HB 530

To: The Honorable Senators Chun-Oakland, Wakai, and the members of their committees.

Aloha,

The Community Alliance for Mental Health along with United Self Help most **strongly supports** HB 530 and it's recognition of one of Hawai'i most vulnerable populations.

Mahalo,
Scott Wall
Vice-President

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
To: [HMS Testimony](#)
Cc: alysajsnyder@yahoo.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB530 on Apr 2, 2013 13:15PM
Date: Monday, April 01, 2013 2:04:50 PM

HB530

Submitted on: 4/1/2013

Testimony for HMS/TEC on Apr 2, 2013 13:15PM in Conference Room 016

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alyssa Snyder	Individual	Support	No

Comments: November is already established by many other states as a month to recognize Hunger and Homelessness Awareness. For the past several years, a state-wide homeless conference has been held in November to bring providers together for collaboration and learning how to strengthen our community's response to homelessness. Focusing on Homelessness during the month of November would bring about more public awareness on this issue and aid in making people aware of how they can help as well as where to find services that are offered in the community.

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.

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To: The Committee on Human Services, Chair Suzanne Chun Oakland & Vice Chair Josh Green, and Committee on Technology and Arts, Chair Glenn Wakai & Vice Chair Clarence Nishihara.

Subject: Testimony in **Support** of HB 530 – Relating to Homelessness

Hearing: Tuesday, April 2nd, 2013, 1:15 P.M., Conference Room 016, State Capitol

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 530 which will designate November as Homeless Awareness Month.

Aloha, my name is Jazlyn Wandasan and I am an MSW student from the Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. I was born and raised on the Wai'anae coast where the homeless community is pervasive. I went to school with people who were homeless, I had family who was homeless, and when I worked as a summer aide doing summer fun, I had children who were homeless. I have always been exposed to homelessness throughout my life. And I admit, as an adolescent, I did not understand the seriousness of this issue. Everywhere I went I saw the homeless community and at-risk youths endangered of being homeless. For me, this was "normal," it was just how things were. But it should not have been that way.

It was not until I left and returned from college that I began to really see the issue as an issue. That is why I am in support of this bill. This population has become very dear to me.

I have seen the positive impact awareness months have had on communities. For example, April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month and already I see events planned to gather people to fight against sexual violence.

I believe in the necessity of prevention and awareness events and programs and I think in order to combat homelessness in Hawaii we need to further educate our communities. So many people have been falling into hard times and are in danger of being homeless. I believe that by raising the public's awareness not only can we gather supporters, we can also promote individual's access to resources and provide respite to the many struggling families out there who may fall between the cracks. It is my hope that we can find more effective ways to support our homeless communities.

Mahalo nui loa.

Jazlyn Makamae Wandasan

To: The Committee on Human Services, Chair Suzanne Chun Oakland & Vice Chair Josh Green, and Committee on Technology and Arts, Chair Glenn Wakai & Vice Chair Clarence Nishihara.

Subject: HB 530 – Relating to Homelessness

Hearing: Tuesday, April 2nd, 2013, 1:15 P.M., Conference Room 016, State Capitol

My name is Trisha Bise and I am currently a first year MSW student of the Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. I am writing in full support of HB 530, which is trying to designate November as "Homelessness Awareness Month".

Homelessness is a social issue that affects multiple aspects of our society. It touches upon the topics of affordable housing, shelter, mental health, general assistance, medical care, and access to resources. Many people are aware that homeless individuals exist in their communities but some fail to educate themselves behind the core issues of this oppressed population. There are people who have no experience with working with the homeless that view them through blurry lenses, fixating only on the negative stereotypes and not the facts.

Through my program, I received the opportunity to have a practicum site that provides a wide range of services to the homeless. By slowly gaining experience at my placement, I am able to see into the world of social services and discovered the injustices and limits that exist. This specific population needs people to advocate for them and I strongly believe that having a month dedicated to creating public awareness of homelessness is extremely important for our state. I find it crucial for people to know the facts and to not let ignorance influence their perception of this group. Making homelessness and its issues known to the people of Hawai'i can be viewed as a step forward towards resolving or improving this social phenomenon in our communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to hear my testimony in full support of this bill.

Sincerely,

Trisha Bise