

SB 82

Measure Title: RELATING TO THE HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY.

Report Title: Hawaii Public Housing Authority; General Powers

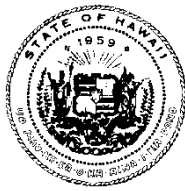
Description: Clarifies the power of the Hawaii public housing authority to sell, lease, rent, hold, maintain, use, and operate certain properties. Authorizes the authority to receive all gifts provided they benefit public housing residents. Requires that the acceptance of gifts with an estimated value of \$1,000 or more be approved or confirmed by the board. Authorizes the authority to use volunteer services. Exempts the authority from various state laws for the use of volunteer services.

Companion:

Package: Housing and Homeless

Current Referral: HMS, WAM

Introducer(s): CHUN OAKLAND, GALUTERIA, GREEN, Dela Cruz, Gabbard, Kahele, Ruderman, Wakai



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
Hakim Ouansafi
Hawaii Public Housing Authority
Before the

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

January 26, 2013 1:15 P.M.
Room 229, Hawaii State Capitol

In consideration of
Senate Bill 82
Relating to the Hawaii Public Housing Authority

Honorable Chair and Members of the Senate Committee on Human Services, thank you for the opportunity to provide you with comments regarding Senate Bill (S.B.) 82, relating to the Hawaii Public Housing Authority.

The Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) supports enactment of this measure, which would clarify the power of the HPHA regarding certain properties, authorizes the acceptance of gifts that benefit public housing residents and exempts the HPHA from various state laws for the use of volunteer services. This measure will significantly improve the ability of the HPHA to administer its programs and resources, and also further enhance the quality of life for our tenants.

The HPHA also appreciates the proposed amendments regarding gifts and volunteer services. On many occasions, people and organizations have been turned away from the HPHA due to conflicts with our state's ethics and volunteer services laws.

Gifts such as gallons of paint, maintenance equipment and lumber are items that would truly make a difference in the living environment for our tenants, and not go toward the benefit of the HPHA Board or staff. However, on many occasions, the HPHA has to turn these people away due to our inability to accept gifts over twenty-five dollars.

Many volunteers come to the HPHA to improve their community by creating projects, and rehabilitating vacant units. These projects benefit community relations, as well as provide housing for some of our most needy individuals. Projects that assist the HPHA in rehabilitating vacant units need physical labor, electrical wiring and plumbing. These are areas where the HPHA are lacking the most resources. With an exemption from the various state volunteer services laws, the HPHA would be able to turn around vacant

units faster, and create resources that can be used by our tenants. The arduous task of coordinating our community events, such as the "I Have a Dream" event, was very difficult to produce due to the ambiguity of our state volunteer services laws.

These gifts and volunteer services are just part of the solution in getting the whole community involved. Tenants, volunteers and staff members work side by side to transform our vacant units into housing for our most needy citizens, and create a sense of pride for our tenants.

The HPHA appreciates the opportunity to provide the Senate Committee on Human Services with the agency's position regarding S.B. 82. We respectfully request the Committee to pass this measure favorably, and we thank you very much for your dedicated support.