

SB 92

Measure Title: RELATING TO HOUSING.

Report Title: Housing; Housing First Programs; Department of Human Services; Appropriation (\$)

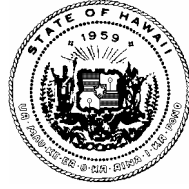
Description: Appropriates funds to the department of human services to continue to administer housing first programs for chronically homeless individuals in the State.

Companion:

Package: Housing and Homeless

Current Referral: HMS, WAM

Introducer(s): CHUN OAKLAND, GALUTERIA, GREEN, RUDERMAN, SHIMABUKURO, Dela Cruz, Nishihara, L. Thielen



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

January 26, 2013

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Patricia McManaman, Director

SUBJECT: **S.B. 92 – RELATING TO HOUSING**

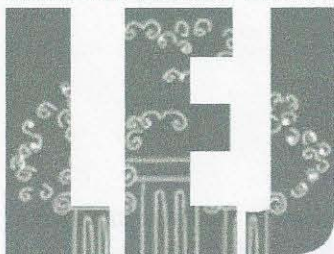
Hearing: Saturday, January 26, 2013; 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 229, State Capitol

PURPOSE: S.B. 92 appropriates \$1,000,000 or so much as may be necessary in fiscal year 2013-14 to the Department of Human Services to continue to administer Housing First programs for chronically homeless individuals in the State.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services appreciates the overall intent of this bill as it is supportive of our objectives. The Housing First program, as administered by the Department, has been successful in engaging and placing some of urban Honolulu's most chronically homeless and vulnerable individuals into stable housing. A rich array of support services (substance abuse, mental health, general health/disability treatment) has been accessed to help provide the "wrap around" services that are necessary to maintain this population in stable housing situations.

The Department asks that the Legislature support the Department's priorities as requested in the Executive Budget submitted by Governor Abercrombie which contains a request for \$1,500,000 for continuation of the Housing First Program, and expansion beyond urban Honolulu to other areas of Oahu and to the neighbor islands.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this bill.

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January 23, 2013

Date: January 23, 2013

To: Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Senate Chair, Committee on Human Services

From: Jenny Lee, Staff Attorney

Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice

Re: Testimony in favor of SB 92

Scheduled for a hearing on January 26, 2013

Dear Chair Chun Oakland and committee members;

Thank you for an opportunity to testify in strong favor of SB 92, which would appropriate funds for the Department of Human Services to continue administering housing first programs for chronically homeless individuals in Hawai'i. Providing people who have experienced chronic homelessness with stable and decent housing is crucial to ending the homelessness crisis we are experiencing.

My name is Jenny Lee, and I am a staff attorney at the Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice (formerly Lawyers for Equal Justice). Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice (LEJ) 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.

Housing first, also known as "rapid re-housing," has been adopted in many parts of the country as a major tactic to end chronic homelessness by helping individuals secure and retain permanent housing. It is an evidence-based practice that reduces chronic homelessness, improves the health and well-being of formerly homeless individuals, and lowers costs. The housing first model stabilizes individuals' housing situation and provides comprehensive support services so that participants can address the other issues they face, such as mental illness, substance abuse, and chronic health conditions.

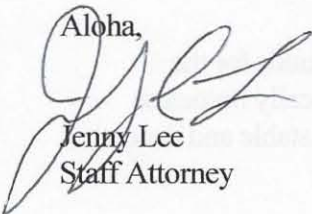
The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness has endorsed housing first as a "best practice" that has shown great success in reducing chronic homelessness and improving outcomes for participants. For example, Utah's statewide implementation of a housing first program has resulted in an incredible 72 percent decrease in the number of chronically homeless individuals since 2005. Homelessness has been reduced enough that they have actually closed emergency shelters. Communities throughout the nation have recognized similar results.

Those placed in housing show improved mental and physical health, decreases in substance use, and overall quality of life. Visits to emergency rooms, hospitalizations, outpatient treatment, detox services, incarceration, and shelter utilization are dramatically reduced when chronically homeless individuals are placed in housing. Not only does housing first result in positive outcomes for participants, but it also saves the state significant amounts of money. By lowering the usage of these services, states and municipalities have saved thousands or tens of

thousands of dollars per individual, even when the cost of permanent housing and services is factored in. Over time, this adds up to millions of dollars. Placement in housing can also help individuals take full advantage of benefits to which they are entitled, increasing their financial stability.

In its position as an advocate for people experiencing homelessness, LEJ has researched affordable housing and how to address the homelessness crisis here in Hawai'i. Housing first has been extensively studied and has shown the type of results we desperately need in Hawai'i. An investment in housing first not only saves money, but most importantly, it dramatically increases the health and well-being of individuals who have experienced homelessness for far too long.

Again, thank you for providing us with an opportunity to testify in support of SB 92.

Aloha,

Jenny Lee
Staff Attorney



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 92: RELATING TO HOUSING

TO: Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair, Senator Josh Green, M.D., Vice Chair, and Members, Committee on Human Services

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

Hearing: Saturday, 1/26/13; 1:15 pm; CR 229

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 92, which appropriates funds to continue the implementation of the Housing First model in Hawaii. I am Betty Lou Larson, Legislative Liaison at Catholic Charities Hawaii. Catholic Charities Hawaii supports this bill.

The Housing First program has proven its success in many states as a way to more effectively address the chronically homeless. These homeless are often the most visible homeless, living in our neighborhoods, doorways, under bridges, etc. These persons experience homelessness over a long period of time and incur very significant public costs. Housing First assists them to gain permanent housing and then provides the services needed to keep them in housing and successfully transition off the streets.

In 2012, 100 medically vulnerable unsheltered homeless individuals were identified during the 100K Homes Campaign on Oahu. Homeless providers are currently working collaborative and aggressively to house these targeted vulnerable individuals. However, housing is only the first step – they will need ongoing services to ensure that they are able to address their health and social needs.

The Housing First program can provide a means through which many of these 100 medically vulnerable unsheltered homeless individuals can receive the services they need. The benefit to these individuals is an improvement to their quality, and quantity, of life. The benefit to our community is reduced cost since the latest information on Partners In Care's "What is the Cost of Homelessness?" states:

- 38% of all public costs for those who are unsheltered are health care costs.
- The average public cost for an unsheltered homeless person is \$2,897 per month vs. the average public cost for a resident in supportive housing is \$605 per month. Public costs can be decreased by 79% by providing supportive housing with services.

We also support the Governor's budget which increases the funding to \$1.5 million for the Housing First program. This increase would enable Housing First to expand beyond urban Honolulu to other areas, including the Neighbor Islands.

We urge your support to continue and expand Housing First to reduce the public costs and to move the most vulnerable off our streets. Thank you.



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Dedicated to safe, responsible, humane and effective drug policies since 1993

January 26, 2013

To: Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senator Josh Green, Vice Chair and
Members of the Committee on Human Services

From: Jeanne Ohta, Executive Director

RE: SB 92 Relating to Housing
Hearing: Saturday, January 26, 2013, 1:15 p.m., Room 229

Position: Support

The Drug Policy Forum of Hawai`i writes in support of this measure.

DPFH supports the housing first program as a very effective way to address the needs of the homeless, many of whom have substance use issues. This is a proven concept and assists in not only taking people off the streets, but once they have a stable place to live, can facilitate their decision to receive drug treatment or counseling.

Those with substance use issues are homeless because many shelters or programs require them to be substance-free before they receive housing and yet, they cannot become substance-free until they live in a stable environment.

In order to reduce the homeless population, the housing first program should be funded and supported. We urge the committee to pass this measure. Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony.



PARTNERS IN CARE

Oahu's Coalition of Homeless Providers

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 92: RELATING TO HOUSING

TO: Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair, Committee on Human Services
Senator Josh Green, M.D., Vice Chair, and
Members, Committee on Human Services

FROM: Gladys L. Peraro, Advocacy Committee Co-Chair, Partner In Care

Hearing: **Saturday, 1/26/13; 1:15pm; CR 229**

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 92, which appropriates funds to continue the implementation of the Housing First model in Hawaii. I am Gladys L. Peraro, Advocacy Committee Co-Chair for the Partners In Care (PIC). Our coalition of care providers focuses on the needs of homeless persons and strategies to end homelessness. Partners In Care supports appropriation of funding toward the Housing First effort in Hawaii as means to assist "*Hawaii's chronically homeless who are often the most vulnerable, most visible, and most difficult to serve,*" as outlined in SB 92.

The Housing First program has proven its success in many areas as a way to more effectively address the chronically homeless. These homeless are often the most visible homeless, living in our neighborhoods, doorways, under bridges, etc. These persons experience homelessness over a long period of time and incur very significant public costs. Hospital, emergency services, police, social services and other public costs are high. Housing First has a good track record in assisting homeless people to gain permanent housing and then provide the services needed to keep them in housing and successfully transition off the streets. Partners In Care Hawaii supports this model as a way to target the *chronically homeless and assist them to transition to permanent housing*.

PIC also supports the Governor's budget which increases the funding to \$1.5 million for the Housing First program. This increase would enable Housing First to expand beyond urban Honolulu to other areas, especially to the Neighbor Islands.

Partners In Care has compared the public costs for an unsheltered homeless person vs. a resident in Supportive Housing, such as in a Housing First model. They found that the average public cost for an unsheltered homeless person is \$2,897 per month vs. the average public cost for a resident in supportive housing is \$605 per month. Public costs can be decreased by 79% by providing supportive housing with services.

Focusing on the Housing First model is one new important strategy for Hawaii. We urge your support for the continuation and expansion of this innovative strategy in Hawaii.

Partners In Care, c/o Aloha United Way, 200 N. Vineyard Blvd. Suite 700
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

Partners in Care is a membership organization of homeless service providers, other service professionals, units of local and state government, homeless consumers, and other community representatives located in Hawai'i on O'ahu. It is a planning, coordinating, and advocacy body that develops recommendations for programs and services to fill gaps in the Continuum of Care on O'ahu.



PROTECTING HAWAII'S OHANA, CHILDREN, UNDER SERVED, ELDERLY AND DISABLED

P13:002T:LKR

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January 23, 2013

TO: Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senator Josh Green, M.D., Vice Chair
Members, Committee on Human Services

FROM: Laura Kay Rand, Interim Executive Director, PHOCUSED

HEARING: Committee on Human Services
January 26, 2013 at 1:15 p.m.

Testimony in Support of SB92, Relating to Housing

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB92, which appropriates funding for continue to administer housing first programs for chronically homeless individuals. PHOCUSED is a coalition of health, housing, human services agencies and individual advocates voicing the needs of the marginalized and underserved in Hawaii.

As a community, we must support our citizens who are chronically homeless and assist them with solutions that work. Housing First programs have demonstrated success across many states as a means to address the complex issues associated with chronic homelessness. Housing First provides permanent housing and then implements the supportive services needed to solidify the transition off the streets. These services are provided through a host of social services providers, such as those in the Partners in Care coalition.

Housing chronically homeless individuals first is not only a more supportive means to address the chronically homeless situation, evidence shows it is also more economically sound. Partners in Care found that the average public cost for an unsheltered homeless person is \$2,897 per month vs. the average public cost for a resident in supportive housing of \$605/month.

I urge your support of SB92. We appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of this measure.

Sincerely,
Laura Kay Rand
Interim Executive Director