



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS

P. O. BOX 1879
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96805

TESTIMONY OF JOBIE M. K. MASAGATANI, CHAIRMAN
HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING
IN SUPPORT OF

SCR 137 SD 1, REQUESTING THE COORDINATOR ON HOMELESSNESS TO ASSEMBLE A WORKING GROUP TO IDENTIFY INNOVATIVE HOUSING SOLUTIONS FOR HOMELESS NATIVE HAWAIIAN FAMILIES; INVESTIGATE SUITABLE AND AVAILABLE FEDERAL, STATE, COUNTY, AND PRIVATE LAND FOR INNOVATIVE HOUSING PROJECTS; AND PREPARE A PLAN TO DEVELOP A DEMONSTRATION HOUSING PROJECT FOR HOMELESS NATIVE HAWAIIAN FAMILIES THAT CAN SERVE AS A MODEL STATEWIDE.

April 18, 2013

Chair Cabanilla, Vice-Chair Woodson, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Hawaiian Home Lands supports the intent of SCR 137, which requests the formation of a working group to identify innovative housing solutions for homeless Native Hawaiian families.

We recognize that a number of our state's homeless and houseless population are beneficiaries of our trust, and we are currently collaborating with the Coordinator on Homelessness to identify ways to address these needs. We defer to the Coordinator on Homelessness on the feasibility and costs of completing the tasks requested in the resolution.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this concurrent resolution.

woodson1-Jonathan

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, April 16, 2013 3:12 PM
To: HSGtestimony
Cc: rezentesc@aol.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SCR137 on Apr 18, 2013 10:00AM

SCR137

Submitted on: 4/16/2013

Testimony for HSG on Apr 18, 2013 10:00AM in Conference Room 423

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Cynthia K.L. Rezentes	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: Aloha Chair and members of the committee, I would like to offer my support for the concept of this effort but would like to comment with respect to what portion of the Hawaiian population is being addressed, native Hawaiians, or Native Hawaiians. Depending on your classification the support structure is different and also the funding that might be available might also be different as well as who the lead might be in pursuing this effort. As a community member who volunteers to work with our shelter and service providers on the Westside of O`ahu, we are aware of the numerous families that are of, at least, part Hawaiian ancestry. This has been known for a while and there have been discussions, both with the State Homeless Coordinator and specific individuals in various agencies, i.e. OHA as to how to approach is concern. As a state-wide structure is already in place the Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH), I would recommend that instead of creating another unfunded mandate that additional instruction be given to HICH to address this specific concern instead of initiating another group to re-visit many of the issues already being discussed. The fineness of the slice of this issue as compared with the overarching concerns being viewed as a larger picture can benefit from not establishing a "new" group to essentially "start from scratch (or nearly so)" and just provide a finer exploration into one facet of the population that might receive more/different benefits that can be applied to aid provided to those clients. Mahalo for the opportunity to provide comments.

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TESTIMONY ON SCR 137, SD 1 REQUESTING THE COORDINATOR ON HOMELESSNESS TO ASSEMBLE A WORKING GROUP TO IDENTIFY INNOVATIVE HOUSING SOLUTIONS FOR HOMELESS NATIVE HAWAIIAN FAMILIES; INVESTIGATE SUITABLE AND AVAILABLE FEDERAL, STATE, COUNTY, AND PRIVATE LAND FOR INNOVATIVE HOUSING PROJECTS; AND PREPARE A PLAN TO DEVELOP A DEMONSTRATION HOUSING PROJECT FOR HOMELESS NATIVE HAWAIIAN FAMILIES THAT CAN SERVE AS A MODEL STATEWIDE

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

April 18, 2013

10:00 AM

Conference Rm. 423

Aloha Chair Cabanilla, Vice-Chair Woodson and members of the House Committee on Housing **my name is Stephen Morse. I am the Executive Director of Blueprint for Change (BFC) and am here today to support SCR 137, SD1.**

Members, for the record, BFC is the fiscal, technical, and administrative support entity for five Neighborhood Place centers statewide that provide support and strengthening services to families at risk of child abuse and neglect under a POS contract with the Department of Human Services. Our Neighborhood Place programs are unique among CAN prevention programs for two reasons: (1) they are the only places where children and families at risk of child abuse and neglect can get services without a referral or appointment and by simply knocking on the door; and (2) because many of the children and families we serve are Native Hawaiian, the NP services are culturally congruent, and for the most part, non-clinical.

We find that one of the biggest risk factors for child neglect in the Native Hawaiian families we serve is that they are homeless, and often, homelessness becomes a revolving door for these families because of a myriad of other socioeconomic problems they are mired in, including unemployment and low incomes, substance abuse, and chronic health problems. If we are going to break the cycle of homelessness and prevent the generational neglect of children within these families, we need to develop innovative housing solutions that provide these families with both stable housing and access to wrap around social services, and perhaps, it's time we turn to more traditional ways to lead Native Hawaiian families out of homelessness.

Made popular by a book written several years ago by former Secretary of State and First Lady, Hillary Clinton, the concept of "it takes a village" to raise a child was actually practiced by Native Hawaiians for hundreds of years prior to and after the arrival of Westerners. Members of an extended `ohana lived in small villages, in complexes called, "Kauhale," and child rearing was a village/complex responsibility. These kauhale were clusters of living, cooking, eating, meeting, storage, and ancillary shelters. At the center of the village or within the kauhale themselves, was a larger shelter called a "halau," which was used for larger meetings, teaching, kukakuka (discussions) on village issues, and to air grievances and making things right, or "ho'opono."

Several years ago when I was employed as the Chief Housing Officer for the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Richard "Likeke" Paglinawan, an esteemed Social Worker and Hawaiian Cultural Practitioner who was serving as OHA's Administrator at the time, shared with me a manuscript he had written on the Hawaiian "Kauhale." What struck me was how perfectly designed the Kauhale was for the extended members of an `ohana, because besides sharing daily responsibilities such as cooking or child rearing, it kept the other important aspect of an `ohana intact, problem-solving.

The point I'm trying to make in this testimony is that by the enactment of these resolutions, we could use the demonstration housing project called for in these resolutions as the means to re-create a Kauhale complex, or other innovative housing solutions, for Native Hawaiian families that would not only stabilize their living situations, but through connecting to their culture, help them resolve their underlying socioeconomic problems with support from each other and social service providers like Neighborhood Places.

Recently, State Homeless Coordinator, Colin Kippen, organized a group of social service providers, including myself, and asked for help in coming up with solutions for the Native Hawaiian homeless. I am confident that this working group is ready and willing to work with the Legislature and executive branch of government to make the plan called for in SCR 137, SD 1 a reality.

Aloha and Mahalo for allowing us the opportunity to testify this afternoon.

woodson1-Jonathan

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2013 12:02 PM
To: HSGtestimony
Cc: hspoehr@papaolalokahi.org
Subject: Submitted testimony for SCR137 on Apr 18, 2013 10:00AM

SCR137

Submitted on: 4/17/2013

Testimony for HSG on Apr 18, 2013 10:00AM in Conference Room 423

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Hardy Spoehr	Papa Ola Lokahi	Support	No

Comments: Papa Ola Lokahi strongly supports this measure and is ready to participate in any way deemed appropriate.

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woodson1-Jonathan

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2013 4:24 PM
To: HSGtestimony
Cc: mendezj@hawaii.edu
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SCR137 on Apr 18, 2013 10:00AM*

SCR137

Submitted on: 4/17/2013

Testimony for HSG on Apr 18, 2013 10:00AM in Conference Room 329

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

Comments:

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Testimony of Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
Supporting SCR 137
House Committee on Housing
Scheduled for Hearing Thursday, April 18, 2013, 10:00 AM, 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 support of Senate Concurrent Resolution 137, which would encourage the creation of a working group to identify innovative housing solutions for Native Hawaiian families experiencing homelessness and develop a pilot project.

Hawai'i's homelessness problem has reached crisis proportions, particularly among Native Hawaiians:

- Hawai'i's rate of homelessness is the third highest among the states.
- Around 27 percent of those using shelter or outreach programs are Native Hawaiian or part Native Hawaiian, according to the 2012 Homeless Service Utilization Report.
- Hawai'i faces a severe affordable housing shortfall, with many families residing long-term in shelters because no permanent affordable housing is available.

Many creative housing options exist, including ultra-affordable small houses or multi-family dwellings:

- Models and designs abound from around the country, and this task force is an opportunity to compile successful models and how to apply them to Hawai'i.
- A number of programs, such as the Sustainable Native Communities Collaborative, have specialized in the creation of affordable housing for indigenous peoples that incorporates traditional cultural values, practices, and living arrangements with practical housing designs that meet families' needs today.
- Elsewhere, ultra-affordable housing has been developed, such as the Rural Studio's "\$20,000 House" designed in close collaboration with low-income clients living in Alabama's Black Belt region.

A housing pilot targeted at Native Hawaiian families is one innovative solution among many to a complex problem. Housing is a fundamental human need that must be met before individuals experiencing homelessness can address issues such as managing mental illness or finding employment. Despite the efforts of the state and social service providers, homelessness has not significantly abated, and many members of our community remain in shelters because of lack of affordable housing. It is absolutely critical that we begin to take meaningful action to create permanent housing. One such approach is to experiment with new options such as a housing pilot so that this problem is approached from all angles.

woodson1-Jonathan

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, April 17, 2013 6:28 PM
To: HSGtestimony
Cc: kamakane73@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for SCR137 on Apr 18, 2013 10:00AM*

SCR137

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Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jeremy Hopkins	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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woodson1-Jonathan

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, April 18, 2013 7:14 AM
To: HSGtestimony
Cc: jedill@pidfoundation.org
Subject: Submitted testimony for SCR137 on Apr 18, 2013 10:00AM

SCR137

Submitted on: 4/18/2013

Testimony for HSG on Apr 18, 2013 10:00AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jan E. Dill	Partners In Development Foundation	Support	No

Comments: Aloha, As an organization that has worked with homeless Native-Hawaiian families and their keiki for a number of years, we are supportive of any effort that will provide a stable environment for this lost community to transition too. It is sad that people of these islands cannot find a home, so we will work alongside, and partner with any individual, organization, or agency to help alleviate this situation. Mahalo Nui Loa, Jan E. Hanohano Dill President Partners In Development Foundation 18Apr13

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