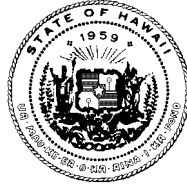


DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



RACHAEL WONG, DrPH
DIRECTOR

PANKAJ BHANOT
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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

February 16, 2016

TO: The Honorable Representative Dee Morikawa, Chair
House Committee on Human Services

FROM: Rachael Wong, DrPH, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 2640 – RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS**

Hearing: Tuesday, February 16, 2016; 11:00 a.m.
Conference Room 329, State Capitol

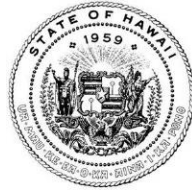
DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the proposal's intent and the Legislature's support of addressing homelessness statewide, and offers comments. We defer to each County on its interest in a state lead homeless emergency action response team and the potential fiscal or operational impact such a team would have on its resources. The Department further requests that the Legislature appropriate the funds related to homeless services identified in the Executive Budget.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the proposed measure is to establish the homeless emergency action response program in the Department of Human Services (DHS), and appropriates funds.

Each County has a protocol in place for how and when they intervene in homeless encampments. Often the strategy includes a collaboration between the Counties and non-profit homeless and housing providers to conduct assertive outreach to the individuals and families in the encampments to both notify the affected individuals and also to offer social services prior to displacement. Many of the services providers are primarily funded with State funds through the Department of Human Services.

As State-funded homeless service providers already are engaged in the County responses, DHS requests the Legislature fully fund the requests for homeless services identified in the Executive Budget, rather than establishing a new program within the Department.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
HONOLULU

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

February 16, 2016

TO: The Honorable Representative Dee Morikawa, Chair
House Committee on Human Services

FROM: Scott Morishige, MSW, Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness

SUBJECT: HB 2640 – RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS

Hearing: Tuesday, February 16, 2016, 11:00 a.m.
Conference Room 329, State Capitol

POSITION: The Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness appreciates the intent of this measure, and offers written comments. The Coordinator expresses concern that the homeless emergency action response team may potentially duplicate existing efforts of homeless outreach providers that are contracted by the State.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the bill is to establish the homeless emergency action response team program in DHS. The bill also appropriates an unspecified amount of funds to support this purpose.

While the Coordinator understands and appreciates the intent of this bill, there is concern that the bill may duplicate services currently being provided by homeless outreach providers. Through DHS and the Department of Health (DOH), the State currently contracts homeless outreach providers for similar services statewide.

The Coordinator notes that the Governor's Executive Budget includes an additional \$2 million for homeless outreach, and asks for the Legislature's support of the Executive Budget request. The appropriation requested for homeless outreach will expand homeless outreach services, and enable outreach to be better targeted to meet the needs of specific geographic regions. The role of homeless outreach providers includes responding to homeless encampments, which includes offering homeless individuals access to shelter, conducting

intake and assessment for Housing First and other housing programs, and working with homeless individuals to obtain identification and other necessary documents.

For example, when the State and City & County of Honolulu responded to a large homeless encampment in Kakaako Makai, homeless outreach agencies worked alongside to provide assistance with housing placement. Through the participation of homeless outreach, 215 out of 293 estimated homeless individuals in the encampment were connected to shelter or permanent housing over a six month period. Similar approaches have also been utilized by homeless outreach providers on Oahu's Leeward Coast, as well as in other counties.

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

kobayashi2-Jessi

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, February 11, 2016 10:00 AM
To: HUS testimony
Cc: laurayam@hawaii.edu
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB2640 on Feb 16, 2016 11:00AM*

HB2640

Submitted on: 2/11/2016

Testimony for HUS on Feb 16, 2016 11:00AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Laura Yamamoto	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



LATE

46-063 Emepela Pl. #U101 Kaneohe, HI 96744 · (808) 679-7454 · Kris Coffield · Co-founder/Executive Director

TESTIMONY FOR HOUSE BILL 2640, RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS

**House Committee on Human Services
Hon. Dee Morikawa, Chair
Hon. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair**

**Tuesday, February 16, 2016, 11:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 329**

Honorable Chair Morikawa and committee members:

I am Kris Coffield, representing IMU Alliance, a nonpartisan political advocacy organization that currently boasts over 350 members. On behalf of our members, we offer this testimony in support of, with proposed amendments for House Bill 2640, relating to homelessness.

According to the latest point-in-time count, Hawai'i has 7,620 people living without housing, a 10 percent increase from the previous year. Our state's homeless population has reached its highest number in five years, boosted by a dramatic increase in the number of unsheltered houseless persons. Unsheltered persons now total 3,843 people, while sheltered individuals total 3,777. On O'ahu, in 2015, the houseless population rose to 4,903, up from 4,712 in 2014. The Big Island of Hawai'i totaled 1,241 houseless persons, up from 869 a year ago—a shocking 43 percent increase. Maui County saw its houseless population rise to 1,137, last year, up from 959 the previous year.

We do not believe that this bill represents a long-term, comprehensive solution to homelessness in Hawai'i. Moreover, we recognize that if passed, this bill must be coupled with additional reforms to be fully effectuated, such as increasing access to identification for houseless persons whose identification cards have been lost, stolen, or confiscated, funding our state's Housing First program, establishing transitional shelters, expanding job training, and most importantly, offsetting the islands' regressive and nation-leading cost of housing by building truly affordable housing. Moreover, we note that this measure calls for homeless emergency action response teams to address "encampments of homeless persons" in coordination with

local police departments. Thus, we encourage your committee to ensure that the proposed response teams are not used as instruments of police action against the homeless, including the illicit seizure of houseless people's property. We accordingly urge you to amend subsection (c) of this bill to read: (c) The homeless emergency action response team established pursuant to this section shall include case workers from the department of human services, who shall work with county agencies, including police departments, to address homelessness and encampments of homeless persons in the counties; **provided that no homeless emergency action response team established pursuant to this section shall act as an agent of any state or county police department.**"

That said, we understand that each of our state's counties face unique challenges in meeting the needs of houseless persons. Counties could use the support and expertise of Department of Human Services personnel, particularly case workers, who may bring a knowledge of best professional practices, client needs, interagency programming and protocols, and human services networks necessary to bring compassion back to our state's approach to the homeless crisis.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

Sincerely,
Kris Coffield
Executive Director
IMUAlliance