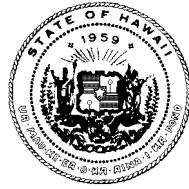


SB 120

Measure Title:	RELATING TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING.
Report Title:	Appropriation; Kupuna Caucus; Housing Omnibus; Affordable Housing; Housing First (\$)
Description:	<p>Authorizes the issuance of general obligation bonds and the appropriation of funds for deposit into the rental housing trust fund and the dwelling unit revolving fund to finance affordable rental housing development and infrastructure development. Appropriates funds for the construction of micro apartment housing units. Appropriates funds to the department of human services to continue to administer housing first programs for chronically homeless.</p>
Companion:	
Package:	Housing and Homeless Legislative Package
Current Referral:	HSH, WAM
Introducer(s):	CHUN OAKLAND, ESPERO, GALUTERIA, Dela Cruz, English, Green, Harimoto, Riviere



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

January 31, 2015

MEMORANDUM

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

FROM: Rachael Wong, Director

SUBJECT: **S.B. 120 – RELATING TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Hearing: Saturday, January 31, 2015; 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 229; State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purpose of S.B. 120 is to appropriate funds for a variety of housing and homeless needs, including appropriation of funds to the Department of Human Services to continue to administer the Housing First (HF) program (Part V).

DEPARTMENT’S POSITION: The Department of Human Services is appreciative of the intent of this proposed bill as it would provide funding to continue the State’s Housing First program (HF). However, the Department asks the Legislature to support the Department’s priorities in the Executive Budget submitted by Governor Ige which contains a request for \$2,000,000 for the continuation of the HF program.

The State’s HF program was designed and is being implemented to align with nationally recognized best practices to house and provide robust services to the chronically homeless with the highest acuity (needs), without pre-requisite compliance with treatment services. Together with Hale O Malama, the State’s coordinated entry system, HF is targeting service to

unsheltered, chronically homeless that typically overuse high cost services such as hospitals, 911 systems, emergency rooms, and jails.

The HF program leverages federal grant funding totaling approximately \$2.9 million awarded in 2013 from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), to the Department of Health, to implement the Hawaii Pathways Project (HPP), an evidence based housing first program for individuals with substance abuse and/or co-occurring substance abuse and mental health issues. This important collaboration is part of the State's overall effort to develop a coordinated approach to end homelessness. The SAMHSA grant provides funds for services; it does not provide funding for housing costs. The HF program's design and implementation has achieved the best leveraging of the SAMHSA funds.

Since the June 2014 execution of the most recent contract with our vendor, US Vets, the HF program has housed 43 chronically homeless people, including two households (families). Another 32 people have been referred and are at various stages in preparation for housing and services. Thus far, the average cost of each housing unit has been \$1,229 per month. Supportive services costs have varied due to the range of needs of each client served.

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

TESTIMONY BY WESLEY K. MACHIDA
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
STATE OF HAWAII
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES AND HOUSING
ON
SENATE BILL NO. 120

January 31, 2015

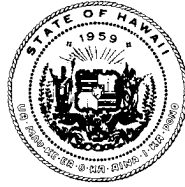
RELATING TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Senate Bill No. 120 authorizes, among other things, the issuance of general obligation bonds and the appropriation of funds for deposit into the rental housing trust fund and the dwelling unit revolving fund, for the purposes of financing affordable rental housing development and infrastructure development.

The Department has technical comments on this bill. Federal tax law requires, among other things, that tax-exempt general obligation bond proceeds be used to finance projects/programs that serve public purposes. As private entities will derive the benefit from this legislation, tax-exempt general obligation bonds cannot be used for this purpose. The State would need to issue taxable general obligation bonds at a higher cost in order to fund the rental housing trust fund and dwelling unit revolving fund.

In addition, to the extent that funding for such programs are not in the proposed Executive Budget, should this bill proceed or pass the Legislature, an amount for the corresponding annual debt service will need to be included in the Legislature's version of the budget.

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



STATE OF HAWAII

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM
HAWAII HOUSING FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
677 QUEEN STREET, SUITE 300
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
FAX: (808) 587-0600

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Statement of
Craig K. Hirai
Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation
Before the

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES AND HOUSING

January 31, 2015 at 1:15 p.m.
State Capitol, Room 229

In consideration of
S.B. 120
RELATING TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

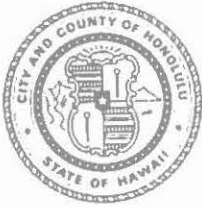
HHFDC supports Parts II, III, and IV of S.B. 120, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities set forth in the Executive Biennium budget. We defer to the Department of Human Services on the remainder of this bill.

Part II of this bill appropriates \$60 million in General Obligation Bond funds in Fiscal Year 2015-2016 for deposit into the Rental Housing Trust Fund (RHTF). We also note that the Governor will be submitting a request for \$100 million in General Obligation Bond funds in Fiscal Year 2015-2016 for deposit into the RHTF. An additional \$60 million for the RHTF would help to finance the development of approximately 480 permanent affordable workforce rental units and would provide an economic stimulus by creating 160 to 215 direct construction jobs and 402 to 429 indirect jobs, depending on the type of project being developed.

Part III of this bill appropriates \$20 million in General Obligation Bond funds in Fiscal Year 2015-2016 for deposit into the Dwelling Unit Revolving Fund. DURF is primarily used for interim and permanent loans, and can be used to finance the development of off-site infrastructure for affordable housing projects. Additional funding for DURF would allow HHFDC to increase the amount of DURF loans.

Part IV of this bill appropriates \$15 million in General Funds to HHFDC in both FY 2015-2016 and Fiscal Year 2016-2017 for the construction of micro apartment housing units. These funds could be used to finance the development of a micro apartment project located in Kakaako at 630 Cooke Street.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



CITY COUNCIL
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
530 SOUTH KING STREET, ROOM 202
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-3065
TELEPHONE: (808) 768-5010 • FAX: (808) 768-5011

KYMBERLY MARCOS PINE
COUNCILMEMBER, DISTRICT 1
TELEPHONE: (808) 768-5001
EMAIL: kmpine@honolulu.gov

January 30, 2015

The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland
Chairwoman
Senate Human Services Committee
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 266
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

The Honorable Josh Green
Vice-Chair
Senate Human Services Committee
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 266
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

VIA EMAIL

Subject: SB 120 – Relating to Affordable Housing

Honorable Chair Chun Oakland and Vice-Chair Green:

I appreciate the opportunity to express my support for the Senate Bill 120 which proposes to appropriate funding for the development of affordable housing. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Committee for its continued efforts to curb homelessness and clear pathways for more affordable housing options in Hawaii.

As you know, the City has redoubled its efforts to finance affordable housing and curb homelessness by among other things – appropriating over \$47 million in its FY2015 budget to fund the construction of *housing first* units in Honolulu. This is but one step toward creating more affordable housing for Hawaii's families. City Councilmembers believe that a collaborative 'all hands on deck' approach is needed to adequately address the long-standing community issue, which is why I **strongly support** SB 120.

SB 120 will incentivize the development of affordable housing while significantly curbing homelessness.

Mahalo for your continued service to the people of the State of Hawaii. Please contact me at 768-5001 if you would like to discuss this matter in further detail.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kimberly Marcos Pine". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kimberly Marcos Pine
Councilmember, District 1



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 120: RELATING TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

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

FROM: Trisha Kajimura, Social Policy Director, Catholic Charities Hawaii

Hearing: Saturday, 1/31/15, 1:15 pm; Conference Room 229

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **strong** support of SB 120, the Housing Omnibus Bill. Catholic Charities Hawaii's **priorities are: \$60 Million funding to the Rental Housing Trust Fund, including \$15 Million for micro units, and \$3 Million to the Department of Human Services (DHS) to continue Housing First and expand this successful program to the Neighbor Islands.**

Catholic Charities Hawaii (CCH) is a tax exempt, non-profit agency that has been providing social services in Hawaii for over 60 years. CCH has programs serving elders, children, developmentally disabled, homeless and immigrants. Our mission is to provide services and advocacy to the most vulnerable of the people in Hawaii. Catholic Charities Hawaii has a long history of working in the areas of affordable housing and homelessness. We are now partnering with other agencies on the Pathways Project (a Housing First model), to end chronic homelessness. A recent story shows how Housing First services are effective to change lives and end homelessness.

"John" came to the Hawaii Pathways program when he was identified as one of Oahu's most vulnerable and displaced homeless adults through the Hale O Malama coordinated assessment and intake process. As specified by the Housing First model, we provided intensive clinical and support services as he has struggled with living independently in his own apartment, relapsing periodically into substance abuse. Recently, a crisis occurred when he had his personal affects stolen, including the key to his apartment. He called on the CCH support service team for help, and was able to maintain sobriety despite returning to the streets for a night. The therapeutic relationship developed by our support service team with John has kept him in the fight to stay housed and recover from his many challenges. We can clearly see that this intensive partnership with our clients is an effective intervention to chronic homelessness.

Our housing crisis is NOW. Hawaii has the highest rate of homelessness in the USA. 78% of extremely low income households living in poverty pay more than half their income for rent. We support new creative ways to house Hawaii's people, such as micro units. The **\$15 million for micro units** would result in new models being costed out and built. These could then be replicated in other areas for small households. **\$60 million to the Rental Housing Trust Fund** is critical to address the growing shortfall in affordable housing units for Hawaii, now surpassing 13,000 units needed in one year (2016).

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Please contact me at (808) 527-4810 or trisha.kajimura@catholiccharitieshawaii.org if you have any questions.



CLARENCE T. C. CHING CAMPUS • 1822 Ke'eaumoku Street, Honolulu, HI 96822
Phone (808) 527-4810 • trisha.kajimura@CatholicCharitiesHawaii.org



Aloha United Way



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Human Services and Housing
Saturday, January 31, 2015 at 1:15 P.M.
Conference Room 229, State Capitol**

RE: SENATE BILL 120 RELATING TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

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

The Chamber **supports** the intent of S.B. 120 which proposes to:

1. Authorize the issuance of \$60,000,000.00 in general obligation bonds and appropriate the funds for deposit into the rental housing trust fund to finance affordable rental housing development;
2. Authorize the issuance of \$20,000,000.00 in general obligation bonds and appropriate the funds for deposit into the dwelling unit revolving fund for the development of infrastructure and improvements of on-site and off-site development;
3. Appropriate \$15,000,000.00 for the construction of micro apartment housing units; and,
4. Appropriate \$3,000,000.00 to the department of human services to continue to administer housing first programs for chronically homeless.

The Chamber is the largest business organization in Hawaii, representing more than 1,000 businesses. Approximately 80% of our members are small businesses with less than 20 employees. As the “Voice of Business” in Hawaii, the organization works on behalf of its members, which employ more than 200,000 individuals, to improve the state’s economic climate and to foster positive action on issues of common concern.

The Chamber strongly supports the need to provide government assistance to develop housing units for the 80% AMI and below income group. The economics associated with developing units for people in this income group and below require some type of government assistance. The private sector is unable to provide units at these price points without government assistance.

The Chamber also suggests that the Legislature expand its efforts by creating “incentives” for development of more units at all price points above the 80% and below AMI. Incentives could include some of the following:

- Up-zoning or density bonuses for existing urbanized properties;
- Improving the land use entitlement process to encourage development of housing units for certain targeted price points (i.e. 80% to 140% of AMI);
- Invest in regional infrastructure capacity building in areas identified for growth, and allow for small and medium size developers to enter the market to increase competition.



Chamber of Commerce HAWAII

The Voice of Business

Addressing only one segment of the housing market is not the answer. A healthy housing market allows for people to “Step Up” into other units as their family and economic situation improves. Without increasing the overall supply of housing at all price points, people will be unable to “step up” into other housing units. Allowing families to “step up” into other units will also allow other first time home buyers to purchase the sellers entry level unit.

Thank you for the opportunity to express our views on this matter.

January 30, 2015

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

RE: SENATE BILL 120, RELATING TO HOUSING

FROM: Bob Nakata, Co-Chair
FACE Housing Task Force

Thank you for this opportunity to speak in strong support of SB120 to support various housing programs of the State of Hawaii, in response to the severe problem in affordable housing and homelessness.

After many years of neglect, the powers that be are beginning to move strongly to address the problems. This Committee, under the leadership of its Chair, began addressing the problems several years ago and has been instrumental in building the gathering momentum we now see.

The push for micro housing units and for the Housing First Program was initiated by this Committee. Its work also undergirded other efforts which led to Mayor Caldwell's Housing Strategy, and now the Governor's major initiatives, among others.

There is a lot more to be done, and many more hands and minds are needed. This bill itself is an important part of the movement, as are all who are supporting it and the other bills on this agenda. We must build the tens of thousands of affordable units needed and stop the pace of death of homeless persons which has reached one a week for the last eight years.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

January 31, 2015

The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services and Housing
State Capitol, Room 229
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

RE: S.B. 120, Relating to Affordable Housing

HEARING: Saturday, January 31, 2015, at 1:15 p.m.

Aloha Chair Chun Oakland, Vice Chair Green, and Members of the Committee:

I am Myoung Oh, Government Affairs Director, submitting testimony on behalf of the Hawai'i Association of REALTORS® (“HAR”), the voice of real estate in Hawai'i, and its 8,400 members. HAR **supports** S.B. 120, which authorizes the issuance of general obligation bonds and the appropriation of funds for deposit into the rental housing trust fund and the dwelling unit revolving fund to finance affordable rental housing development and infrastructure development; appropriates funds for the construction of micro apartment housing units; and appropriates funds to the department of human services to continue to administer housing first programs for chronically homeless.

HAR has historically supported mechanisms to help increase the supply of low and moderate income affordable housing such as the Rental Housing Trust Fund (RHTF) Program which can help integrate the use of mixed-income and mixed-use projects, special purpose revenue bonds, low-interest loans, block grants, low-income housing tax credit programs and deferred loan programs to provide rental housing opportunities.

HAR also supported the Dwelling Unit Revolving Funds (DURF) which may be used for the acquisition of real property; development and construction of residential, commercial and industrial properties; interim and permanent loans to developers; and any and all things necessary to carry out the purposes of the Housing Development Program.

Lastly, as these programs help to increase the availability of rental and affordable housing for persons who face obstacles in moving from homelessness to housing and persons with lower incomes who need to find affordable rental housing, HAR believes these efforts should continue to help address the homelessness issue in our State.

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony.



The Public Policy Voice for the Roman Catholic Church in the State of Hawaii

HEARING: Senate HSH on Saturday, January 31, 2015 @ 1:15 #229
SUBMITTED: January 30, 2015
TO: Senate Committee on Human Services & Housing
Sen. Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Sen. Josh Green, Vice Chair
FROM: Walter Yoshimitsu, Executive Director
RE: Support for SB 120, Relating to Affordable Housing

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of SB 120, appropriating funding for a variety of critical programs targeted at addressing the affordable housing crisis and ending homelessness. Guaranteeing affordable housing to all continues to be a challenge in our state. It is an issue that remains a top priority for the Catholic Church in Hawaii.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops stated recently that “[t]he traditional law of supply and demand has not yet proved adequate tot the task of providing decent housing for all our people. The demand, as we have seen, is present and growing, yet the response is clearly inadequate, especially for low- and moderate-income people. . . . Since decent housing is a human right, its provision involves a public responsibility. The magnitude of our housing crisis requires a massive commitment of resources and energy.”

We strongly support measures that would provide the necessary funding to create more affordable rentals. According to recent statistics, Hawaii has the highest rate of homelessness in the United States. 78% are extremely low-income households living in poverty that pay more than half their income for rent.

We strongly support the creation of micro units because we believe that this innovative idea can truly serve Hawai'i. 25% of Hawai'i's households are singles and new creative ideas are needed to solve their housing needs. On the mainland, where micro units are created, developers partner with talented local designers to work on solutions that are appropriate to both the local community and the needs of residents. This partnership results in new housing solutions that truly serve the vulnerable among us. We believe a step further must be made using public-private partnerships to offer assistance to social services and also help manage the buildings long-term. We believe that is the key to creating affordable communities.

Finally, we also strongly support funding for the successful Housing First project. Housing First is a successful model that delivers services in a more dignified and compassionate way by providing people who are homeless with the stability of housing and then offering supportive services to address their barriers to stabilization. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



HPCCA

HAWAII PRIMARY CARE ASSOCIATION

Senate Committee on Human Services
The Hon. Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
The Hon. Josh Green, Vice Chair

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 120
Relating to Affordable Housing
Submitted by Robert Hirokawa, Chief Executive Officer
January 31, 2015, 1:15pm, Room 229

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA), which represents the federally qualified community health centers in Hawaii, supports Senate Bill 120, which authorizes bonds to be used to bolster affordable housing development and infrastructure.

The HPCA is a staunch believer in the social determinants of health, those economic and social conditions that influence an individual and a community's health status. These conditions serve as risk factors endemic to a person's living and working environment, rather than their behavioral or genetic histories. Factors such as income, education, access to recreation and healthy foods, housing, and employment, can and do have measurable impacts on a person and a community, both in health and financial outcomes.

Senate Bill 120 speaks to one of these major determinants by seeking to alleviate the growing affordable housing crisis in Hawaii. For that reason, we strongly support this measure and thank you for the opportunity to testify.



PARTNERS IN CARE

Oahu Continuum of Care

Partners in Care is a coalition of Oahu's homeless service providers, government representatives and community stakeholders working together in partnership to end homelessness.

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 120: RELATING TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

TO: Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair, Senator Josh Green, Vice Chair; and members of the Committee on Human Services and Housing
FROM: Betty Lou Larson, Advocacy Committee, Partners in Care
Hearing: **Saturday, January 31, 2015; 1:15 PM; Conference Room 229**

Dear Chair Chun Oakland, Vice Chair Green, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony **in strong support** of SB 120, appropriating funding for a variety of critical programs targeted at addressing the affordable housing crisis and ending homelessness. I am Betty Lou Larson from the Advocacy Committee of Partners in Care.

Partners in Care strongly supports **\$60 million to the Rental Housing Trust Fund** to provide the affordable rentals needed to prevent more people from falling into homelessness. Our housing crisis is NOW. Hawaii has the highest rate of homelessness among the US states. 78% of extremely low income households living in poverty pay more than half their income for rent.

PIC also strongly supports **\$15 million for micro units**. About 25% of Hawaii's households are singles. New creative ideas are needed to solve their housing needs. The concept of micro units is a new pathway to house people in safety and dignity in a small, well-designed unit, but at half the cost of a regular "affordable" rental unit. This funding would challenge developers to design new prototypes that could be used for very low income singles, seniors and small families.

PIC also strongly supports **\$3 million for Housing First**, to continue this successful program and to expand it to the Neighbor Islands. Research indicates that Housing First is the way to end chronic homelessness. Programs consistently report high success rates of keeping residents in permanent housing. We respectfully urge you to add this funding to the **base budget of DHS**.

Last year PIC asked people to sign a petition to support funding for affordable rental housing. Many people wrote comments, sending their hopes and concerns to the Legislature. Their comments show the depth of feeling and support throughout Hawaii for affordable housing:

"I have lived in Hawaii all my life, and I will never be able to even rent a decent housing unit; this makes me sad." Another said, *"I work a full-time job at \$10 an hour. My rent is \$1275. If I had to pay my rent by myself I would not be able to afford it along with my utilities. Please help us here in Hawaii."* And another, *"My grandchildren had to move to the Mainland because Section 8 closed due to a 5 year waitlist. I am so sad and not sure when I'll ever see them again."* One reflected: *"When I see a person without a home I think: Where's the Aloha Hawaii? Where is the empathy? How can we allow children to live on beaches and on the streets? How can we allow our Veterans to be Homeless? I know some folks need mental health services so let's get them help. I couldn't imagine being forced to live my life out in the public, can you? So I vote Yes! Please do all you can to End homelessness in Hawaii and hopefully every state will follow us."*

And lastly:

"Malama our Island Ohana! Support the cause, and put a roof over homelessness."

The People of Hawaii are speaking to you today. Thank you for hearing their testimony. Please contact me at (808) 373-0356 or bettylou.larson@catholiccharitieshawaii.org if you have any questions.



Community Health Outreach Work

677 Ala Moana Blvd., Suite 226
Honolulu, HI 96813
Phone (808) 853-3292 • Fax (808) 853-3274

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 120: RELATING TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

TO: Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair, Senator Josh Green, Vice Chair; and members of the Committee on Human Services and Housing

FROM: Heather Lusk, Executive Director, CHOW Project

Hearing: Saturday, January 31 at 1:15 in Room 229

Dear Chair Chun Oakland, Vice Chair Green, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony **in strong support** of SB 120, appropriating funding for a variety of critical programs targeted at addressing the affordable housing crisis and ending homelessness.

For over 20 years the CHOW Project has been working improve the lives of men women and families experiencing homelessness who also may be touched by addiction. The CHOW Project is dedicated to serving individuals, families, and communities adversely affected by drug use, through a participant-centered harm reduction approach. CHOW works to reduce drug related harms such as but not limited to HIV, hepatitis B/C and overdose. As a nonprofit organization that provides services for the homeless, we have seen firsthand how the new housing first approach is effective when working with our population. As a member of Partners in Care, we support their recommendations:

- Partners in Care strong supports **\$60 million to the Rental Housing Trust Fund** to provide the affordable rentals needed to prevent more people from falling into homelessness. Our housing crisis is NOW. Hawaii has the highest rate of homelessness among the US states. Almost 75% of extremely low income households pay more than half their income for rent.
- PIC also strongly supports **\$15 million for micro units**. About 25% of Hawaii's households are singles. New creative ideas are needed to solve their housing needs. The concept of micro units is a new pathway to house people in safety and dignity in a small, well-designed unit, but at half the cost of a regular "affordable" rental unit. This funding would challenge developers to design new prototypes that could be used for very low income singles, seniors and small families.
- PIC also strongly supports **\$3 million for Housing First**, to continue this successful program and to expand it to the Neighbor Islands. Research indicates that Housing First is the way to end chronic homelessness. Programs consistently report high success rates of keeping residents in permanent housing. We respectfully urge you to add this funding to the **base budget of DHS.**

Sincerely,

Heather Lusk

Executive Director
CHOW Project

SB120

Submitted on: 1/29/2015

Testimony for HSH on Jan 31, 2015 13:15PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alika Campbell	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I strongly support funding the rental housing trust fund as it helps to provide much needed resources for affordable housing development. I also strongly support funding for the development of micro-units as this could expand the inventory of housing options available to low income renters. Additionally, I also strongly support the funding for Housing First. The more options available to address the diverse housing needs of our extended ohana the better.

SB120

Submitted on: 1/29/2015

Testimony for HSH on Jan 31, 2015 13:15PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Andrea	Individual	Support	No

Cynthia K.L. Rezendes

Email: Rezendesc@aol.com

January 31, 2015

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 120: RELATING TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

TO: Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair, Senator Josh Green, Vice Chair; and members of the Committee on Human Services and Housing
Hearing: **Saturday, January 31, 2015; 1:15 PM; Conference Room 229**

Dear Chair Chun Oakland, Vice Chair Green, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **strong support** of SB 120, recognizing and appropriating funding to address our critical housing shortage which is placing extreme hardships on many families in Hawai'i, including those who are working but still without a home.

As many in the business of attempting to help those who are homeless or at the risk of homelessness have been saying for many years, more housing inventory is required to address the high cost of either renting or owning a home.

This bill definitely goes towards attempting to start addressing that major issue. The \$60 million being proposed to increase the Rental Housing Trust Fund, thereby providing the additional funding developers require to build low-income or affordable housing, has the potential to provide more economical housing to help those extremely low income households reduce the amount of their income being allocated to stay housed from greater than 50% to a lesser amount thereby allowing monies to be spent on other requirements, i.e. food, water, electricity, etc.

The option to have alternative housing, like micro units, also has the potential to address those households composed of only one to two individuals. Current statistics show that about 25% of household are singles. The \$15 million being identified for micro units provides an option for those not requiring larger dwellings, thereby making it more affordable for these individuals to have their own household and leaving larger dwellings for those that truly need them. This also provides the historical concept of starting with a smaller dwelling and then up-grading or down-grading as time and requirements change.

The \$3 million for Housing First will only strengthen a program that is already starting to take off and show positive results for people that were thought would never integrate into "regular" housing. This commitment needs to continue to not only continue to support the individuals and families placed into permanent housing via Housing Frist and providing services to transition these individuals and families into independent, productive citizens but to also expand the program to address more of those that have been identified as our more critical chronically homeless (those most at risk of causing the system extremely higher amounts of funding to address if not strategically helped.) Placing these funds into the base budget of DHS would be the most efficient and assured method to be continued in the future as we all address this difficult issue.

Thank you for accepting my testimony.

Sincerely,

Cynthia K.L. Rezendes
Wai`anae Resident

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 120: RELATING TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING

TO: Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair, Senator Josh Green, Vice Chair; and members of the Committee on Human Services and Housing
FROM: Hannah O'Leary, Master of Social Work graduate student at the Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work at the University of Hawaii at Manoa
Hearing: Saturday, January 31, 2015, 1:15 PM, Room 229

Dear Chair Chun Oakland, Vice Chair Green, and members of the committee:

My name is Hannah O'Leary, and I am a graduate student at the Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **strong support** of SB 120, especially regarding the continuation of funds for Housing First.

In 2012, I was part of the highly enthusiastic 100K Homes Oahu campaign; and collected data by talking story with individuals and families who were houseless in urban Honolulu. The information that was obtained was beneficial to establish the framework for the next step in housing the most vulnerable of Oahu's homeless population.

However, our progress since 2012 has been met with struggles and setbacks, e.g. criminalizing homelessness with the sit-lie ban law. The ban has been known to do more harm than good by imposing costs on cities by way of law enforcement and lawsuits; and still there is little improvement to services for people who are homeless.

Housing First has demonstrated a positive track record in many states on the continent, with Hawaii slowly implementing the program on Oahu. It is a joy to know that, as of today, 40 homes are occupied using the Housing First model on Oahu; and that the efforts that began in 2012 are not in vain.

As a social worker, best practices and effective models are the tools we use to bolster our abilities to help people in vulnerable situations. The Housing First model has been proven to work in many cities. It takes care of the presenting problem – no home – and then allows for the stability that comes with having a place to live help people make their own decisions about their health and well-being. The main idea is to create a safe environment so that people can feel empowered and maintain the right to self-determine.

For this reason, I **support** SB 120 to put Housing First funding in the base budget for the Department of Human Services; and to increase the budget to 3 million in order to expand to our neighbor islands. We need this program to be sustained so that we can all be part of its positive benefits.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify on behalf of SB 120.

Hannah O'Leary
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To: Senator Susan Chun-Oakland, Chairperson
Senator Josh Green, Vice-Chairperson
And members of the Senate Committee on Human Services and Housing

From: Leimomi Devenport

RE: SB120, Relating to AFFORDABLE HOUSING – STRONG SUPPORT

Senator Susan Chun-Oakland, Senator Josh Green, and members of the Senate Committee on Human Services and Housing, I am testifying in **STRONG SUPPORT** of SB120.

My name is Leimomi Devenport and I am a student from the Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work at the University of Manoa, and I am also an intern case manager in the Family Program at the Institute for Human Services.

Here in Hawaii, we have a growing homeless population and although there is no one reason for homelessness, a large contributor to the problem is a lack of affordable housing. I appreciate that this bill would appropriate monies into the rental housing trust fund to allow for the construction of new apartment housing units. I also value the increase in funding to allow the department of human services to continue to run and manage housing first programs for our chronically homeless.

I relate to this bill because I grew up in Hawaii as an only child of a single mother. My mother did not qualify for benefits to assist us in housing, and we always lived paycheck to paycheck, as many families in Hawaii do. Having been homeless once in my high school years, I know first-hand some of the struggles these families face and the importance of having affordable housing options.

I also currently work with the homeless population, and I have found that a major part of what holds families back from finding housing is a lack of available or affordable options. Having an increase in housing units would help alleviate Hawaii's growing problem of homelessness. The additional funds for the housing first programs will also ensure that not only will the existing users benefit, but it will also allow for more people to be helped.

I strongly support SB120 and request that you also support the passing of this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,
Leimomi Devenport