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**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SB2300 on Feb 9, 2016 14:55PM  
**Date:** Monday, February 08, 2016 9:27:12 PM

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**SB2300**

Submitted on: 2/8/2016

Testimony for HOU on Feb 9, 2016 14:55PM in Conference Room 225

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ann S Freed	Hawaii Women's Coalition	Support	No

Comments: Although this measure is not in our 2016 Package, we did support this measure last year. This small amount of money per household will have a big impact on those struggling to make ends meet at the lower end of the income scale. Please pass this bill and help vulnerable families, many of which have women as heads of households. Mahalo, Ann S. Freed, Co-Chair, Hawaii Women's Coalition

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**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for SB2300 on Feb 9, 2016 14:55PM\*  
**Date:** Tuesday, February 09, 2016 1:00:52 PM

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**SB2300**

Submitted on: 2/9/2016

Testimony for HOU on Feb 9, 2016 14:55PM in Conference Room 225

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Leilani Maxera	The CHOW Project	Support	No

Comments:

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Hawaii  
**Children's Action Network**  
Building a unified voice for Hawaii's children

February 9, 2016

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To: Senator Breene Harimoto, Chair  
Senator Brickwood Galuteria, Vice Chair

From: Deborah Zysman, Executive Director  
Hawaii Children's Action Network

Re: **SB 2300, Relating to Low-Income Household Renters Credit - Support**  
**Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 225 – February 9, 2016 – 2:55 PM**

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**On behalf of Hawaii Children's Action Network (HCAN), formerly Good Beginnings Alliance, we are writing in support of SB 2300, Relating to Low Income Household Renters Credit.**

HCAN is committed to improving lives and being a strong voice advocating for Hawai'i's children. Last fall, HCAN convened input in person and online from more than 50 organizations and individuals that came forward to support or express interest for a number of issues affecting children and families in our state that resulted in the compilation of 2016 Hawai'i Children's Policy Agenda, which can be accessed at <http://www.hawaii-can.org/2016policyagenda>.

HCAN supports this initiative to increase the low-income household renters credit from \$50 to a maximum value of \$150 per qualified exemption for households. This bill also adjusts the income threshold to allow households with an adjusted gross income of less than \$60,000 to claim the credit.

The low-income household renters credit was created nearly 40 years ago but the last update was in 1989 when the income threshold was increased. However, the tax credit has not been adjusted since 1981. This proposed change adjusts the credit values to make up for decades of inflation and neglect. Additionally, the credit will be tiered to better focus on those most in need and gradually phase-out as household income increases.

Housing is highest cost burden for families followed by childcare as a percentage of the overall family budget. More than half of renter-households spend more than 30 percent

of their income on rent. We desperately need to alleviate the burden on renter families that are struggling to afford housing.

We need sound policies and stable funding sources that address the chronic housing shortage and bridge the economic gap for families to afford safe and secure housing, especially those with young children. Without state investments, we could see our state continue to lead the nation in growing rates for homelessness and unsafe and unstable housing.

**Homeless Children:** Hawaii has the highest homeless rate in the nation. It's estimated that one-third of the homeless in Hawaii are children.

**Unstable Housing:** Many of our families may not be living on the street or the beach, yet they don't have permanent housing -- they stay with friends and family -- moving frequently.

**High cost of housing for families:** 60 percent of households with young children in Hawaii pay more than 30% of their income for housing.

We need solutions and improved outcomes for our most vulnerable populations. Let's build a comprehensive affordable housing program that helps families at every stage secure stable housing options and allows us establish greater economic stability and a healthier thriving community.

**For these reasons, HCAN respectfully requests that the committee vote to pass this bill.**