



**OFFICE OF PLANNING
STATE OF HAWAII**

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Statement of
LEO R. ASUNCION
Director, Office of Planning
before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC DEVELOPEMNT AND BUSINESS
Wednesday, February 15, 2017
9:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 309

in consideration of
HB 599, HD1
RELATING TO THE HAWAII STATE PLAN.

Chair Nakashima, Vice Chair Keohokalole, and Members of the House Committee on Economic Development and Business.

The Office of Planning (OP) supports HB 599, HD1, which updates the goal of the State to provide housing to households with extremely low- to above moderate- income households. OP agrees that the need for affordable rental units is particularly important for households with low incomes. Housing is considered “affordable” when a household spends less than 30 percent of their income on shelter and utilities. However, affordable housing is a serious challenge for Hawaii’s low-income residents, who face one of the highest housing costs in the county. The proposed measure will assist in focusing the State’s efforts on affordability of housing.

HB 599, HD1 also amends the process for updating of Functional Plans to be more efficient for lead agencies, and to take advantage of advisory groups or boards and commissions that many lead agencies have formed to serve as advisory committees in the update of a lead agency’s Functional Plan.

The Office of Planning notes that the proposed amendments in HB 599, HD1 were vetted and developed by the Special Action Team on Affordable Rental Housing pursuant to Act 127, Session Laws of Hawaii 2016.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.