



BRIDGING THE GAP

*Balance of State Continuum of Care on the neighbor islands of Hawaii,
where ending homelessness is our top priority*

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 171: RELATING TO HOUSING

TO: Senator Josh Green, Chair, Committee on Human Services, Senator Will Espero, Chair, Committee on Housing, and Members, Human Services and Housing.

FROM: Brandee Menino, Chairperson
Balance of State Continuum of Care, Bridging the Gap

Hearing: Monday, 1/30/17; 2:55 pm; CR 016

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony **in strong support** of SB 171, to continue the Housing First Program and including funding for the neighbor island communities. This funding provides immediate solutions to ending chronic homelessness. My name is Brandee Menino, and am writing in behalf of the Balance of State Continuum of Care group, Bridging the Gap.

According to Hawaii's Homeless Point in Time Count report, the total number of chronically homeless individuals and families increased by 27% in 2016 with 1,949 persons in chronically homeless households, compared to 2015 with 1,534 in chronically homeless households. On the neighbor islands, there were 665 chronically homeless individuals identified & 194 persons in 42 chronically homeless families.

According to the Homeless Service Utilization Statistical Supplement Report for FY 2015, **102 chronic homeless adults and 100 chronic homeless families on Hawai'i, Mau'i and Kaua'i Counties** moved into permanent housing and **NONE of them** returned to the homeless service system after one year. So, in every community on the neighbor islands, we know firsthand that Housing First works!

We ask for your support for \$3 million to continue the Housing First program statewide. We also respectfully urge that this funding be added to the **base budget of DHS**. Without this, the sustainability of housing for currently housed chronically homeless people would be at risk.

Thank you very much for hearing and considering this critical bill to help end chronic homelessness. Please contact me at (808) 933-6013 or bmenino@hopeserviceshawaii.org if you have any questions. Mahalo for your time and look forward to your support.



HAWAII APPLESEED

CENTER FOR LAW & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Testimony of Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
Supporting SB 171 Relating to Housing
Senate Committees on Human Services and Housing
Scheduled for Hearing Monday, January 30, 2017, 2:55 PM, Conference Room 016

Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice Hawai'i Appleseed is committed to a more socially just Hawai'i, where everyone has genuine opportunities to achieve economic security and fulfill their potential. We change systems that perpetuate inequality and injustice through policy development, advocacy, and coalition building.

Dear Chair Green, Chair Espero, and Members of the Committees on Human Services and Housing:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 171, which makes appropriations for the continuation of the Housing First program in order to combat chronic homelessness.

Hawaii has the highest homelessness rate in the nation, and the problem continues to worsen. We need to adopt proven, cost-effective solutions to address homelessness. We support the continuance of the Housing First program on Oahu and its expansion to neighbor islands. The program gets people off the streets immediately, moving them into a more stable environment where they can be rehabilitated and achieve self-sufficiency. Housing first has been proven nationally as the most effective model for combating chronic homelessness.

Locally, the program is already proving effective. Recent data shows that Housing First results in tremendous public cost savings in healthcare. Early findings from UH Center on the Family show a 43% reduction in healthcare costs after just 6-months in the Housing First program—approximately \$4,590 per person per month. After deducting the average cost of Housing First rental subsidies (\$1,100/mo) and supportive services (\$1,120/mo), the net savings accrued from Housing First based on healthcare cost savings alone is estimated to be around \$2,370 per person per month. With an estimated 500 people served by City and State Housing First programs, the savings is estimated to amount to \$1.18M per month.

The Housing First program is working, and it is critical that funding for it be continued. Thank you very much for hearing and considering this important bill to help end homelessness.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, January 30, 2017 2:26 PM
To: HMS Testimony
Cc: blawaiianlvr@icloud.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB171 on Jan 30, 2017 14:55PM

SB171

Submitted on: 1/30/2017

Testimony for HMS/HOU on Jan 30, 2017 14:55PM in Conference Room 016

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
De MONT R. D. CONNER	Ho'omana Pono, LLC.	Support	Yes

Comments: We FULLY SUPPORT this bill that addresses the Homeless issue.

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.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, January 30, 2017 1:04 PM
To: HMS Testimony
Cc: stanfranco@hawaiiantel.net
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB171 on Jan 30, 2017 14:55PM

SB171

Submitted on: 1/30/2017

Testimony for HMS/HOU on Jan 30, 2017 14:55PM in Conference Room 016

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
stan franco	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I am a housing advocate on Maui and Co-Chair of Face Maui's Housing Committee. I support the Housing First approach to meet the needs of our homeless population.

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.

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Kendrick Farm

I speak in support of SB171 which provides additional funding for housing first initiatives. This policy position is backed by science and evidence from the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness. Per the Council findings “Housing First is a proven approach in which people experiencing homelessness are offered permanent housing with few to no treatment preconditions, behavioral contingencies, or barriers.” (United States Interagency Council on Homelessness Retrieved 1/29/2017

Beyond citing studies from academic sources, I am a Member of the Neighborhood Board Member-At Large for Kalihi-Palama No 15. The problem of homelessness and other problems surrounding it is a major concern for my district. The homeless on the street affect areas such as public safety and public health. The homeless on the street also contribute to unsanitary living conditions.

As I walk through my neighborhood district I not only read about homelessness, but see it every day. People living on the streets in makeshift cardboard boxes are a common sight within my district.

In addition, in terms of cost benefit analysis it cost the state less money to house individuals currently on the street than having persons that are homeless not have access to shelters based on entry requirements. Such barriers increase the propensity for negative law enforcement encounters and exacerbated medical conditions due to living on the streets.

We must be willing to part with previous orthodoxy that put an emphasis on having the individual “come clean” on the outside before entering a housing program. We must become pragmatic in our approaches not to base our policy positions on emotional or ideological conviction but data driven approaches. I will ask other members of my Neighborhood board to support a resolution in support of SB171.

Sources

<https://www.usich.gov/solutions/housing/housing-first>