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LATE TESTIMONY

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Statement of
Hakim Ouansafi
Hawaii Public Housing Authority
Before the

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

Thursday, February 2, 2017
2:55 PM
Room 225, Hawaii State Capitol

In consideration of
SB 968

RELATING TO SERVICES PERFORMED BY CIVIL SERVICE EMPLOYEES

Honorable Chair Espero and Members of the Senate Committee on Housing, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony concerning Senate Bill 968, relating to housing.

The Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) supports SB 968, which authorizes the establishment of permanent multi-skilled worker civil service positions for the HPHA to provide some services historically and customarily performed by civil service employees in connection with housing opportunities for homeless individuals and others in need. Specifically, this bill requests thirty-four permanent positions for the HPHA Multi-Skilled Worker program.

The Multi-Skilled Worker (MSW) Program began as a pilot program to address a dire need to reduce housing turn-over rates. The program's advantage is that public servants are no longer confined by their position descriptions, but can now train and be trained by other skilled trade workers in the MSW program to effectively, and efficiently work as a unified team to put a roof over the heads of our most vulnerable citizens and also reduced the amount of time to repair a vacant unit from triple digits' years ago, to only seven days.

Because it is voluntary in nature, HPHA currently has only 34 participants in a 68-person program. Establishing permanent positions will enable a greater opportunity for increased success across the agency. Positions for the program were initially borrowed from the Property Management Branch, as HPHA workers volunteered to participate in the program. Ultimately, the MSW positions will save tax payer money as HPHA gets Federal subsidies based on the total occupied units.

The HPHA appreciates the opportunity to provide the Senate Committee on Housing with the HPHA's comments regarding SB 968. We thank you very much for your dedicated support.