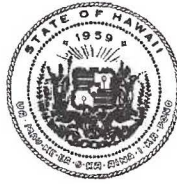


DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



PANKAJ BHANOT  
DIRECTOR

BRIDGET HOLTHUS  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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

March 30, 2017

TO: The Honorable Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair  
Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor

The Honorable Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair  
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **HB1195 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS**

Hearing: Thursday, March 30, 2017, 9:50 a.m.  
Conference Room 211, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent of this bill to provide funding to address the State's homeless crisis and appreciates the clarification of which agencies and sections will be required to implement this measure. DHS still has concerns that the measure may adversely affect the Governor's Executive Budget requests for services targeted to ending homelessness. DHS asks for the Legislature's support of the Governor's Executive Budget requests, and defers to Department of Health in regard to section 2 and 3, the Office of Youth Services in regard to section 5, and the Hawaii Public Housing Authority in regard to section 7.

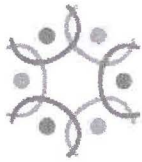
**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the bill is to appropriate funding for various outreach programs. DHS appreciates the clarifications and recommendations of the House Committee on Human Services, and the amendment of the Senate Committee on Human Services adding an appropriation for rental subsidies.

Homeless Programs Office (HPO) has currently awarded \$4.4 million for outreach services and \$600,000 for civil legal services. The outreach services include, and are not limited to,

providing or referring to shelter, housing, medical care, mental healthcare, substance use treatment programs, addressing civil legal barriers and obtaining government issued identification.

DHS respectfully asks that the Legislature support similar requests in the Governor's Executive Budget to address homelessness; predictable appropriations through the Executive Budget supports program continuity and overall improvement in the delivery of services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



March 27, 2017

To: Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Chair  
Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair  
Committee on Judiciary and Labor

Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair  
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Vice Chair  
Committee on Ways and Means

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

Re: **HB 1195 HD 1 SD 1 – Relating to Homelessness**  
**Hawaii State Capitol, Room 211, March 30, 2017, 9:50 AM**

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**On behalf of Hawaii Children's Action Network (HCAN), we are writing to support HB 1195 HD 1 SD 1– Relating to Homelessness.**

While we support the full bill, HCAN's testimony will focus on homeless families and unaccompanied runaway and homeless youth.

**Unaccompanied youth:** Outreach and housing for unaccompanied youth is especially critical. Currently there are no state or federal funds in Hawaii for this outreach. Unaccompanied youth living on the streets have different needs and issues than homeless adults and families, while the unaccompanied youth are also some of the most invisible and vulnerable segment of the homeless population. They need outreach and housing programs that are tailored to address their specific needs such as counseling, safety, health issues, and workers who understand adolescent development and their mental health challenges.

**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.

According to a 2012 report published by Child Trends, children and youth who experience a high degree of instability and turbulence in their lives are more likely to suffer higher levels of emotional and

behavioral problems. Children and youth who are homeless may suffer from hunger, poor physical and emotional health, and missed educational opportunities.

Hawaii needs a comprehensive solution that helps families and youth at every stage to secure stable housing solutions and build a pathway toward greater economic stability and a healthier thriving community. Outreach is vital to helping families and unaccompanied youth leave the streets and find better living situations.

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

HCAN is committed to building a unified voice advocating for Hawaii's children by improving their safety, health, and education. 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 2017 Hawai'i Children's Policy Agenda, which can be accessed at <http://www.hawaii-can.org/2017policyagenda>.

## LATE TESTIMONY



**TO:** Chairs Keith-Agaran and Tokuda, Vice Chairs Rhoads and Dela Cruz and the Members of the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Labor and Senate Committee on Ways and Means

**FROM:** Ryan Kusumoto, President & CEO of Parents And Children Together (PACT)

**DATE/LOCATION:** Thursday, March 30, 2017; 9:50 a.m., Conference Room 211

### **RE: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1195, HD1, SD1 – RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS**

**We support the intent of HB 1195, HD1, SD1 – Relating to Homelessness.** Homelessness is largely about poverty. Social service support to homeless youth and families have immediate and long-term benefits that include higher levels of educational achievement, reduced homelessness, reduced crime, reduced substance abuse, improved health, and overall better social and economic well being.

History has shown that as the economy has changed to negatively impact the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in our society, it has a direct tie to increased homelessness. These impacts have long lasting and multi-generational consequences. History has also shown that the lack of expansion in governmental safety net programs and the inability of social service programs to keep up with the rising needs severely impacts the war on poverty and homelessness.

This bill will support the critical services for families that are most in need. Parents And Children Together supports this bill and notes that it is of critical importance that this bill supports the social service delivery to families with young/preschool-aged children. The first 5 years of a child's life provides the foundation for future development. Access to services at an early age will help early identification of developmental, social/emotional, and educational issues. It is also critical to serve this population because families with young children do not often seek these services because of the fear of their children will be taken away from them. Services also to parents and caregivers are critical to address their unique circumstances.

There are approximately 8,000 keiki in Hawaii between the ages of 3-5 living in poverty and approximately 10,000 from the ages of 0-3. Many of these kids are homeless. Support of this bill will provide the funding that benefits the child and their families as they deal with homelessness and poverty. This is a key component to our war on intergenerational poverty. **All children in Hawaii, no matter what their circumstance, deserve a chance.**

Founded in 1968, Parents And Children Together (PACT) is one of Hawaii's not-for-profit organizations providing a wide array of innovative and educational social services to families in need. Assisting more than 18,000 people across the state annually, PACT helps families identify, address and successfully resolve challenges through its 16 programs. Among its services are: early education programs, domestic violence prevention and intervention programs, child abuse prevention and intervention programs, child and adolescent behavioral health programs, and community building programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support of HB 1195, HD1, SD1**, please contact me at (808) 847-3285 or [rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org](mailto:rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org) if you have any questions.