



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
HONOLULU

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GOVERNOR

February 9, 2018

TO: The Honorable Representative John M. Mizuno, Chair
House Committee on Health and Human Services

FROM: Scott Morishige, MSW, Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness

SUBJECT: **HB 1761 – RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS**

Hearing: Friday, February 9, 2018, 8:30 a.m.
Conference Room 329, State Capitol

POSITION: The Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness appreciates the intent of this measure, and offers comments.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the bill is to establish the Emergency Department Homelessness Assessment Pilot Program within the Department of Health (DOH) to identify a possible correlation between social worker interventions and the use of hospital emergency departments by individuals experiencing homelessness. The bill requires DOH, in consultation with the Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH) and other appropriate agencies, to serve as administrator of the pilot program. In addition, the bill appropriates funds to DOH for fiscal year 2018-2019 for implementation of the pilot program, including all program costs and hiring of necessary staff. DOH shall reimburse participating hospitals for expenses related to the pilot program, provided that funds are matched on a dollar-for-dollar basis by the participating hospital.

Homelessness remains one of the most pressing challenges facing Hawaii, and the State has adopted a comprehensive framework to address homelessness that focuses on three primary leverage points – affordable housing, health and human services, and public safety. The Coordinator works closely with multiple state agencies to implement this framework by working with State agencies and law enforcement to connect trespass and other enforcement

efforts together with the offer of services and housing-focused programs, such as Housing First and Rapid Rehousing. The coordinated efforts to implement the State's framework to address homelessness have made progress in reducing the number of homeless individuals statewide. In 2017, the statewide Point in Time (PIT) count found that the number of homeless people in Hawaii had *decreased* for the first time in eight years – a decrease of 701 people between 2016 and 2017.

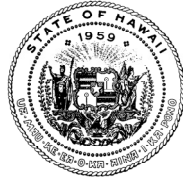
The Coordinator appreciates the Legislature's willingness to support innovative approaches to addressing the complex challenge of homelessness. However, the Coordinator is concerned about the adverse impact that an appropriation for this measure may have on priorities in the Governor's supplemental budget request for existing homeless programs. Collectively, the homeless programs administered by DHS and other State agencies represent an array of financial resources designed to provide one-time crisis assistance, as well as medium term (3-24 months) and longer-term support. This mix of short-, medium-, and long-term assistance is designed to transition at-risk and homeless individuals and families into stable housing, and is also designed to prevent homelessness by assisting formerly homeless individuals in maintaining housing over time. Accordingly, the Coordinator respectfully requests the Legislature's support of the Governor's supplemental budget request, which includes over \$15 million for homeless services administered by DHS and DOH.

The Coordinator notes that certain health plans have begun to locate staff in hospital emergency departments to facilitate better linkage to case management services for individuals with frequent emergency department utilization. In addition, UnitedHealthcare was recently awarded an Accountable Health Communities (AHC) grant through the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to address gaps between clinical care and community services in the current health care delivery system. The AHC grant includes a partnership with Waianae Coast Comprehensive Health Center, Kalihi-Palama Health Center, and Queen's Medical Center, and is expected to begin in April 2018. In particular, the AHC grant program will engage high-risk Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries at these health centers and will refer them to navigators that will provide in-depth assessments and care coordination. Generally, navigators will conduct an initial follow-up within two weeks after an individual is screened, and will

maintain regular contact with the individual on a monthly basis thereafter until the individuals are connected with an appropriate social service provider.

The Coordinator suggests that the Legislature consider monitoring the results of the AHC grant and similar efforts to inform the potential need for implementation of a pilot program like the one proposed in this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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TESTIMONY COMMENTING ON HB1761
RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS

REPRESENTATIVE JOHN M. MIZUNO, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Hearing Date and Time: Friday, February 9, 2018 at 8:30 a.m. Room Number: 329

1 The Department of Health (DOH) acknowledges that homelessness is one of the
2 State's most significant and challenging social concerns. The DOH and the Adult
3 Mental Health Division (AMHD) partner with other state agencies and with both AMHD
4 contracted and non-AMHD contracted community programs to address the mental
5 health needs of individuals experiencing homelessness. Key partners include the
6 Department of Human Services (DHS), Department of Transportation (DOT),
7 Department of Public Safety (PSD), the City and County of Honolulu, law enforcement,
8 and community based health and human service programs.

9 The purpose of this Act is to establish a pilot program to place social workers and
10 social worker designees in emergency departments to identify individuals experiencing
11 or at risk for homelessness and provide individualized assessments and referrals for
12 wrap-around social services with the goal of reducing costs associated with chronic use
13 of emergency departments.

14 The AMHD appreciates the intent of this bill and offers the following comments.

1 It is not clear how what this bill proposes comports with procurement law, or
2 other requirements regarding hospital employee staffing of emergency departments and
3 hospital discharge planning. It is also not clear how the participating emergency
4 departments would be selected. Until these issues are delineated further, it may be that
5 legislation as outlined here, is premature

6 We thank the Legislature for introducing a variety of measures that aim to
7 address the issue of homelessness in Hawaii. Respectfully, the AMHD asks for the
8 Legislature's support of the Governor's Executive Budget request, SB2065/HB1900,
9 which includes appropriations to the DHS and DOH for \$3 million for Housing First, \$3
10 million for Rapid Rehousing, \$1.75 million for homeless outreach, and \$800,000 for
11 outreach and counseling services for chronically homeless persons with severe
12 substance use disorders. Furthermore, with regard to the need for outcomes
13 evaluation, the department encourages swift passage of HB2361, Relating to Health
14 Analytics, an Administration Bill which establishes health care analytics capacity across
15 Employer-Union Health Benefits Trust Fund (EUTF) and Medicaid plans within the DHS.

16 The DOH will be available for consultation with DHS, the Governor's Coordinator
17 on Homeless, and others to coordinate services.

18 We thank the committee for considering our testimony.

HB-1761

Submitted on: 2/8/2018 8:31:22 AM

Testimony for HHS on 2/9/2018 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	OCC Legislative Priorities	Support	No

Comments:

**PRESENTATION OF THE
OAHU COUNTY COMMITTEE ON LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES
DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF HAWAII
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
THE SENATE
TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2018
Friday, February 9, 2018
8:30 a.m.
Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 329**

RE: Testimony in Support of HB 1761, RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES

To the Honorable John M. Mizuno, Chair; the Honorable Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee on Health & Human Services:

Good morning. My name is Melodie Aduja. I serve as Chair of the Oahu County Committee ("OCC") Legislative Priorities Committee of the Democratic Party of Hawaii ("DPH"). Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony on House Bill No.1761 relating to an Emergency Department Homelessness Assessment Pilot Program.

The OCC Legislative Priorities Committee is in support of House Bill No.1761 and is in favor of its passage.

House Bill No.1761 is in accord with the Platform of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i ("DPH"), 2016, as it establishes a pilot program to place social workers and social worker designees in emergency departments to identify individuals experiencing or at risk for homelessness and provide individualized assessments and referrals for wrap-around social services with a goal of reducing costs associated with chronic use of emergency departments.

Specifically, the DPH Platform provides that "[w]e support dedicated social services and housing opportunities for Hawaii's homeless population to get them off the streets and reintegrated into society, with specific devoted services for disenfranchised groups including but not limit to the Hawaiian community, aged-out foster kids, youth, returning veterans, the aged, and lesbian , gay, bisexual and transgender homeless." (Platform of the DPH, P. 7, Lines 355-358 (2016)).

As House Bill No. 1761 authorizes an Emergency Department Homelessness Assessment Pilot Program, it is the position of the OCC Legislative Priorities Committee to support this measure.

Thank you very much for your kind consideration.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ **Melodie Aduja**


Melodie Aduja, Chair, OCC Legislative Priorities Committee

Email: legislativepriorities@gmail.com, Tel.: (808) 258-8889



THE QUEEN'S HEALTH SYSTEMS

To: The Honorable John M. Mizuno
The Honorable Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair
Members, Committee on Health and Human Services

From:  Paula Yoshioka, Vice President, Government Relations and External Affairs, The
Queen's Health Systems

Date: February 8, 2018

Hrg: House Committee on Health and Human Services Hearing; Friday, February 9, 2018 at
8:30 AM in Room 329

Re: Support for H.B. 1761, Relating to Homelessness

My name is Paula Yoshioka, and I am a Vice President at The Queen's Health Systems (Queen's). I would like to express my support for H.B. 1761, Relating to Homelessness and provide suggested amendments to broaden the scope of those participating in the pilot program. This bill would establish and appropriate funds for an Emergency Department Homelessness Assessment Pilot Program. Currently, the bill only includes social workers or social worker designees to identify patients in an Emergency Department (ED) and provide necessary assessment. We believe that the pilot program should be expanded to include a more comprehensive and multidisciplinary team made up of a physician, APRN, Social Workers and Patient Navigators.

Care coordination and patient navigation is considered the gold standard model to address the complex needs of the homeless population and the high medical utilization that providers are dealing with across the nation. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services has recognized the merits of programs that target super utilizers and many states across the country (e.g. New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and California) have leveraged multidisciplinary teams to deliver care coordination and navigation in a cost-effective manner.

The mission of Queen's is to provide quality health care services to improve the well-being of Native Hawaiians and all the people of Hawai'i, which includes our most vulnerable and underserved patient populations like the homeless. Queen's provides the majority of medical care to our homeless population in Hawai'i. In 2015, Queen's had 10,126 homeless encounters, up from 6,958 in 2013. This represents 64% of the state's homeless hospital encounters.

As the major trauma center for the state of Hawaii and the Pacific Basin, Queen's provides comprehensive trauma services, is the only Comprehensive Stroke Center, and was recently designated by the American College of Surgeons as a Level One Trauma Center. To ensure that our community has access to the lifesaving trauma services provided at our facility, Queen's must be ready to accept severe trauma patients through our ED. Over the years, ED visits have steadily been on the rise and our average daily census has increased to 180 patient visits. While future plans are in place to expand our ED capacity to meet the needs of the community, the over

The mission of The Queen's Health Systems is to fulfill the intent of Queen Emma and King Kamehameha IV to provide in perpetuity quality health care services to improve the well-being of Native Hawaiians and all of the people of Hawai'i.

utilization of the ED for non-emergent services for homeless patients continues to place a strain on our health care system and too often leads to ED crowding and excessive ED ambulance diversion.

The costs to the entire continuum of care—from hospitals to long-term care facilities to home-based services—of treating the homeless population are large and growing. There are still unmet needs for our homeless patients and while Queen's has been a leader in care coordination, we know that much more needs to be done within the community to close the gaps in services and supports for our homeless population. I commend the legislature for introducing this measure and thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Date: February 8, 2018

To: The Honorable John M. Mizuno, Chair
The Honorable Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair
House Committee on Health and Human Services

From: NASW Hawai'i Chapter

RE: Testimony in Support of H.B. 1761 Relating to Homelessness

Chair Mizuno, Vice Chair Kobayashi, and members of the House Committee on Health and Human Services:


The National Association of Social Workers- Hawaii (NASW-Hawai'i) strongly supports HB 1761 which establishes the Emergency Department Homelessness Assessment Pilot, with amendments.

Hawai'i ranked first in homelessness per capita in the U.S, as reported by the U.S Department on Housing and Urban Development. There are approximately 51% homeless individuals for every 10,000 people in Hawai'i. The absence of safe and stable living conditions puts homeless individuals at further risk for abuse, incarceration, and disease. Individuals suffering from homelessness often have or acquire a severe mental illness or substance abuse disorder, which further their needs for healthcare services. In the 2016 Point-in-time survey of homeless individuals in Oahu, approximately 20% of homeless individuals reported having a serious mental illness and 17% reported a substance abuse disorder.

For those living with the acute effects of homelessness, the emergency department is often the only resource available for obtaining basic medical and respite services. Homeless individuals with co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorders are at greatest risk for frequent hospitalizations and emergency department visits. By providing additional resources such as Social Workers imbedded in the emergency department who can link homeless patients and those at risk of homelessness with appropriate community resources addressing health, mental health, social and emotional needs, hospitals can reduce the extensive costs incurred by emergency department over usage of homeless individuals.

We suggest amending section 2, page 5 line 12, to clarify which level of social worker the bill refers to, as Hawaii has 3 levels of social worker, LBSW (Licensed Bachelor Social Worker), LSW (Licensed Social Worker {Master's level}), LCSW (Licensed Clinical Social Worker), each with different levels of training and responsibility.

We also suggest eliminating the usage of "social worker designee" in section 2, page 5, line 14 and instead using the term "social services designee" which is the term used in the professional field.


Sonja Bigalke-Bannan, MSW, LSW
Executive Director

National Association of Social Workers, Hawai'i Chapter