



**TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE, 2018**

LATE

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

H.B. NO. 2359, RELATING TO THE HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY.

BEFORE THE:

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

DATE: Thursday, February 8, 2018 **TIME:** 9:30 a.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 423

TESTIFIER(S): Russell A. Suzuki, Acting Attorney General, or
Jennifer R. Sugita, Deputy Attorney General

Chair Brower and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General supports this bill.

This bill amends chapter 356D and section 708-814, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to clarify the prohibition of trespassing in public housing projects. These amendments provide for clearer definitions and notice requirements regarding areas closed to the public and the giving of reasonable warning or request to leave. This bill would ensure that tenants of the State's public housing projects are afforded similar protection against criminal trespassers as are afforded to persons who reside on private property.

We respectfully ask the Committee to pass this bill.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



HAKIM OUANSAFI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BARBARA E. ARASHIRO
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

STATE OF HAWAII

HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY
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Statement of

Hakim Ouansafi

Hawaii Public Housing Authority
Before the

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

Thursday, February 8, 2018

9:30 AM - Room 423, Hawaii State Capitol

In consideration of

HB 2359

RELATING TO THE HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY

Honorable Chair Brower and Members of the House Committee on Housing, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony concerning House Bill (HB) 2359, relating to the Hawaii Public Housing Authority.

The Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) **strongly supports** the enactment of HB 2359. This Administrative Bill provides that certain areas within HPHA housing projects are closed to the public, amends criminal trespass in the second degree to permit the prosecution of an unauthorized entry or a violation of a written prohibition to enter into the subject housing project, and clarifies requirements for signage notifying trespassers of illegal entry.

One of the HPHA's greatest concerns and priorities is the safety and well-being of its tenants and staff. Too often, incidents arise on HPHA project grounds due to the presence of uninvited individuals. On multiple occasions, unauthorized persons have entered onto public housing property believing it was acceptable to put up tents in the middle of the property or caused property damage, which is usually not found until the following morning. In other examples, people who have been evicted for criminal activities come back to the property to harass or intimidate their former neighbors. Such acts, and others, create conflict among the tenants as well as staff, especially when we are not able to effectively resolve the matter.

This measure will assist the HPHA to prosecute trespassers for unauthorized entry, or violation of a written prohibition to enter a housing project based on an unlawful act, as the measure further clarifies what property is closed to members of the public in a housing project. The passage of this bill should provide a positive impact on the public, especially public housing tenants, their household members, and the surrounding community by affording a safer living environment for all.

The HPHA appreciates the opportunity to provide the House Committee on Housing with the HPHA's testimony regarding HB 2359. We thank you very much for your dedicated support.