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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 2649 – 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 require DHS to develop a regularly updated, publicly accessible system that tracks appropriations made for contracts with provider agencies that offer services to homeless persons on behalf of the State and measures the effectiveness of services provided by these agencies.

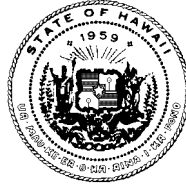
Homelessness remains one of the most pressing challenges facing Hawaii, and the State has adopted a comprehensive framework to address homelessness that focuses on three primary leverage points – affordable housing, health and human services, and public safety. In particular, the State has worked together with the Legislature and other stakeholders to increase resources for permanent housing programs, such as Housing First and Rapid Rehousing. Between 2015 and 2017, the number of permanent housing beds for homeless individuals statewide increased by 1,986 – an increase of 146%, more than doubling the supply of permanent beds. As a result of the State's coordinated efforts, Hawaii is making 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.

A critical part of the State's approach has been a specific focus on oversight and accountability for public funds used for this purpose. In State Fiscal Year 2017, DHS established new performance measures for all homeless services contracts pursuant to Act 234, Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH) 2016. This approach emphasizes regular reporting and transparency, and ties payment for homeless services to provider performance on specific identified measures, such as length of stay in homeless services, permanent housing placement, and housing retention. In addition to DHS monitoring of State funded contracts, data for homeless programs is posted online at <http://www.hawaiihmis.org>, which includes public reports on data quality, system performance measures for each Continuum of Care (CoC), housing inventory counts, and monthly monitoring reports for program census, length of stay, and exit destination.

The Coordinator notes that the State's focus on accountability and housing-focused performance measures have resulted in improved outcomes. For example, the permanent housing exit rate for December 2017 was 44%, which was up significantly from 35% during the prior month. In addition, programs such as the Family Assessment Center have demonstrated placement rates of 91%, with an average length of stay in shelter of 77 days.

The Coordinator defers to DHS in regard to the monitoring and performance of specific homeless services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



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

February 9, 2018

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

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 2650 – RELATING TO HOMELESS SERVICES PROVIDERS**

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

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent of this bill to address the State's response to homelessness. DHS offers comments.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this bill requires the Department of Human Services to develop a regularly updated, publicly accessible system that tracks appropriations made for contracts with provider agencies that offer services to homeless persons on behalf of the State and measures the effectiveness of services provided by these agencies.

DHS is continually working to improve efficiencies and our service delivery model, and per Act 234, Session Laws of Hawaii 2016, DHS included additional requirements to include performance based measures. Performance metrics include length of stay in the program, permanent housing placement, and maintaining permanent housing.

DHS provides funding for the development and maintenance of the state's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), a system required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. DHS Homeless Programs Office (HPO) has invested in maximizing the HMIS capacity to collect data. A great amount of effort was required to design reports that can capture each agency's performance.

DHS has also improved the data reporting and data sharing system by requiring homeless services providers to request consent to release forms from all clients, and report utilization data on a timely basis. With training, these two requirements have improved the entire homeless system's access to data and analysis. Statewide reports and data dashboards can be found on <http://www.hawaiihmis.org/> regarding homeless aggregated data within the continuum of care.

DHS believes there are systems already in place that allows transparency to the general public. Tracking appropriation contracted to providers can be found on the State Procurement Office website <http://spo.hawaii.gov/> . The awards can be found on the Hawaii Awards & Notices Data system found on <https://hands.ehawaii.gov/hands/awards> .

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

HB-2650

Submitted on: 2/7/2018 8:27:45 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Louise Storm		Support	No

Comments:

Whenever any person or organization receives funds from the government to provide a service for the benefit of the community, it should be subject to evaluations of its effectiveness in doing so, and changes should be made if goals are not being met. Just because a cause is worthy does not automatically mean the entity entrusted to address it is doing a good job. Would you keep giving money to a project that is not producing the results it promised at the outset? Oh, Wait....what happened to all that money for a rail line?

HB-2650

Submitted on: 2/8/2018 12:22:17 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Stuart Asahina		Support	No

Comments:

Although I have some reservations about how much of an additional administrative burden this bill will put on the Department of Human Services, I believe that some sort of proper accounting for the significant dollar volume of funds that are allocated to vendors is appropriate and necessary. I was actually surprised that this was not already being done, but perhaps the information is already being collected and that this bill is primarily for the purpose of making that information available to the public for the sake of transparency, and to allow for outside input to help police the selection and/or size of the allocation given to vendors.

In any event, I feel like ANYthing that will intensify the efforts to combat homelessness are simply necessary, and while I am also disappointed that ALL of Representative Ohno's ideas regarding homelessness are not being entertained, at least this is another step in the right direction.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in favor of HB2650.

Stuart Asahina

HB-2650

Submitted on: 2/8/2018 1:17:18 PM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Barry P Fitzgerald	Mr	Support	No

Comments:

It is my belief that a system of auditing the social service providers for the homeless should be established. Both to maintain an acceptable quality of services and to insure that the resources are being expended honestly and competently. Thanks

LATE

HB-2650

Submitted on: 2/9/2018 4:11:54 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rachel L. Kailianu	Ho`omana Pono, LLC	Support	Yes

Comments: