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Statement of
Hakim Ouansafi
Hawaii Public Housing Authority
Before the

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Friday, February 23, 2018
3:30 PM - Room 308, Hawaii State Capitol

In consideration of
HB 2744, HD1
RELATING TO HOUSING ASSISTANCE

Honorable Chair Luke and Members of the House Committee on Finance, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony concerning House Bill (HB) 2744, HD1, relating to housing assistance.

The Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) **supports the intent** of HB 2744, HD1, provided that it does not adversely affect the Governor's Supplemental budget. HB 2744, HD1 appropriates funds to support the state rent supplement program (RSP).

The RSP is a State funded program that was originally set up to assist middle-income families, who were not threatened by poverty, but were not economically sound to afford the high cost of living in Hawaii. The program was originally designed to assist teachers, policemen, and firemen. The program was later extended to include the general public and has a maximum rental subsidy of \$500.

With the assistance of the Legislature in providing an additional RSP position during the 2016 legislative session, the HPHA has expanded the RSP program to currently serve 494 families, and is ready to assist more families if additional funding is provided.

The HPHA appreciates the opportunity to provide the House Committee on Finance with the HPHA's testimony regarding HB 2744, HD1. We thank you very much for your dedicated support.



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COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2018, 3:30 pm, room 308
HB 2744, HD1, Relating to Housing Assistance

TESTIMONY

Nina Eejima, Legislative Committee, League of Women Voters of Hawaii

Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Cullen, and Committee Members:

The League of Women Voters of Hawaii supports HB 2744, HD1 that appropriates funds to provide additional rent subsidies

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

HB-2744-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2018 2:44:30 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/23/2018 3:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	OCC Legislative Priorities Committee, Democratic Party of Hawai'i	Support	No

Comments:



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
HONOLULU

LATE

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

February 23, 2018

TO: The Honorable Representative Sylvia J. Luke, Chair
House Committee on Finance

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

SUBJECT: **HB 2744 HD1 – RELATING TO HOUSING ASSISTANCE**

Hearing: Friday, February 23, 2018, 3:30 p.m.
Conference Room 308, State Capitol

POSITION: The Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness supports this measure to the extent that this appropriation does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Executive Budget. The Coordinator notes that the Governor's Executive Budget request includes \$1,551,577 to the Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) for the state rent supplement program. The Coordinator defers to HPHA in regard to the implementation and oversight of the state rent supplement program.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the bill is to appropriate funds to HPHA to provide additional rent supplement subsidies.

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.

The Coordinator notes that Hawaii is beginning to make progress in reducing the number of homeless individuals statewide. In 2017, the statewide Point in Time (PIT) count found 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. It is critical that the State continue to invest in programs that have proven their effectiveness in transitioning homeless individuals to longer-term housing. Accordingly, the Coordinator respectfully requests the Legislature’s support of the Governor’s Executive Budget request, which includes over \$15 million for homeless services, including \$3 million for Housing First, \$3 million for Rapid Rehousing, \$1.75 million for homeless outreach services, \$680,000 for the Family Assessment Center, and \$1,551,577 for the state rent supplement program.

Collectively, the homeless programs administered by DHS, HPHA 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.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.