

HB 2744, HD 1

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| Measure Title: | RELATING TO HOUSING ASSISTANCE. |
| Report Title: | Housing Assistance; State Rent Supplement Program; Appropriation (\$) |
| Description: | Appropriates funds to provide additional rent supplement subsidies. (HB2744 HD1) |
| Companion: | |
| Package: | None |
| Current Referral: | HOU, WAM |
| Introducer(s): | BROWER, AQUINO, BELATTI, CULLEN, FUKUMOTO, GATES, ICHiyAMA, JOHANSON, KEOHOKALOLe, KOBAYASHI, LEARMONT, C. LEE, LOPRESTI, LOWEN, MIZUNO, MORIKAWA, NAKASHIMA, NISHIMOTO, OHNO, ONISHI, QUINLAN, SAIKI, SAN BUENAVENTURA, TAKUMI, TODD, WOODSON, YAMANE, YAMASHITA |

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Statement of
Hakim Ouansafi
Hawaii Public Housing Authority
Before the

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

Tuesday, March 13, 2018
2:45 PM - Room 225, Hawaii State Capitol

In consideration of
HB 2744, HD1
RELATING TO HOUSING ASSISTANCE

Honorable Chair Espero and Members of the Senate Committee on Housing, 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 Senate Committee on Housing with the HPHA's testimony regarding HB 2744, HD1. We thank you very much for your dedicated support.



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2744, HD1: RELATING TO HOUSING ASSISTANCE

TO: Senator Will Espero, Chair; Senator Breene Harimoto, Vice Chair; and Members, Committee on Housing
FROM: Terrence L. Walsh, Jr., President and Chief Executive Officer
Hearing: **Tuesday, 3/13/18; 2:45 p.m.; Conference Room 225**

Chair Espero, Vice Chair Harimoto, and Members, Committee on Housing:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony **in support of HB 2744, HD1**, which appropriates funds to provide additional rent supplement subsidies. I am Terry Walsh, with Catholic Charities Hawai'i. We are also a member of Partners in Care.

Catholic Charities Hawai'i (CCH) is a tax exempt, non-profit agency that has been providing social services in Hawai'i for over 60 years. Our mission is to provide services and advocacy for the most vulnerable in Hawai'i. Housing homeless kids and their families is of special concern.

This funding would continue rental subsidies to homeless families and others added to the Rent Supplement Program at the Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA), as well as enable more new families to receive this valuable rental help. Two years ago, with a one year allocation from the legislature, Catholic Charities Hawai'i very successfully worked with HPHA to assist 85 homeless families, statewide, to find housing utilizing the Rent Supplement Program. Over the years, Catholic Charities Hawai'i has worked with the elderly, homeless, disabled, and others to link them to this program. It is straight forward, user friendly to both landlords and applicants, and a godsend to most to keep them out of homelessness.

We support pathways like the Rent Supplement Program for families to become housed and remain housed. Families continue to be severely housing cost-burdened. Half of isle households do not earn enough to cover basic needs, much less save anything for an emergency, and can easily fall into homelessness (per January 2018 ALICE report by Aloha United Way). Many jobs do not pay enough to enable families to afford the astronomical housing costs in Hawaii. Funding additional rent supplement subsidies addresses this compelling need to create options for more affordable housing.

Many families simply need financial relief to get into housing, or be prevented from falling out of housing in the first place. This bill can provide that relief to end, or at least slow down, family homelessness.

Please contact our Legislative Liaison, Betty Lou Larson, at 373-0356 or bettylou.larson@catholiccharitieshawaii.org, if you have any questions.



HB-2744-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/12/2018 2:38:53 PM

Testimony for HOU on 3/13/2018 2:45:00 PM

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

Comments: