



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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**TESTIMONY COMMENTING ON SB2027 SD1
RELATING TO APPROPRIATIONS TO ADDRESS HOMELESSNESS**

SENATOR DONOVAN M. DELA CRUZ, CHAIR
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Hearing Date and Time: Wed., February 28, 2018 at 11:00 a.m. Room Number: 211

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 bill is to appropriate funds to the DHS for the coordinated
10 statewide homeless initiative subject to funding of administrative fees at 15% of
11 amounts paid under the master contract and funding 100% of the coordinated statewide
12 homeless initiative program at the start of the program.

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

1 The AMHD continues its commitment to increasing and strengthening linkages to
2 housing and community based referrals that support recovery. The AMHD continues to
3 work with Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH) Formula
4 Grant Homeless Outreach providers to link homeless individuals to case management
5 and recovery support services so that the realization of recovery may reduce the barrier
6 of discrimination and the stigma of mental illness.

7 The DHS and the AMHD provide services in different regions statewide. For
8 example, AMHD Homeless Outreach providers focus their outreach efforts on locating
9 individuals who live with Serious Mental Illness (SMI), who are chronically homeless,
10 and who meet AMHD's eligibility criteria for AMHD funded services.

11 Linkage to health care services, Social Security benefits, entitlements, workforce
12 development, job training opportunities, emergency shelters, transitional housing,
13 clothing, mental health treatment, substance use treatment, service coordination,
14 collateral contacts, advocacy on their behalf, and/or assistance with finding individuals
15 with a home in the private marketplace are examples of tasks that Homeless Outreach
16 providers assist with. Homeless Outreach case managers help to complete
17 Supplemental Security Income (SSI)/Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)
18 applications using the SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) model.

19 Homeless Outreach is provided on the islands of Kauai, Oahu, Maui, and Hawaii.

1 The DHS focus on unsheltered homeless individuals and families transitioning to
2 permanent housing. For example, services provided by DHS Homeless Outreach
3 providers include assistance with developing housing plans, obtaining income through
4 public benefits and employment and providing legal services to resolve legal challenges
5 that prohibit individuals from obtaining permanent housing.

6 When a provider is dually contracted by the DHS and the AMHD and they identify
7 an individual who lives with a SMI diagnosis, the provider transfers the individual to an
8 AMHD Homeless Outreach provider who will engage with the individual and assist them
9 with linkage to services.

10 The AMHD continues to provide residential services statewide to 150 consumers
11 living in supported housing and 796 consumers living in 24 hour, 8-16 hour, and semi-
12 independent group homes.

13 The AMHD asks for the Legislature's support of the Governor's Executive
14 supplemental budget request. In the Governor's Executive supplemental budget
15 request, appropriations to the DHS for the Rapid Rehousing program is included. The
16 Rapid Rehousing program addresses both homelessness prevention and housing
17 replacement. The AMHD defers to the State Procurement Office and the DHS with
18 regard to contracting and implementation of homeless services.

19 We thank the committee for considering our testimony.



Life Foundation & The CHOW Project

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TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB2027 SD1: RELATING TO APPROPRIATIONS TO ADDRESS HOMELESSNESS

TO: Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair; Senator Kaiali'i Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair; Senate Committee on Ways and Means
FROM: Heather Lusk, Executive Director, CHOW Project
Hearing: Wednesday, February 28, 2018 11:00 AM Conference Room 211, State Capitol

Dear Chair Baker, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the Committee on Ways and Means:

I thank you for this opportunity to testify in **support** of SB 2027 SD1 relating to homelessness.

Since the implementation of the coordinated statewide homeless initiative in April of 2016, Hawai'i has been able to keep hundreds of families from falling into homelessness, and has supported over 1400 households experiencing homelessness and the risk of homelessness. Sixty four percent of these households included children.

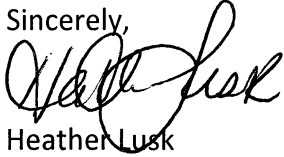
SB2027 allows the coordinated statewide homeless initiative to continue to support these households and to prevent homelessness through funds appropriated to the Department of Human Services for:

- (a) The continuation of the initiative
- (b) Landlord outreach and liaison

Community engagement through outreach work gives The CHOW Project the unique experience of working with the most vulnerable in our community. For those without a home, coordinated statewide homeless services afforded through SB 2027 have a distinct positive impact.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony for SB 2027 which offers a comprehensive, effective approach to developing a future for our struggling families and individuals who so easily can fall into homelessness.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Heather Lusk". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Heather" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Lusk".

Heather Lusk

Executive Director

CHOW Project + Life Foundation