



**EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS**  
HONOLULU

**DAVID Y. IGE**  
GOVERNOR

March 15, 2017

**TO:** The Honorable Representative Dee Morikawa, Chair  
House Committee on Human Services

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

**SUBJECT: SB 964 SD1 – RELATING TO HOMELESS SHELTERS**

Hearing: Wednesday, March 15, 2017, 9:15 a.m.  
Conference Room 329, State Capitol

**POSITION:** The Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness supports this Administration bill, and respectfully requests an amendment to Section 4. The Coordinator notes this bill addresses concerns raised by homeless service providers that the requirement in Act 234, Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH) 2016, for partitioned sleeping areas in homeless shelters may result in a reduction of emergency shelter bed spaces.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the bill is to amend provisions of Act 234, SLH 2016, to provide emergency shelters with the flexibility to provide partitioned sleeping spaces for homeless persons or families based upon guidelines determined by the Department of Human Services (DHS). The bill also extends the effective date of Act 234, SLH 2016 by one year.

Act 234, SLH 2016, established minimum requirements for every homeless emergency shelter operated by a provider agency that is under contract with DHS. In an attempt to make the system of homeless shelters more cost effective and more appealing to families and individuals, the Act directed that payments be conditioned on performance measures and established audit provisions.

The Coordinator notes that providing the option to implement partitions will provide needed flexibility to emergency shelter providers. Without this flexibility, the requirement to mandate partitioned space may have the unintended consequence of adversely impacting bed

space at certain shelters, especially those located on the neighbor islands. Emergency shelter bed space is especially limited on the neighbor islands, which have seen the largest percentage increase in unsheltered homeless persons according to the 2016 statewide homeless point in time count.

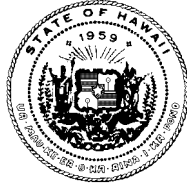
The amendment to provide flexibility in regard to partitioned bed space will also impact bed spaces for shelters partially funded by other departments, such as the Department of Health (DOH). For example, mental health group homes are sometimes funded as emergency shelters by both DOH and DHS. If partitioned spaces are mandated, rather than optional, this may adversely impact limited bed space in some mental health group homes.

The Coordinator further notes that additional time is needed for DHS to obtain feedback from homeless service providers prior to the formal adoption of administrative rules to implement new shelter standards required by Act 234, SLH 2016.

Finally, the Coordinator respectfully requests an amendment for clarity. In the current version of the bill section 8 of Act 234, SLH 2016 takes effect on July 1, 2018, provided that section 6 shall take effect on July 1, 2016. However, the measure should be clarified to indicate that only subsection 6(c) will take effect on July 1, 2016, while the remainder of section 6 will take effect on July 1, 2018.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



PANKAJ BHANOT  
DIRECTOR

BRIDGET HOLTHUS  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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

March 15, 2017

TO: The Honorable Representative Dee Morikawa, Chair  
House Committee on Human Services

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **SB964 SD1 – RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS**

Hearing: Wednesday, March 15, 2017, 9:15 a.m.  
Conference Room 329, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports this administration bill to address shelter requirements. This measure addresses concerns raised by homeless service providers that the requirement of Act 234, Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH) 2016, for partitioned sleeping areas in homeless shelters is resulting in a reduction of emergency shelter bed spaces.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the measure is to allow DHS the flexibility to determine the appropriate standard for partitioned space, based upon guidelines established by DHS and ensure that shelter beds are not lost to the requirements of Act 234, Session Laws of Hawaii 2016. In addition, the measure extends the effective date to give DHS time to implement the act. The Senate Committee on Human Services amended the measure by defecting the effective date and making technical changes.

Act 234, SLH 2016, established minimum standards for every homeless shelter to make shelters more amenable to homeless clients. Act 234, SLH 2016, also required that payments be based off of performance measures and audit requirements to ensure that the State is receiving the most value and the best services.

Giving DHS discretion and the flexibility to determine which shelters will or will not have partitions may prevent the unintended consequence of reducing the amount of bed space available to homeless people.

The extension of the effective date of the Act, will ensure that DHS will be able to work with the affected service providers to get appropriate feedback and draft administrative rules on new shelter standards that will benefit homeless individuals and families, service providers, and the State.

The Administration's proposed amendments to Act 234, SLH 2016, are part of a comprehensive framework to address homelessness, which seeks to transition homeless individuals and families into permanent housing as quickly as possible. The framework includes a focus on three primary leverage points – affordable housing, health and human services, and public safety. All three of these leverage points must be addressed to continue forward momentum in addressing the complex issue of homelessness.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and provide comments on this measure.



## CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAI'I

### TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 964, SD1: RELATING TO HOMELESS SHELTERS

TO: Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair, Rep. Chris Todd, Vice Chair, and Members,  
Committee on Human Services

FROM: Terrence L. Walsh, Jr., President and Chief Executive Officer

**Hearing: Wednesday, 3/15/17; 9:15 AM; CR 329**

Chair Morikawa, Vice Chair Todd, and Members, Committee on Human Services:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony **in support** of SB 964, SD1, which provides that emergency shelters may have partitioned space for homeless persons/families based on guidelines from the Department of Human Services. It further extends the emergency and transitional shelter compliance requirements for Act 234 for contracts with DHS for one year. 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. CCH has programs serving elders, children, developmentally disabled, homeless and immigrants. Our mission is to provide services and advocacy for the most vulnerable in Hawai'i. Ending homelessness is a top priority for 2017.

Catholic Charities Hawai'i strongly believes in the dignity of the individual. We understand the intent of Act 234 to set standards for emergency and transitional shelters. However, this has led to unintended consequences. We support this bill since it addresses some of these unintended consequences as well as giving time for the Department of Human Services to get feedback from homeless service providers before the Department creates and adopts administrative rules to implement the new shelter standards set forth in Act 234, SLH 2016.

The issue of mandating partitions for all emergency shelters has been particularly troublesome. This bill would provide the option to install partitions and give needed flexibility to the many various types of emergency shelters. Without this flexibility, shelters may be adversely impacted and lose bed spaces. Neighbor Island shelter space is especially limited, having seen the largest percentage increase in unsheltered homeless per the 2016 statewide Point in Time Count.

We know we have a crisis. We know we are #1 rate in the nation for homelessness per capita. We need to give shelters flexibility to serve the homeless.

We urge you to support this bill to work towards our goal of ending homelessness in Hawaii. Please contact our Legislative Liaison, Betty Lou Larson, at 373-0356, or at [bettylou.larson@catholiccharitieshawaii.org](mailto:bettylou.larson@catholiccharitieshawaii.org), if you have any questions.



TO: Chair Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair Chris Todd, Members of Human Services Committee

FROM: Sheila Beckham, CEO 

DATE: Wed. March 15, 2017 9:15 am; Rm. 329

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 964: SHELTERS

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB964.

Waikiki Health (WH) is a 501c3 nonprofit federally qualified community health center with a mission to provide quality medical and social services that are affordable and accessible for everyone, regardless of their ability to pay

WH manages and operates Next Step Emergency Shelter, located in Kakaako Makai. Next Step Shelter has provided safe and clean indoor living accommodations 24-hours per day, 7 days per week to approximately 230 homeless individuals and families through January 2017. Priority has been given to individuals with HIV/AIDS and other chronic diseases using a Housing First intervention model delivered through a recovery-oriented housing-focused intensive case management approach.

New regulations to homeless shelters that went into effect February 1, 2017, have reduced the allowable population at Next Step to 125 adults only—no families. Considering that each homeless shelter has its unique needs and features, specifications relating to cubicle size, storage capacity, shower/restroom ratios should be decided between the operator of the shelter and the State Department of Human Services Homeless Programs Office rather than by legislation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

**todd2 - Chloe**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 13, 2017 9:29 AM  
**To:** HUS testimony  
**Cc:** gavin@hiappleseed.org  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SB964 on Mar 15, 2017 09:15AM

**SB964**

Submitted on: 3/13/2017

Testimony for HUS on Mar 15, 2017 09:15AM in Conference Room 329

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b>                                      | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Gavin Thornton      | Hawaii Appleseed Center<br>for Law & Economic<br>Justice | Support                   | No                        |

Comments: This bill corrects an issue that has resulted in the loss of critically needed shelter beds. Please pass this bill to ensure that Hawaii is making the most effective use of its resources to combat homelessness. Thank you for your consideration.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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**todd2 - Chloe**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Friday, March 10, 2017 1:45 PM  
**To:** HUS testimony  
**Cc:** mamaupin@hotmail.com  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for SB964 on Mar 15, 2017 09:15AM\*

**SB964**

Submitted on: 3/10/2017

Testimony for HUS on Mar 15, 2017 09:15AM in Conference Room 329

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Margaret Maupin     | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments:

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**todd2 - Chloe**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 13, 2017 10:55 AM  
**To:** HUSstestimony  
**Cc:** rezentesc@aol.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SB964 on Mar 15, 2017 09:15AM

**SB964**

Submitted on: 3/13/2017

Testimony for HUS on Mar 15, 2017 09:15AM in Conference Room 329

| <b>Submitted By</b>   | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Cynthia K.L. Rezendes | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments: Aloha Chair and members of the House Housing Committee: It is important for the State to take a step back and review the impacts on implementing ACT 234 and hear what the various shelters are attempting to do to comply with those guidelines. Unfortunately, those guidelines have some unintended consequences and reduce the number of spaces/beds available for those in crisis and need a place to stay for a night or more. This bill would allow more time to review/understand and consider more practical implementations for respecting private individuals while helping as many people as the system possibly could. Please support and move forward this bill. Mahalo, Cynthia K.L. Rezendes Waianae Resident

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**todd2 - Chloe**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, March 13, 2017 4:25 PM  
**To:** HUS testimony  
**Cc:** burgharc@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for SB964 on Mar 15, 2017 09:15AM

**SB964**

Submitted on: 3/13/2017

Testimony for HUS on Mar 15, 2017 09:15AM in Conference Room 329

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Present at Hearing</b> |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| cheryl              | Individual          | Support                   | No                        |

Comments: Having worked with many houseless people over the past years, I STRONGLY believe that anything we can do to make their situations in the shelters more palatable, we should.

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**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB964 HD1: RELATING TO HOMELESS SHELTERS**

**TO:** House Committee on Human Services

**FROM:** Erin Rutherford

**Hearing:** Wednesday, March 15, 2017 at 9:15am; Conference Rm 329

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony **in support** of SB964, which provides that emergency shelters may have partitioned space for homeless persons/families based on guidelines from the Department of Human Services. It further extends the emergency and transitional shelter compliance requirements for Act 234 for contracts with DHS for one year. I am Erin Rutherford, a community member who works with the homeless population.

I strongly believes in the dignity of the individual. We understand the intent of Act 234 to set standards for emergency and transitional shelters. However, this has led to unintended consequences. We support this bill since it addresses some of these unintended consequences as well as giving time for the Department of Human Services to get feedback from homeless service providers before the Department creates and adopts administrative rules to implement the new shelter standards set forth in Act 234, SLH 2016.

The issue of mandating partitions for all emergency shelters has been particularly troublesome. This bill would provide the option to install partitions and give needed flexibility to the many various types of emergency shelters. Without this flexibility, shelters may be adversely impacted and lose bed spaces. Neighbor Island shelter space is especially limited, having seen the largest percentage increase in unsheltered homeless per the 2016 statewide Point in Time Count.

We know we have a crisis. We know we are #1 rate in the nation for homelessness per capita. We need to give shelters flexibility to serve the homeless.

We urge you to support this bill to work towards our goal of ending homelessness in Hawaii. Please me at 502-797-6509 or erinrutherford815@gmail.com, if you have any questions.