



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAI'I

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 1031, SD1: RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS

TO: Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair, Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair;
and Members, Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Betty Lou Larson, Legislative Liaison, Catholic Charities Hawai'i

Hearing: **Monday, February 25, 2019; 10:30 am; CR 211**

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members, Committee on Ways and Means:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony **in strong support** of SB 1031, SD1, which establishes and funds the long-term rental assistance pilot program for elders. I am Betty Lou Larson, 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 70 years. CCH has programs serving elders, children, families, homeless and immigrants. Our mission is to provide services and advocacy for the most vulnerable in Hawai'i. Our Housing Assistance Program for elders finds that many of our clients who are homeless or at the point of homelessness could rapidly be housed with the type of subsidy proposed in this bill.

Skyrocketing housing costs are an especially serious threat to Hawai'i's kupuna living on fixed incomes. One elderly veteran came to CCH after being homeless for 14 years. He was unable to afford a unit even though he was willing to share with a friend, also a homeless elder. Their salvation was an ongoing rental subsidy which got them a unit where they no longer had to spend much of their budget on buying ice daily and eating out due to no place to cook. These kupuna were overwhelmed with gratitude that they would not have to weather gusty winds and could take a hot shower.

In Hawai'i, 1,386 elders, 60 years or older, are homeless (Homeless Service Utilization Report, 2017). Many other elders face falling into homelessness each year as Hawai'i rents climb beyond their means. Affordable senior housing takes years to obtain and cannot assist elders in a crisis. Rent subsidy programs like Section 8 and the State Rent Supplement Program, are now closed for new applications due to their already long waiting lists.

A Long-Term Rental Assistance Pilot Program for Kupuna can address the needs of this especially vulnerable population. The program would provide rental assistance, on an ongoing basis, to homeless elders and elders at imminent risk of homelessness. Catholic Charities Hawaii supports a **\$1.5 million** appropriation for this pilot program. Our kupuna need safe, decent, and affordable housing to enable them to age in place.

Thank you for addressing our vulnerable kupuna who urgently need affordable housing. Please contact me at (808) 373-0356 or bettylou.larson@catholiccharitieshawaii.org if you have any questions.



SB-1031-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2019 6:49:23 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2019 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mike Goodman	Testifying for Hawaii Kai Homeless Task Force	Support	No

Comments:

TO: Senator Dela Cruz, Chair, Senator Kieth Agaran, Vice Chair, and all Members of the Committee on Ways and Means.

FROM: Mike Goodman, Director, The Hawaii Kai Homeless Task Force, Member, Partners in Care

RE: SB1031

HEARING: Monday, February 25th, 2019, 10:00 A.M. Conf. Rm. 211

Aloha Senator Dela Cruz, Chair, Senator Kieth Agaran, Vice Chair, and all Members of this Committee; Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony with along with a proposed amendment.

I'm Mike Goodman, Director of the Hawaii Kai Homeless Task Force and a member of Partners in Care ("PIC"). PIC is a coalition of more than 50 non-profit homelessness providers, including Aloha United Way, Catholic Charities, the Institute for Human Services, the Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice, The Salvation Army, and many others. **The Homeless Task Force and Partners In Care strongly supports this bill.**

The University of Hawai'i's Center of the Family's 2017 Homeless Services Utilization Report shows that 1,386 elders over the age of 60 are homeless. It's a travesty we're doing such a poor job caring for our kapuna. Rising rents will make many more homeless who are on fixed incomes.

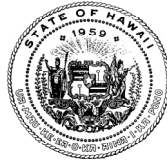
Subsidizing their rents will prevent them from becoming homeless, and an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. Once someone becomes homeless, it's exponentially more difficult, and more expensive, to rehouse that person than it would have been to prevent them from becoming homeless in the first place. Moreover, this doesn't take into account the damage caused by becoming homeless. For example, having an eviction on a person's credit report can make hard, if not impossible, to rent housing on the commercial market for up to ten years. There are also many adverse health effects of being homeless which are particularly acute for the elderly.

This pilot program is an important step toward ending the travesty of homeless kapuna.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT.

The pilot program be expanded to include handicapped persons not currently served by other programs. Just like our kapuna, most live on fixed incomes and are physically vulnerable.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
P. O. Box 3378
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378
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**Testimony in OPPOSITION of SB1031 SD1
RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS**

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

Hearing Date and Time: Monday, February 25, 2019 10:30 a.m.

Room: 211

1 **Fiscal Implications:** \$1,500,000 General Fund appropriation.

2 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health (DOH) respectfully opposes this measure.

3 SB1031 SD1 proposes to establish a long-term rental assistance pilot program within the
4 DOH for kupuna. In collaboration with the counties, this measure requires the DOH to provide
5 rental assistance to kupuna over the age of 60 who are homeless or at imminent risk of
6 becoming homeless; to ensure pilot program participants pay no more than 50% of their income
7 for rent; and to provide housing counseling and landlord assistance for kupuna to obtain or
8 retain permanent housing.

9 Additionally, this measure defers to the DOH for collaboration with the Executive Office
10 on Aging to determine whether it is efficient to merge the pilot program with existing programs;
11 for the establishment of rules and qualification standards for beneficiaries of the pilot program;
12 and for requiring the pilot program to participate in the Continuum of Care's Coordinated Entry
13 System for homeless services. The provider of the pilot program will be required by the DOH to
14 input data into the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Homeless
15 Management Information System. The DOH is required to submit a report to the legislature
16 with its findings and recommendations one month prior to the convening of the regular sessions
17 of 2020, 2021, and 2022. The pilot program is set to cease to exist on June 30, 2022.

18 It is straight-forward that the DOH is the inappropriate agency for the program described
19 in this measure. With the exception of the Hawaii Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for

1 Women, Infants, and Children Program, the DOH does not currently run means-tested housing
2 programs. The DOH would need to acquire that expertise somehow and along the way,
3 resulting in a likely sub-optimal long-term rental assistance pilot program for kupuna.

4 The DOH and its units and branches have no experience or expertise in operating a
5 housing program or a direct subsidy program, nor matters outside the scope of population
6 health management. Further, the DOH is without significant experience in the following relevant
7 areas; zoning ordinances, federal and state housing laws, income and asset verification, etc.

8 As a result, the DOH respectfully urges the Senate to defer this measure for further
9 discussion amongst agency partners and community stakeholders.

10 The DOH asks for the Legislature's support of the Governor's Executive Budget request
11 which includes appropriations to the DHS and DOH for Housing First, Rapid Rehousing,
12 homeless outreach, and for outreach and counseling services for chronically homeless
13 individuals with severe substance use disorders.

14 The department acknowledges that many kupuna struggle to keep pace with the cost of
15 living in Hawaii and that the intent of this measure is laudable.

16 **Offered Amendments:** If the Legislature wishes to move this bill forward, then we respectfully
17 request the committee insert the following amendment.

18 "The department of health shall contract with each county to implement this program,
19 based on requirements developed by each county."

LATE

SB-1031-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2019 9:04:45 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2019 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dylan P. Armstrong	Testifying for Oahu County Democrats	Support	No

Comments:

LATE



O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities

COMMITTEE WAYS AND MEANS

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

DATE: Monday, February 25, 2019

TIME: 10:30 a.m.

PLACE: Conference Room 221
State Capitol

RE: SB 1031, SD 1, Relating to Homelessness

To the Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair; the Honorable Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair; and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means:

I am Melodie Aduja, Chair of the O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawai`i ("DPH"). Mahalo for this opportunity to submit testimony on SB 1031, SD 1. The O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities ("OCCLP") hereby submits its testimony in **SUPPORT of SB 1031, SD 1, Relating to Homelessness.**

The purpose of SB 1031, SD1, is to establish a long-term rental assistance pilot program for kupuna to be administered by the department of health. The department of health shall enter into a memorandum of agreement with the counties to implement this Act.

SB 1031, SD 1, further provides that the department of health and the counties shall: (1) provide long-term rental assistance to individuals who are over the age of sixty who are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless; (2) ensure that individuals participating in the program will not pay more than fifty per cent of their income for rent; and (3) provide housing counseling and landlord assistance to assist elders in obtaining or retaining permanent housing.

DPH supports expanding programs that prevent displacement of existing residents, especially in Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities; creating affordable and workforce housing; and preserving neighborhood-serving nonprofit organizations and small businesses. DPH will reinvigorate housing production programs, repair public housing and seek increased funding for rental assistance programs. DPH will fight for robust funding to end homelessness in our cities and counties once and for all, through targeted investment to provide

the necessary outreach, social services, and housing options for all populations experiencing homelessness. DPH will engage in a stronger, more coordinated, and better funded partnership among Federal, State, and local governments to end chronic homelessness. *Democratic Party of Hawai'i Platform (2018), p. 6, ln. 26-33*

For the foregoing reasons, to wit, that DPH favors reinvigorating housing production programs, repairing public housing and seeking increased funding for rental assistance programs and fighting for robust funding to end homelessness in our cities and counties once and for all, through targeted investment to provide the necessary outreach, social services, and housing options for all populations experiencing homelessness, OCCLP supports SB 1031, SD1, and urges its passage out of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mahalo nui loa
Me ka `oia`i`o

/s/ Melodie Aduja

Melodie Aduja

Chair, O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawai`i

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LATE

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
HONOLULU

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

February 25, 2019

TO: The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

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

SUBJECT: SB 1031 SD1 – RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS

Hearing: Monday, February 25, 2019, 10:30 a.m.
Conference Room 211, State Capitol

POSITION: The Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness supports the intent of this bill, and respectfully offers comments. The Coordinator appreciates the amendments of the Senate Committees on Human Services and Housing to require the long-term assistance pilot program to participate in the Continuum of Care's Coordinated Entry System for homeless services and for the provider of the program to input data into the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).

PURPOSE: The purpose of the bill is to establish the long-term rental assistance pilot program within the Department of Health (DOH). The bill also appropriates funds for the administration of the program.

Elderly individuals are a vulnerable segment of the homeless population. In addition, many elderly individuals have a fixed income and may find themselves at imminent risk of homelessness if faced with unexpected financial hardship. The long-term rental assistance pilot will provide a combination of rental assistance and case management to assist participants in obtaining and maintaining housing.

The Coordinator notes that the Department of Human Services (DHS) and Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) currently administer a number of programs – including Rapid Re-Housing and the state rent supplement program – that provide shallow subsidy support for a

broad population that is not limited solely to elderly individuals. In addition, DHS administers the Housing First program that provides a deep rental subsidy and intensive case management for chronically homeless individuals.

If this bill proceeds, the Coordinator respectfully requests clarification regarding the duration of the long-term rental assistance program and if the program is intended to be a form of permanent supportive housing or is more similar to the Hawaii Public Housing Authority's state rent supplement program. Permanent supportive housing programs, such as Housing First, require intensive case management and ongoing rental assistance, while the state rent supplement program primarily provides ongoing rental assistance and minimal case management or services. The Coordinator notes that the state rent supplement program requires an annual recertification of eligibility for the program, while permanent supportive housing requires periodic assessment of need by the participant's case manager.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



PARTNERS IN CARE

Oahu's Continuum of Care

LATE

Our mission is to eliminate homelessness through open and inclusive participation and the coordination of integrated responses.

Testimony in Strong Support of SB 1031 SD1: Relating to Homelessness

TO: Committees on Ways and Means

FROM: Partners in Care (PIC)

HEARING: Monday, February 25, 2019 at 11:30 a.m., Conference Room 211

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 1031 SD1, which would establish a long-term rental assistance pilot program for kupuna. Partners in Care (PIC), a coalition of more than 50 non-profit homelessness providers, strongly supports this bill.

Many kupuna in our state have worked hard all their lives, but now may face homelessness due to skyrocketing rents. Partners in Care feels it is a tragedy that 1,386 elders (age 60 or older) are already homeless. Many other seniors may face homelessness as their rents rise. These seniors often just have an economic need though their health and safety are put at risk if they become homeless. Senior housing projects have extremely long waitlists. Section 8 and the State Rent Supplement Program are closed for new applications. A shallow rent subsidy program is urgently needed to help homeless elders and those at imminent risk of becoming homeless.

Addressing homelessness requires a multi-faceted approach using interventions that are targeted to the particular characteristics of the population being served. Low-income elders living on fixed incomes are a gap group that have few resources to avoid homelessness when their incomes become stretched too thin to pay their rents. This economic need can be resolved with an ongoing shallow rent subsidy. Seniors lack the ability to increase their incomes to pay higher and higher rents. The Long-Term Rental Assistance Pilot Program proposed in this bill would help very vulnerable elders to obtain or retain housing. Partners in Care supports \$1.5 million for a pilot program to divert our kupuna from homelessness.

Partners In Care strongly supports SB 1031 SD1 to help our kupuna live in decent, safe housing so they can age in place in our community. Thank you for your consideration of this very important bill.

LATE

SB-1031-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2019 7:13:09 AM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2019 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kai Lorinc	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Finally, legislation to assist our Kupuna.

LATE

SB-1031-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2019 4:33:50 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2019 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Brett Kulbis	Individual	Support	No

Comments:



SB-1031-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2019 1:18:58 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2019 10:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Andrea Quinn	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Honorable Committee Members:

Please support SB1031. The homeless need all the help they can get. Compassion aside, it will also help to reduce the homeless problem businesses regularly complain about.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my testimony.

Andrea Quinn

Kihei