

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



PANKAJ BHANOT  
DIRECTOR

CATHY BETTS  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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

February 11, 2019

TO: The Honorable Senator Russell E. Ruderman, Chair  
Senate Committee on Human Services

The Honorable Stanley Chang, Chair  
Senate Committee on Housing

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 471 – RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS**

Hearing: Monday, February 11, 2019, 3:05 p.m.  
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports this bill and provide comments for the coordinated statewide homeless initiative.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this bill is to appropriate funds to the outreach program, rapid re-housing program, housing first program, family assessment centers, law enforcement assisted diversion program, and coordinated statewide homelessness initiative. Establishes and appropriates funds for a short-term rental assistance pilot program and a long-term rental assistance pilot program.

Section 2 provides appropriations to continue existing homeless services and is similar in amount to DHS budget requests made through the Executive Budget. We know that these investments are making a difference as the State's coordinated effort to end homelessness continues to move forward with positive results. In 2018, the Point in Time (PIT) count found that the number of homeless people in Hawaii decreased for the second consecutive year. DHS has worked together with the Legislature and other stakeholders to increase resources for outreach, permanent housing programs, such as Housing First and Rapid Rehousing.

Additionally, as these services have established performance measures, DHS respectfully requests that these appropriations be made part of the department's base budget to support programmatic continuity and encourage further delivery innovation.

DHS notes that the coordinated statewide homeless initiative identified in Section 2 does not require additional appropriation at this time and may be deleted from Section 2, or that funding for the coordinated statewide homeless initiative be appropriated to state fiscal year 2020-2021 only. DHS Homeless Programs Office is in the process of procuring for the coordinated statewide homeless initiative with a projected contract start date of June 1, 2019 ending June 30, 2020.

For further background on the services described in Section 2, homeless outreach is a critical component of the State's framework to address homelessness, and is essential to meet unsheltered homeless households in the community and to build rapport that connects individuals and families to housing and services, such as Housing First, Rapid Rehousing, or shelter. Outreach workers provide a comprehensive array of services that include completing applications for housing and services, housing search, and obtaining identification and other necessary documents. Without the assistance of homeless outreach, many homeless individuals are unable to access care and unable to navigate Hawaii's system of homeless services.

The State's Rapid Rehousing program provides flexibility that supports those who are literally homeless or those who are imminently at risk of homelessness. The Rapid Rehousing program allows households to maintain their homes or quickly divert them from utilizing existing homeless programs. These programs can be accessible to benefit those who are the most vulnerable and have higher service needs.

The Family Assessment Center (FAC) in Kaka'ako utilizes 'Housing First' principles to quickly move families with minor children off the streets and into permanent housing. FAC opened in September 2016 and quickly moves families with minor children out of homelessness and into permanent housing. FAC also increases families' income through linkages to public benefits, employment, and other critical resources during their stay at the facility.

DHS appreciates Section 3 and Section 4, and the added program component to "provide financial case management to individuals and families participating in the program."

As session progresses, we will look into the cost of such a program and provide an estimate. However, we respectfully request that any additional appropriation not supplant budget priorities identified in the Executive Budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



PANKAJ BHANOT  
DIRECTOR

CATHY BETTS  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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

**LATE**

February 11, 2019

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Senate Committee on Human Services

The Honorable Stanley Chang, Chair  
Senate Committee on Housing

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 471 – RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS**

Hearing: Monday, February 11, 2019, 3:05 p.m.  
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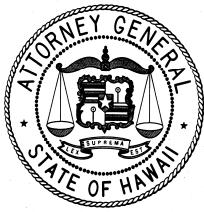
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DHS appreciates Section 3 and Section 4, and the added program component to "provide financial case management to individuals and families participating in the program."

As session progresses, we will look into the cost of such a program and provide an estimate. However, we respectfully request that any additional appropriation not supplant budget priorities identified in the Executive Budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill.



**TESTIMONY OF  
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
THIRTIETH LEGISLATURE, 2019**

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**ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:**

S.B. NO. 471, RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS.

**BEFORE THE:**

SENATE COMMITTEES ON HUMAN SERVICES AND ON HOUSING

**DATE:** Monday, February 11, 2019                      **TIME:** 3:05 p.m.

**LOCATION:** State Capitol, Room 016

**TESTIFIER(S):** Clare E. Connors, Attorney General, or  
Melissa L. Lewis, Deputy Attorney General

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Chairs Ruderman and Chang and Members of the Committees:

The Department of the Attorney General offers the following comments.

The purpose of this bill is to appropriate funds to the Department of Human Services and the Department of Health for specified homeless services.

The bill contains a provision that may impede implementation. The wording in section 2, on page 3, lines 4-15, provides that:

There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$16,500,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2019-2020 and the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2020-2021 for the department of human services and department of health to fund and administer the outreach program, rapid re-housing program, housing first program, family assessment centers, law enforcement assisted diversion program, and coordinated statewide homeless initiative.

The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department of human services and the department of health for purposes of this Act.

Most of the identified programs in the measure are within the Department of Human Services, and one of the programs is within the Department of Health. The wording of the bill, however, does not break down how much of the appropriation would go to each respective department, nor does it address how much of the appropriation may be expended by each of the departments.

To avoid implementation problems, we recommend that the appropriation and expenditure clauses be separated for the Department of Human Services and the Department of Health.





**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
P. O. Box 3378  
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378  
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

**Testimony COMMENTING on SB471**  
**RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS.**

SENATOR RUSSELL E. RUDERMAN, CHAIR  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

SENATOR STANLEY CHANG, CHAIR  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

Hearing Date: February 11, 2019

Room Number: 229

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

2 **Department Testimony:** The Department of Health (DOH) takes no position on the merits of  
3 SB471, which proposes a rent subsidy program for kupuna. DOH acknowledges, however, that  
4 many kupuna struggle to keep pace with the cost of living and that the intent of this measure is  
5 laudable.

6 With respect to BILL SECTIONS 5 and 6 only, the department has no experience or expertise in  
7 operating a housing program or direct subsidy program, nor with matters outside the scope of  
8 population health management like zoning ordinances, federal and state housing laws, income  
9 and asset verification, etc. As a result, DOH respectfully urges the Senate to remove the  
10 Department of Health as the implementing agency.

11 If the Legislature determines that the Department of Health is the ideal agency, then SB471  
12 should be amended to explicitly authorize delegation to the Counties as the implementing entities  
13 for which DOH may serve as a fiscal intermediary. The counties are in a better position to  
14 understand local real estate markets, geography, and community needs than DOH.

15 **Offered Amendments:** Delete the Department of Health as the expending or implementing  
16 agency.

**SB-471**

Submitted on: 2/10/2019 12:34:16 AM

Testimony for HMS on 2/11/2019 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
andy levin	Testifying for county of hawaii, Mayor's office	Support	No

Comments:

Hawaii County participates in Community Alliance Partners (CAP), and heavily relies on that organization to identify pertinent bills related to homelessness that are worthy of support. CAP, understandably, has enthusiastically endorsed the comprehensive approach in SB 471, and has asked others to join in the effort to win passage.

Homelessness is one of my few priorities for this Session, and I know I would be preaching to the choir if I elaborated on why this issue is so important. Rather than do that, let me simply say that I support SB 471, and hope you will fund the programs at a level that will make a real difference for our community.

Respectfully submitted,

Harry Kim, Mayor

# HAWAII YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK

677 Ala Moana Boulevard, Suite 904 Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Phone: (808) 489-9549

Web site: <http://www.hysn.org> E-mail: [info@hysn.org](mailto:info@hysn.org)

Rick Collins, President

Judith F. Clark, Executive Director

Bay Clinic

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hawaii

Bobby Benson Center

Child and Family Service

Coalition for a Drug Free Hawaii

Collins Consulting, LLC

Domestic Violence Action Center

EPIC, Inc.

Family Programs Hawaii

Family Support Hawaii

Friends of the Children of West Hawaii

Hale Kipa, Inc.

Hale 'Opio Kauai, Inc.

Hawaii Children's Action Network

Hawaii Health & Harm

Reduction Center

Hawaii Student Television

Ho'ola Na Pua

Kahi Mohala

Kokua Kalihi Valley

Maui Youth and Family Services

Na Pu'uwai Molokai Native Hawaiian Health Care Systems

P.A.R.E.N.T.S., Inc.

Parents and Children Together (PACT)

PHOCUSED

PFLAG – Kona Big Island

Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest and

Hawaiian Islands

Residential Youth Services

& Empowerment (RYSE)

Salvation Army Family

Intervention Services

Sex Abuse Treatment Center

Susannah Wesley Community Center

The Catalyst Group

February 5, 2019

Senator Russell Ruderman, Chair,  
And members of the Committee on Human Services

Senator Stanley Chang, Chair,  
And members of the Committee on Housing

## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 471 RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS

Hawaii Youth Services Network (HYSN), a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, supports SB 471 Relating to Homelessness.

Homeless youth who are living on their own on the streets without support or guidance from their families are the most vulnerable segment of our homeless population. They are children who have not completed their education, lack employment experience, and have not yet learned the skills for adult living.

More than 40% were forced to leave home by their families. Three-fourths have been physically, emotionally, or sexually abused. The average age when they first became homeless is 14. Many trade sex for the resources they need for survival – food, money, a safe place to sleep. They lack adequate food, access to education, and have difficulty meeting health care needs.

Outreach is the first step in helping youth leave the streets for safer and more appropriate living situations. Workers build trusting relationships and convince youth to accept help to leave the streets, while helping them meet their immediate survival needs. Funding for outreach to youth is critically important.

Youth adults ages 18 – 24 face many housing challenges and could benefit from rapid rehousing and rent supplement programs. Typically, they work at low-wage jobs while trying to complete a GED, attend college, or participate in vocational training. This includes young adults who have emancipated

from foster care or are participating in the Imua Kakou Program (voluntary care to age 21). Ensuring that these young adults have stable, safe housing during this critical period can provide the foundation that will enable them to be self-supporting for a lifetime.

By providing an array of services to meet the needs of different segments of our homeless population, we can greatly reduce homelessness.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Judith F. Clark". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

Judith F. Clark, MPH  
Executive Director

## Helping Hawai'i Live Well

To: Senator Russell Ruderman, Chair, Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair, Members, Senate Committee on Human Services

Senator Stanley Chang, Chair, Senator Dru Mamo Kanuha, Vice Chair, Members, Senate Committee on Housing

From: Trisha Kajimura, Executive Director

**Re: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 471 RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS**

**Hearing: February 11, 2019, 3:05 pm, CR 016**

Dear Chairs Ruderman and Chang, and members of the committees on Human Services and Housing:

Thank you for hearing **Senate Bill 471** which proposes making critical investments to address homelessness in Hawaii. Mental Health America of Hawaii supports this bill.

Mental Health America of Hawaii is a 501(c)3 organization founded in Hawai'i 77 years ago, that serves the community by promoting mental health through advocacy, education and service. Many of our community members suffering from homelessness are also mentally ill and unable to access the mental health treatment that they need due to the instability of their living situation. Homelessness also puts people at risk for mental health issues due to the high level of stress it causes. We need to support programs that both prevent homelessness and directly intervene in it while targeting the diverse types of populations affected by homelessness in our state.

These actions will have a lasting effect on our State and provide a future for our struggling families and individuals who so easily can fall into homelessness.

Thank you for considering my **testimony in support of SB 471**. Please contact me at [trisha.kajimura@mentalhealthhawaii.org](mailto:trisha.kajimura@mentalhealthhawaii.org) or (808)521-1846 if you have any questions.



## CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAI'I

### TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 471: RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS

TO: Senator Russell Ruderman, Chair, Senator Stanley Chang, Chair, and Members,  
Committees on Human Services, and Housing  
FROM: Betty Lou Larson, Legislative Liaison, Catholic Charities Hawai'i  
Hearing: **Monday, 2/11/19; 3:05 pm; CR 016**

Chair Ruderman, Chair Chang, and Members, Committee on Human Services, and Housing:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony **in strong support** of SB 471, making appropriations for critical services to end homelessness. 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. Catholic Charities Hawai'i has a long history of working in the areas of affordable housing and homelessness.

Hawaii's network of evidence based programs has begun to turn the tide of homelessness. The statewide Point in Time count (January 2018) showed that homelessness had decreased **by nearly 18% since 2016**. However, these programs must be greatly expanded if Hawaii is to leap from #1 in the nation per capita for homelessness (now tied with New York) to actually **ENDING** homelessness. **Catholic Charities Hawaii urges that \$16.5 million be added to the Base Budget to provide stable funding and the ability to scale up successful, evidence based programs to meet the need. The uncertainty of year to year funding makes it impossible to fully utilize these successful programs that provide multiple paths to permanent housing.**

Outreach is critical to connecting people living on the streets to housing navigation and resources to escape homelessness. The Legislature saw the potential of the Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion program (LEAD) and not only put it into the base budget for Oahu, but added monies for the Neighbor Islands. This initiative needs to continue to be supported. Diversion is critical to reduce the flow of homeless individuals into our jails. Data from the Coordinated Statewide Homelessness Initiative (CSHI) shows that families on the cusp of homelessness can avoid evictions with a relatively small cash infusion. This program is credited as playing a significant role in a **25% reduction in evictions on Oahu in 2017**.

Three other proven programs need stable funding in the Base Budget: Housing First not only addresses chronically homeless who are often the most visible street people, it saves the state money! The UH Center on the Family's research found that an estimated **\$6,197 / MONTH** in health care costs alone, was saved for EACH homeless participant in Housing First. For a projected 301 participants, that could add up to over **\$22 million EACH year in savings**. This program needs to be expanded since it successfully keeps 92.5% of its clients in permanent housing, well above the national average of 85% (as of 8/2018) for Housing First programs.



The Kakaako Family Assessment Center, operated by Catholic Charities Hawai‘i, has become a model for changes to the shelter system. The Kakaako FAC moves families off the streets in 77 days (average). 100% of the families have remained in permanent housing!. Its success inspired the Legislature to allocate another \$800,000 in 2018 to support a new FAC.

Rapid Rehousing provides shallow rent subsidies that can quickly enable working families to obtain a permanent rental unit. The Urban Institute released a new report (10/2018) that found this model to be successful in helping families and veterans to move into housing units in the private rental market faster than they would on their own and for a lower cost. Most do NOT become homeless again, although many struggle with ongoing housing affordability, like many other low-income renters. Their findings suggest that “**Rapid Rehousing could be a scalable and cost-effective crisis response intervention that could help communities address homelessness more effectively.**” Hawaii’s program needs to be scaled up as a proven and effective model to end homelessness.

Besides these proven programs, gaps still exist in the network. Two pilot programs would address these gaps. Short- Term Rental Assistance Pilot Program to Families could provide relief to families struggling to pay Hawai‘i rents. Families are extremely housing cost-burdened. Half of isle households do not earn enough to cover basic needs, much less save. An emergency can easily force them into homelessness. (AUW’s ALICE report 2018) With financial counseling to help stabilize families, this pilot could efficiently house families whose only need is financial.

Long-Term Rental Assistance Pilot Program for Kupuna addresses another gap –our kupuna who lack adequate funds to pay rent. Our vulnerable elders deserve a safe and decent place to live. Yet the most recent Homeless Services Utilization Report (2017) reveals that 1,386 elders over the age of 60 were homeless. Many more are facing homelessness as rents increase. Ongoing rental assistance is essential to meet the health and housing needs of our kupuna, and allow them to age in place as a part of our community.

Thank you for addressing these multiple paths out of homelessness. Please contact me at (808) 373-0356 or [bettylou.larson@catholiccharitieshawaii.org](mailto:bettylou.larson@catholiccharitieshawaii.org) if you have any questions.

**SB-471**

Submitted on: 2/8/2019 6:13:27 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/11/2019 3:05:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mike Goodman	Testifying for Hawaii Kai Homeless Task Force	Support	Yes

Comments:

**TO:** Senator Russell Ruderman, Chair, Senator Stanley Chang, Chair, and Members, Committees on Human Services, and Housing

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

**RE:** SB471

**Hearing: Monday, 2/11/19; 3:05 pm; CR 016**

**Chair Ruderman, Chair Chang, and Members, Committee on Human Services, and Housing:**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony **in strong support of SB 471.**

The programs funded by this bill, with proven track records, end the homeless crisis for many individuals every day.

Housing First programs have a 98.7% success rate, serving the most difficult segment of the Homeless population; The chronic, unsheltered street homeless, most of whom are disabled by severe mental illnesses and substance addictions. Housing First also provides a net savings to the State; The UH Center on the Family's research found that an estimated **\$6,197 per MONTH** in health care costs alone, was saved for EACH homeless participant in Housing First. This program successfully keeps 92.5% of its clients in permanent housing. If this program was "scaled up" to serve all 2000 chronic homeless, it would literally save the State hundreds of millions of dollars each year in the aggregate, for medical care, homeless sweeps, law enforcement, the judiciary, and repairing damaged property.

The Kakaako Family Assessment Center ("F.A.C."), operated by Catholic Charities Hawai'i, moves families off the streets in an average of 77 days. 100% of the families served remained in permanent housing. Because of this spectacular track record, the



2018 Legislature allocated another \$800,000 to fund a second Family Assessment Center. This could serve twice as many clients.

Outreach is critical for connecting unsheltered, chronic homeless to housing navigation and resources to escape homelessness. For severely mentally impaired homeless people, it can take 300 or more contacts to build the trust necessary to get them off the streets.

The Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion program (LEAD) is an essential part of reducing the endless cycle of streets to jail and jail to streets. This will also save the State and counties millions of dollars in the long run.

Data from the Coordinated Statewide Homelessness Initiative (CSHI) shows that families can avoid evictions, and thereby homelessness, with modest assistance. **This program played a key role in reducing evictions on Oahu by 25% in 2017.**

Rapid Rehousing rent subsidies, quickly enables homeless families with employed heads of households, to obtain market rental housing. The Urban Institute report released in October of 2018, found this model worked well to help families and veterans move into housing faster and for a lower cost. Although families continue to struggle financially, the majority do not become homeless again. These findings suggest that Rapid Rehousing could be a cost-effective intervention at a large enough scale to re-house ALL newly homeless families in less than a month.

### **Two pilot programs would address the gaps in existing programs:**

Short- Term Rental Assistance Pilot Program to Families; Half of Hawaii's working households don't earn enough to provide for their basic needs, and have little or no savings. An emergency can easily force them into homelessness. By combining modest subsidies with financial counseling, this pilot could help stabilize families who face the prospect of homelessness.

Long-Term Rental Assistance Pilot Program for Kupuna; The U.H. Center of the Family's Homeless Services Utilization Report Report for 2017, shows that 1,386 elders over the age of 60 were homeless. Rising rents will make many more homeless who are on fixed incomes.

**Year after year, bills have to be written, introduced and passed by the Legislature to fund these core programs. That's why we ask for an amendment to add the \$16.5 million yearly appropriation to the Base Budget. This will provide a stable source of funding and perhaps, the ability to scale up successful, evidence-based programs.**

One reason homelessness is still a major crisis, is these core programs, with proven track records, are not operating at a sufficient scale to serve the estimated six to seven thousand homeless in our State. Although this bill doesn't solve the problem of scale, it

keeps these crucial programs going for another year. Hopefully, we can increase their scale in the future. We also must coordinate and consolidate these proven interventions, with robust plans to create enough permanent supportive housing at a sufficient level to end the homeless crisis.

**Thank you for the opportunity to testify.**

**SB-471**

Submitted on: 2/7/2019 7:22:32 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/11/2019 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
David Mulinix	Testifying for Our Revolution Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:



Inspiring Hope, Changing Lives

Visit us on the web: [www.hopeserviceshawaii.org](http://www.hopeserviceshawaii.org)

Connect via email: [info@hopeserviceshawaii.org](mailto:info@hopeserviceshawaii.org)

HOPE Help Line: 808-935-3050

Hearing: SB 471 in support  
Date: February 11, 2019  
Location: State Capitol, Room 016


Aloha Committee Chair, Vice-Chair, and Committee Members:

I am submitting testimony on behalf of HOPE Services Hawai'i, a nonprofit homelessness service provider, in support of SB 471.

The programs and services covered by this bill will allow us to assist clients more efficiently, and will also directly address the rising rents that have left many Hawai'i families teetering on the edge homelessness. These are foundational programs that are critical to continue our work in reducing homelessness in our state, and must be included in the State Department of Human Services Base Budget. If we can count on these critical resources--rather than having to fight for them each year--we will be able to plan for the long term, likely saving money and increasing our effectiveness in the fight to end homelessness.

In order to afford a 2-bedroom apartment in Hawai'i County, a person earning minimum wage needs to work 101 hours per week. A former client from Kona shared their family's struggle: "I had 2 part time jobs and a full time job. I was always working. I ended up keeping my full time job. I then later struggled with my rent payments. Me and my family were close from being evicted from our home. I called multiple places that would help me. HOPE services helped me with my rent, because of them me and my family still have a roof over our heads."

Let's do whatever is within our power to keep a roof over the heads of families like this one. I urge you to help us help our neighbors avoid homelessness by supporting SB 471. Mahalo for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Brandee Menino  


Chief Executive Officer  
HOPE Services Hawaii, Inc.

JOIN OUR COMMUNITY



HOPE SERVICES HAWAII, INC.  
ADMINISTRATIVE  
OFFICE  
357 Waiuanue Avenue  
Hilo, HI 96720  
phone: (808) 935-3050  
fax: (808) 935-3794

HALE MALUHIA  
EMERGENCY SHELTER  
110 Ululani Street  
Hilo, HI 96720  
phone: (808) 443-4717  
fax: (808) 934-7456

KIHEI PUA  
EMERGENCY SHELTER  
115 Kapi'olani Street  
Hilo, HI 96720  
phone: (808) 933-6053  
fax: (808) 934-0904

VETERAN HOUSING  
PROGRAMS  
21 West Ohea Street  
Hilo, HI 96720  
phone: (808) 934-8658  
fax: (808) 934-8658

FRIENDLY PLACE  
RESOURCE CENTER  
74-5593 Pawai Place  
Kailua-Kona, HI 96740  
phone: (808) 933-6062  
fax: (808) 329-6219

WEST HAWAII EMERGENCY  
HOUSING PROGRAM  
74-5593 Pawai Place  
Kailua-Kona, HI 96740  
phone: (808) 217-5560  
fax: (808) 327-2171

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Chief Executive Officer  
Brandee Menino



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

**Testimony in Strong Support of SB 471: Relating to Homelessness**

TO: Committees on Human Services and Housing

FROM: Partners in Care (PIC)

HEARING: Monday, February 11, 2019 at 3:05 p.m., Conference Room 016

Dear Chair Ruderman, Chair Chang, and members of the Committees on Human Services and Housing:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of SB 471, which will provide funding for proven-effective homelessness services programs that are necessary to reduce homelessness in Hawai'i. SB 471 will also create a pilot rent subsidy program that will fill a critical service gap for kupuna at risk of homelessness due to their fixed incomes and rapidly rising rents. Partners in Care (PIC)—a coalition of more than 50 non-profit, homelessness providers—strongly supports the bill as a critical component of a comprehensive plan to address homelessness in Hawai'i.

If we want to turn the tide on homelessness, two things are key: (1) we need to continue to improve the efficiency with which we use our resources; and (2) we need to make sufficient resources available on a consistent basis.

With respect to improving efficiency, we've seen significant improvements in recent years. Years ago, a family facing homelessness would arrive at service provider's door and receive whatever the provider had to offer whether or not it was the best suited service for the situation. Or the family might be sent away with only a list of other providers and a prayer that one of them could help. Today, regardless of which provider's door they knock on, families are assessed and matched with the services and providers that can best address their particular situation.

Efficiency is critical, but even the most efficient system cannot address a problem of this magnitude without consistent commitment of sufficient resources. Last year, the legislature demonstrated the type of investments we need to be making to address Hawai'i's housing and homelessness crisis, appropriating \$30 million for the Ohana Zones program and \$13.5 million for core homelessness services programs—a \$43.5 million combined investment. SB 471 does not ask for additional funding for Ohana Zones, but it does request an increase in funding for core homelessness services—\$16.5 million. Additionally, Partners in Care supports a \$1.5 million appropriation for a gap-filling kupuna rental assistance pilot program, which would bring the total to \$18 million. Ideally, this level of funding would be added to the base budget to provide stability in funding that would allow service providers to plan long term and more efficiently use these resources.

The programs funded by SB 471 including the following:

**Outreach:** Without outreach services, we could not connect people to the proven effective programs such as Housing First that bring them out of homelessness. Outreach teams connect those on the

streets—youth, families, kupuna, adults, and people suffering from mental illness—to all available housing options: Emergency Shelters, Transitional Shelters, Housing First, Rapid Rehousing with rent stipends, and/or treatment (i.e., substance use). For many chronically homeless mentally ill persons, it can take 50 or more individual outreach contacts spread out over several months or even years to build up trust and move them off the streets. Outreach teams may also do wound care, distribute hygiene kits or snacks, and offer to obtain identification documents.

**Rapid Rehousing:** Rapid rehousing is designed to help individuals and families exit homelessness quickly and return to permanent housing by providing, rental stipends, assistance in finding housing, and case management services. The Urban Institute released a 2018 report that found Rapid Rehousing to be successful in helping families and veterans to move into housing units in the private rental market faster than they would on their own and for a lower cost. Most do NOT become homeless again, although many struggle with ongoing housing affordability, like many other low-income renters. According to the report, “Rapid Rehousing could be a scalable and cost-effective crisis response intervention that could help communities address homelessness more effectively.” This is a program that works, and it should be consistently and adequately funded.

**Housing First:** Housing First targets chronically homeless individuals and families with disabling conditions (mental health, substance use, and physical disabilities). It provides subsidized housing, case management services, and other support services. According to a UH Center on the Family study, Housing First saves an estimated \$6,197 per month in health care costs alone, for **each** homeless participant in Housing First. For a projected 301 participants, that could add up to over \$22 million **each** year in savings. On average nationally, the Housing First program has kept its clients in permanent housing 85 percent of the time, and local data suggests an even higher success rate in Hawaii.

**LEAD:** LEAD (Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion) is a pre-booking diversion program that grants police officers the discretionary authority to redirect low-level offenders – typically drug-involved and homeless - to case managers if they choose to do so. Twenty-eight percent of Hawaii’s unsheltered homeless individuals identify as having substance use disorders. A pilot project funded by the Legislature in 2017 is showing promise in breaking the ineffective, destructive, and expensive revolving cycle of arrest, incarceration, release, and back to addiction and the streets. In 2018, the program was expanded from Oahu to Maui and Hawai‘i Island.

**Family Assessment Center:** The Family Assessment Center (FAC) in Kakaako has had tremendous success. . The Kakaako FAC moves families off the streets in 77 days (average). One-hundred percent of the families have remained in permanent housing. The much-needed capacity provided by the FAC in Kakaako is also needed on neighbor islands and in other areas of Oahu, and the 2018 legislature appropriated funding for an additional FAC on a neighbor island.

**CSHI:** CSHI (Coordinated Statewide Homelessness Initiative) provides a one-time cash infusion for people on the cusp of homelessness. In just eighteen months of operation in 2016, at a total cost of \$3.7 million, CSHI helped 4,944 individuals retain housing or obtain a housing placement. The program was credited as playing a significant role in a 25% reduction in evictions on Oahu. According to judges, property managers, and eviction attorneys, the program had a dramatic and immediate effect on the prevention of evictions. In 2018, a \$1.5 million appropriation was made for this program, and it is among the programs SB 471 would provide funding for.

In addition to the core homelessness services described above, SB 471 would appropriate \$1.5 million for a **Long-Term Rental Assistance Pilot Program for Kupuna**. Skyrocketing housing costs are an especially serious threat to Hawai‘i’s kupuna living on fixed incomes. A Long-Term Rental Assistance Pilot Program for Kupuna can address the needs of this especially vulnerable population. The program

could provide rental assistance of up to \$1,000 per month, such that Kupuna in the program would pay 50% of their income toward rent, which could keep kupuna in their housing and off the street.

To support these key components of a comprehensive plan to address homelessness, Partners in Care urges the passage of SB 471. Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.

**SB-471**

Submitted on: 2/7/2019 5:27:43 AM

Testimony for HMS on 2/11/2019 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Claire Gearen	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

Dear Chairs Russell E. Ruderman and Stanley Chang, Vice-Chairs Karl Rhoads and Dru Mama Kanuha, and Members of the Housing and Human Services Committees,

My name is Claire Gearen, and I write in strong support of Senate Bills 471, 1031, and 1395 as a concerned private citizen. I am also a member of Faith Action for Community Equity, which supports a continued \$200,000,000 appropriation for the rental housing revolving fund. It is urgent that we maintain progress reducing homelessness and increasing access to affordable housing.

Thank you for the generous notice about the February 11 hearing for these bills. As Senate Bill 471, 1031, and 1395 all relate to rent subsidies for citizens at risk of homelessness and are being heard during the same time, I would like to address these bills together in combined testimony.

I have felt the high housing costs in Honolulu as I have at times contributed more than 50% of my income towards housing. In contrast, my twin sister lives in Oregon and for the same price as my one bedroom condominium is raising her two children in a four bedroom house. My parents and another sister and her family are currently sharing a house in Pauoa as an akamai way to save on Oâ€ahu's high housing costs.

At one time or another in the last five years, each of my siblings and I residing in Hawaiâ€i have needed some family assistance. At one point I accepted help with my maintenance fees for a year as an alternative to downsizing to a studio. With thanks to United Ways, legislators now know that in 2017 there were 165,013 families in Hawaiâ€i that were Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) households, and many ohana in Hawaiâ€i lack the extra resources to assist the next generation. Shallow short term rental assistance can keep families housed for less than the cost of servicing them once they become homeless. Shallow long term rental assistance for kupuna on fixed incomes makes sense as housing costs rise far beyond expectations when they were in the workforce. Our pride as a community is entwined with care of our elders. We should not see kupuna on the streets.



Some parents are now advising their millennials to move to the continent or refrain from having children, advice that is surprising for a potential grandparent to say. We all know that in the last two years we were one of only a few states to lose residents. In addition, the birth rate declined by nearly a half. We need residents and an upcoming generation to keep our economy balanced and sustainable. Passing legislation to increase access to affordable housing and reduce homelessness will send a message to families that the situation will improve and that there could be a future for them here in the islands. As someone who considered a move to Portland, Oregon only a few years ago as expenses surpassed my income, I know the difference short term shallow housing assistance can make in keeping me rooted at home. While my assistance came from family, we should have a government program for those without extended family means.

I urge you to pass legislation to provide shallow rental assistance to qualified residents.

Sincerely,  
Claire Gearen

**SB-471**

Submitted on: 2/7/2019 9:41:46 AM

Testimony for HMS on 2/11/2019 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
David Deges	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-471**

Submitted on: 2/7/2019 2:29:28 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/11/2019 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Dara Carlin, M.A.	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-471**

Submitted on: 2/7/2019 9:29:27 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/11/2019 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Sherry Pollack	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**SB-471**

Submitted on: 2/8/2019 12:30:23 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/11/2019 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Paul Normann	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please support this SB471 so that we can continue move individuals and families from homelessness to housed.

**SB-471**

Submitted on: 2/9/2019 8:41:17 AM

Testimony for HMS on 2/11/2019 3:05:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Diane S. Martinson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support SB471 and the continued focus on alleviating the homelessness crisis. Thank you for your sustained work in this effort!