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Statement of
Hakim Ouansafi
Hawaii Public Housing Authority
Before the

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Thursday, March 28, 2019
2:00 PM - Room 308, Hawaii State Capitol

In consideration of
SB 9, SD1, HD1
RELATING TO THE HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY

Honorable Chair Luke and Members of the House Committee on Finance, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony concerning Senate Bill (SB) 9, SD1, HD1, relating to the Hawaii Public Housing Authority.

The Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) **supports the intent, with comments,** of SB 9, SD1, HD1, which requires the HPHA to adopt rules without regard to chapter 91, Hawaii Revised Statutes to reimburse Section 8 landlords for repair costs of tenant-caused property damage under certain circumstances. Appropriates funds and establishes a position.

The HPHA assists our low-income families through the Housing Choice Voucher Program, also known as "Section 8". The Section 8 program is one of the federal government's major programs for assisting very low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled to afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private market, including single-family homes, townhouses and apartments. This program currently brings approximately 32.68 million dollars a year on the island of Oahu, supports over 2,337 families and over 6,400 individuals.

Because of the overwhelming need in our community to assist our low-income families, we are hopeful that with the passage of this measure, more landlords would be willing to consider our over 200 Section 8 participants that are currently searching for housing as tenants. The Section 8 program is an important part of the State's efforts in addressing the affordable housing needs of our low-income families, and the HPHA is willing to work and assist all landlords that would like to participate in the program.

The HPHA appreciates the opportunity to provide the Committee with the HPHA's testimony regarding SB 9, SD1, HD1. We thank you very much for your dedicated support.

SB-9-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/27/2019 4:37:31 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/28/2019 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
William Caron	Young Progressives Demanding Action	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Luke,

Young Progressives Demanding Action strongly supports SB9 SD1 HD1. While we do not buy into the myth that low income families are somehow worse tenants because they are poor, we do understand that landlords need to feel comfortable renting their property out before they will do so. We are in the midst of an affordable housing crisis. Wait times for Section 8 housing vouchers are far too long, in part, because not enough landlords are willing to make their property available to low income families. If a fund needs to be set-up to guarantee these landlords will be compensated should their property be damaged by a low income family in order for those properties to be made available to those families, then so be it. It is our belief that such a fund would be rarely tapped into and so could be rather small, but the important thing is that families that depend on Section 8 have access to a wider range of units that accept Section 8.

Mahalo