
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that homelessness is one
2 of the most pressing problems in Hawai'i, and a robust,
3 comprehensive, long-term solution is needed to address Hawai'i's
4 affordable housing and homelessness crisis.

5 Nearly fifty years ago, in 1970, the State of Hawai'i issued
6 a report stating that Hawai'i had been experiencing a "serious
7 housing problem for many years" which had by then "become a
8 crisis." In the decades since, the problem has worsened. The
9 number of cost-burdened renters who pay more than thirty
10 per cent of their income for rent went from less than a quarter
11 of the population to over one half. High housing costs have
12 driven more and more Hawai'i residents into homelessness.

13 According to the United States Department of Housing and
14 Urban Development, on a single night in January 2018, California
15 and Hawai'i had the highest rates of homelessness among all



1 individuals, with fifty-nine and fifty-eight out of every ten
2 thousand individuals, respectively, experiencing homelessness.

3 By making smart investments in homelessness programs and
4 housing, using data-driven practices, and improving
5 coordination, Hawai'i has gradually begun to turn the tide on the
6 homelessness crisis. In 2017, Hawai'i's homelessness rate went
7 down for the first time in eight years. In 2018, the
8 legislature made unprecedented levels of investment in low-
9 income housing and homelessness solutions, appropriating
10 \$200,000,000 for the rental housing revolving fund, \$30,000,000
11 for the ohana zones pilot program, and \$13,500,000 for other
12 homelessness programs.

13 The legislature finds that investments of this scale must
14 be made consistently in the coming years. Forty-seven per cent
15 of the housing demand is for Hawai'i's households earning below
16 \$45,000 per year, while seventy-four per cent is for households
17 earning below \$75,000 per year. Appropriations that allow for
18 the rental housing revolving fund to be used to build housing at
19 these affordability levels are critically important. Funding
20 for this purpose needs to be steady, predictable, and long-term.



H.B. NO. 1817

1 The purpose of this Act is to authorize the issuance of
2 general obligation bonds and appropriate funds for capital
3 improvement projects consistent with the purposes of the rental
4 housing revolving fund.

5 SECTION 2. The director of finance is authorized to issue
6 general obligation bonds in the sum of \$200,000,000 or so much
7 thereof as may be necessary and the same sum or so much thereof
8 as may be necessary is appropriated for fiscal year 2020-2021
9 for the purpose of financing capital improvement projects
10 consistent with the purposes of section 201H-202(d), Hawaii
11 Revised Statutes.

12 SECTION 3. The sum appropriated shall be expended by the
13 Hawaii housing finance and development corporation for the
14 purposes of this Act.

15 SECTION 4. The appropriation made for the capital
16 improvement projects authorized by this Act shall not lapse at
17 the end of the fiscal biennium for which the appropriation is
18 made; provided that all moneys from the appropriation
19 unencumbered as of June 30, 2022, shall lapse as of that date.

20 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2020.

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INTRODUCED BY:

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H.B. NO. 1817

Report Title:

Rental Housing Revolving Fund; GO Bonds; Appropriation

Description:

Authorizes issuance of \$200,000,000 in general obligation bonds and appropriates funds for capital improvement projects consistent with the purposes of the rental housing revolving fund.

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