



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS  
HONOLULU

**LATE**

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR

March 21, 2019

TO: The Honorable Representative Tom Brower, Chair  
House Committee on Housing

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

SUBJECT: **SB 1395 SD1 – RELATING TO HOUSING**

Hearing: Thursday, March 21, 2019, 10:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 423, State Capitol

**POSITION:** The Governor's Coordinator supports this measure, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities in the executive budget request.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the bill is to make an appropriation for the state rent supplement program.

Homelessness remains one of the most pressing challenges facing Hawaii, and the State has adopted a comprehensive framework to address homelessness that focuses on three primary leverage points – affordable housing, health and human services, and public safety. The Coordinator works closely with multiple state agencies and homeless service providers to implement this framework through the delivery of housing-focused services like Housing First and Rapid Re-Housing, as well as outreach and treatment services for unsheltered homeless individuals experiencing severe mental illness and/or addiction. The coordinated efforts to implement the State's framework to address homelessness have made progress in reducing the number of homeless individuals statewide. Between 2017 and 2018, the number of homeless individuals in Hawaii decreased by 690 individuals (9.6%). The decrease was one of the largest numeric decreases in homelessness in the country, only exceeded by decreases in California, Florida and Michigan.

The Coordinator notes that the state rent supplement program is an effective tool in reducing and preventing homelessness. The program provides a shallow rent subsidy for households that are low-income and would not otherwise be able to cover the full cost of rent on their own. Because the level of funding for the state rent supplement program is capped at a maximum of \$500 per month per household, the program has the ability to address a large number of households and is one of the more cost-effective programs to address homelessness. In addition to directly assisting homeless individuals and families to access housing, the state rent supplement program prevents homelessness for households that – but for the additional funding provided by the program – find themselves at imminent risk of homelessness.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify 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

March 19, 2019

TO: The Honorable Representative Tom Brower, Chair  
House Committee on Housing

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 1395 SD 1 – RELATING TO HOUSING**

Hearing: March 21, 2019, 10:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 423, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports this bill as the State Rent Supplement program provides rental assistance for working families who are struggling to meet their rent. Housing stability promotes employment, educational success, and supports good health outcomes.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this bill is to make an appropriation for the state rent supplement program.

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

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



HAKIM OUANSAFI  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BARBARA E. ARASHIRO  
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY  
1002 NORTH SCHOOL STREET  
POST OFFICE BOX 17907  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96817

Statement of  
**Hakim Ouansafi**  
Hawaii Public Housing Authority  
Before the

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING**

**Thursday, March 21, 2019**  
**10:30 AM - Room 423, Hawaii State Capitol**

In consideration of  
**SB 1395, SD1**  
**RELATING TO HOUSING**

Honorable Chair Brower, and Members of the House Committee on Housing, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony concerning Senate Bill (SB) 1395, SD1, relating to housing.

The Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) **supports the intent** of SB 1395, SD1, provided that it does not adversely affect the Governor's Biennium Budget. SB 1395, SD1 appropriates funds to support the state rent supplement program (RSP).

The RSP is a State funded program that was originally set up to assist middle-income families, who were not threatened by poverty, but were not economically sound to afford the high cost of living in Hawaii. The program was originally designed to assist teachers, policemen, and firemen. The program was later extended to include the general public and has a maximum rental subsidy of \$500.

With the assistance of the Legislature in providing an additional RSP position during the 2016 legislative session, the HPHA has expanded the RSP program to currently serve 390 families and is ready to assist more families if \$2,500,000 in additional funding is provided.

The HPHA appreciates the opportunity to provide the Committee with the HPHA's testimony regarding SB 1395, SD1. We thank you very much for your dedicated support.



## CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

### TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 1395, SD1: RELATING TO HOUSING

TO: Representative Tom Brower, Chair; Representative Scot Matayoshi, Vice Chair; and Members, Committee on Housing

FROM: Betty Lou Larson, Legislative Liaison, Catholic Charities Hawaii

**Hearing: Thursday, March 21, 2019; 10:30 AM; Conference Room 423**

Chair Brower, Vice Chair Matayoshi, and Members, Committee on Housing:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony **in support of SB 1395, SD1**, which appropriates funds to the State Rent Supplement Program. I am Betty Lou Larson, with Catholic Charities Hawaii.

Catholic Charities Hawaii (CCH) is a tax exempt, non-profit agency that has been providing social services in Hawaii for over 70 years. Our mission is to provide services and advocacy for the most vulnerable in Hawaii.

This funding would continue rental subsidies to homeless families and others added to the Rent Supplement Program at the Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA), as well as enable more new families to receive this valuable rental help. Three years ago, with a one year allocation from the legislature, Catholic Charities Hawaii very successfully worked with HPHA to assist 85 homeless families, statewide, to find housing utilizing the State Rent Supplement Program. Over the years, Catholic Charities Hawaii has worked with the elderly, homeless, disabled, and others to link them to this program. It is straight forward and user friendly to both landlords and applicants, and a godsend to most to keep them out of homelessness.

We support pathways like the Rent Supplement Program, which enable families and elders to become housed and remain housed. Hawaii residents continue to be severely housing cost-burdened. Half of isle households do not earn enough to cover basic needs, much less save anything for an emergency, and can easily fall into homelessness (per January 2018 ALICE report by Aloha United Way). Many jobs do not pay enough to enable families to afford the astronomical housing costs in Hawaii. Rental subsidies addresses this compelling need to create options for more affordable housing.

Many families and elders simply need financial relief to get into housing, or be prevented from falling out of housing in the first place. This bill can provide relief to help slow down homelessness.

Please contact me at 373-0356 or [bettylou.larson@catholiccharitieshawaii.org](mailto:bettylou.larson@catholiccharitieshawaii.org), if you have any questions.



**SB-1395-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2019 8:48:01 PM

Testimony for HSG on 3/21/2019 10:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Mike Goodman	Hawaii Kai Homeless Task Force	Support	No

Comments:

<b>TO:</b>	The House Committee on Housing
<b>FROM:</b>	Mike Goodman, Director, The Hawaii Kai Homeless Task Force, Member Partners In Care
<b>RE:</b>	SB1395 SD1
<b>HEARING:</b>	Thursday, March 21, 2019 at 10:30 a.m. Conference Room 423

Representative Brower, Chair, Representative Matayoshi, Vice Chair of the Committee on Housing, and all Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of SB1395, to provide funding for the State Rent Supplement Program subsidy.

This program serves families who barely make ends meet and require either temporary or permanent financial assistance to prevent them from becoming homeless.

It's far more cost effective (not to mention humane) to prevent families from becoming homeless than it does to rebuild their lives and rehouse them after they become homeless.

The State Rent Supplement Program provides what is referred to in the parlance of homeless service providers as "shallow subsidies". This is distinguishable from "deep" subsidies, which are for those at the lowest end of the financial spectrum. Since this program serves families with more or less stable incomes, modest subsidies are sufficient to prevent homelessness. Therefore, this program tends to do a great amount of good relative to the amount of money spent.

# 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

**LATE**

March 21, 2019

Representative Tom Brower, Chair,  
And members of the Committee on Housing

**LATE**

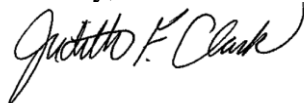
## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 1395 SD 1 RELATING TO HOUSING

Hawaii Youth Services Network (HYSN), a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, supports sb 1395 SD 1 Relating to Housing.

Youth adults ages 18 – 24 face many housing challenges and could benefit from 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.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Judith F. Clark, MPH  
Executive Director



# PARTNERS IN CARE

Oahu's Continuum of Care

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

## Testimony in Support of SB 1395, SD1: Relating to Housing

TO: Committee on Housing  
FROM: Partners in Care (PIC)  
HEARING: Thursday, March 21, 2019; 10:30 AM; conference room 423

**LATE**

Dear Chair Brower, Vice Chair Matayoshi, and members of the House Committee on Housing:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide **testimony in support** of SB 1395, SD1, which makes an appropriation to the State Rent Supplement Program (RS). Partners in Care (PIC), a coalition of more than 50 non-profit homelessness providers, supports this bill.

The strength and health of Hawai'i's people and communities depend on all of us coming together to turn around a housing and homelessness problem that's been growing for decades. In 1970, the state of Hawai'i issued a report declaring a "housing crisis" in Hawai'i. Year after year it's gotten worse as increases in housing costs have outpaced increases in wages. In Honolulu, for example, in 1968, 23 percent of renters were cost-burdened, meaning they were paying more than 30 percent of their income for rent. By 2016, the percentage of cost-burdened renters had **more than doubled to 54 percent**. More and more families are unable to afford housing and still have enough left for food and basic necessities.

The plight of elderly renters is particularly severe with Hawaii's skyrocketing rents. A recent report from UC San Francisco projected that **"the elderly homeless population will nearly triple over the next decade"**. Even more shocking, the researcher found that "Homeless people in their 50's generally display the geriatric difficulties of people age 70 or 80...caring for the coming boom in older street people will be expensive...with more intensive medical care" needed.

We need to act now to prevent more elderly and family renters from becoming homelessness. The Rent Supplement Program is an effective solution. It efficiently assists lower-income households to obtain and maintain housing. The maximum \$500/month rent subsidy can fill the gap between a senior's SSI income or a family's work income and the rent they must pay to be permanently housed. Additional funding to the Rent Supplement Program would be an important step forward in the fight against homelessness, as it can prevent many households from falling into homelessness.

Turning around a housing and homelessness crisis that's been growing for 50 years will be difficult, but not impossible. It will require coming together around a shared vision and taking bold action to target more resources to stop the flow of families into homelessness.

We urge you to pass SB 1395, SD1 to increase funding to the State Rent Supplement Program. Thank you for your consideration of this very important bill.

**PARTNERS IN CARE, OAHU'S CONTINUUM OF CARE**

**200 North Vineyard • Suite 210 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96817 • [www.PartnersinCareOahu.org](http://www.PartnersinCareOahu.org)**



**SB-1395-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/18/2019 1:06:51 PM

Testimony for HSG on 3/21/2019 10:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
chi guyer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

aloha legislators,

as a member of the perhaps soon to be homeless population of maui a tenant at front st. apartment complex in lahaina whose owners are threatening to evict tenants who cannot pay market rate rents (i.e. approximately \$2,000 for a one bedroom apartment); and as a tenant of that complex existing on a section 8 housing voucher, i can so intimately relate to the plight of homelessness.

please vote to help we folks who have contributed significantly to the welfare of the hawaiian economy yet who are now seniors, disabled and otherwise financially threatened and in need of community support for survival. please take care of our kupuna and needy ones, many of whom may be your aunties and uncles and grandparents and such.

respectfully submitted,

chi pilialoha guyer, senior citizen and resident of front street apartments .

**SB-1395-SD-1**

Submitted on: 3/19/2019 11:55:26 PM

Testimony for HSG on 3/21/2019 10:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Thomas Flores	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

SB 1395 RELATING TO HOUSING

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

Conference Room 423

Testifier: Thomas Flores/Recipient

To: Committee on Housing

Date: Thursday, March 21, 2019 at 10:30 A.M.

Conference Room 423

SB 1395

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

SB 1395 RELATING TO HOUSING

Aloha, Committee on Housing:

I am writing to inform you, that I am a current recipient of the Rent Supplement Program pertaining to SB1395. My name is Thomas Flores, and I would love the opportunity to share my point of view in regard to the Rent Supplement Program. I arrived in Honolulu Hawaii in 2016, with a sack clothes and very little financial resources. During the first week of living in Honolulu, HI, I submitted job applications and lived out of a hostel on a day by day basis. By the second week, I received a call for an interview at CJ's New York Style and Deli located inside the Hilton Hawaiian Village. Thankfully, I was hired on the spot for the Dishwasher position, and looked forward to receiving my next pay check and an employee meal.

As my financial resources depleted, I submitted an application at Next Step Homeless Shelter, located in the Kakaako area. After one month of being wait listed, I was accepted into Next Step Homeless Shelter and assigned to Case Worker, Garret Koshiba. I lived at Next Step Homeless Shelter for about a year and experienced challenges that helped me grow as an individual. As I was living at Next Step Homeless Shelter my life began to change in a positive direction. Next Step Homeless Shelter offered the Go Cook and Go Bake Programs held at Kapiolani Community College. Each program was three months long and paid each participant \$50 per day. I gladly accepted this opportunity and earned my basic cooking and baking certification within six months.

A week after completing the Go Cook and Go Bake programs. I updated my resume from Dishwasher to Cook and Baking Apprentice and submitted applications to several businesses in search of employment. About two weeks later, I received a call from Safeway for an interview. I attended the interview for the Baker position and was hired immediately, due to my Go Bake certification.

Next Step Case Worker, Garret Koshiba, explained, since I was generating income; I would be able to qualify for the Rent Supplement Program operated by Catholic Charities. We submitted an application to Catholic Charities, which got accepted. Next, Catholic Charities Administrative Program Manager Dani Gella constantly searched to assist me in finding housing before the deadline. Ms. Gella and Garret Koshiba would communicate with me on their days off to discuss my housing situation. After months of searching for a Landlord who would accept the Rent Supplement Agreement; Case Worker, Garret Koshiba and Program Manager Dani Gella found me a place to live, and now I live in a small studio with a bed to sleep in, which is a dream come true. Furthermore, since the supervision of the Rent Supplement Program has transferred from Catholic Charities to Hawaii Public Housing; Public Housing Specialist II, Mr. D Malachi has done an exceptional job in ensuring that I have a place to live through his professional communication and passion for helping others in need.

Furthermore, the Go Cook and Go Bake programs inspired me to continue my education at Kapiolani Community College. I am one semester from obtaining my AS in Pastry Arts and would like to continue my education by earning an AS Culinary Arts as

well. I believe this education will give me a competitive advantage in the food industry and most importantly, I will never go hungry.

I understand the Rent Supplement Program may cease to exist or endure changes. Therefore, I am asking the Committee on Housing to allow the Rent Supplement Program to continue so it may change people's lives for the better. I would like to continue to better myself as a person, so I may reach my full potential. However, it would be extremely difficult for me to survive without the Rent Supplement Program. For the reason being, I have no family in Hawaii. The Rent Supplement Program, Hawaii Public Housing and Catholic Charities are my family.

I understand cost, expenses, and return on investment are important factors when it comes to making a decision in regard to SB1395. However, I ask the Committee on Housing to take into account the intangible value involved. For instance, I am proud to be a resident of Hawaii. Moreover, Hawaii's cultural values have affected me for the better. For instance, I leaned to help others, regardless if I enjoy their company or not, because it is the right thing to do. With that said, investing in the Rent Supplement Program is the right decision, because some recipients will grow exponentially and give back to the community.

Lastly, the Rent Supplement Program has opened many doors for myself. For instance, Kapiolani Community College, Frolic Hawaii, and a branch within City of Honolulu have asked me to conduct interviews, because they consider myself a success story. Kapiolani Community College is creating a poster with me on it, that will encourage students to join the Go Cook and Go Bake programs. The interview and photos will be sent to Frolic Hawaii. The City of Honolulu would like to conduct the interview for the purpose of raising funds for the Go Cook and Go Bake Programs. Furthermore, on September 26, 2018, I was blessed with the opportunity to bake for Governor David Ige and his guest at Kapiolani Community College.

Believe me, I am not much of a talker, because I prefer to work. Therefore, I share these blessings in this testimony, because without the Rent Supplement Program none of the interviews in regard to our success would be possible. However, my counselors, who I consider family have asked me to conduct the interviews, so I will. Furthermore, Hawaii Public Housing invited me to attend the Senate Hearings on SB1395, and I will because they are my family. Mahalo for your valuable time and consideration. I wish the Committee on Housing the best with the decision-making process.

Mahalo,

Thomas Flores

\*(Attached is Linda Ford's Testimony. Ms. Ford does not have an email address to submit her testimony, therefore, with her permission I have included her testimony

Below:)

State Capitol

415 South Beretania Street

Conference Room 423

Testifier: Linda Ford/ Recipient

To: Housing Committee

Date: Thursday, March 21, 2019 at 10:30 A.M.

Conference Room 423

SB 1395

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

RE: Senate Bill 1395

To Whom it May Concern:

My name is Linda Ford and in less than six months I will be 70 years old. I am also disabled and require a walker or rollator to help with my balance to be able to walk. I live by myself with a little bird as my companion. With Rent Subsidy, I have a better quality of life. I have a reason and hope to wake up every morning. I am very thankful for the rent subsidy that I receive. I am grateful and appreciate all the help that you have given me. Yet I have a fear that I will become a statistic of being lost and forgotten, living with hopelessness and despair, becoming homeless, so I implore you, please continue the Rent Subsidy Program.

Thank you and May God Bless You All,

Linda Ford

TO: COMMITTEE ON HOUSING  
Rep. Tom Brower, Chair  
Rep. Scot Z. Mitayoshi, Vice Chair

HEARING: Thursday  
March 21, 2019  
10:30 AM  
Conference Room 423

FROM: Angilynne Pekelo-Agpaoa

RE: Support for SB 1395- Relating to Housing

Honorable Chair Tom Brower, and Members of the Senate Committee on Housing, thank you for allowing me the opportunity to provide testimony concerning Senate Bill (SB) 1395, relating to housing.

I am in strong support of SB 1395, which will provide needed funding for a key program to reduce and prevent homelessness. As stated in the bill, “the legislature finds that Hawaii has the highest per capita rate of homelessness of any state in the nation. Hawaii also has the highest rate of chronically unsheltered homeless per capita of any state. An estimated 56,530 people are living on the streets and in shelters in Hawaii. Addressing homelessness requires a multi-faceted approach using interventions that are targeted to the particular characteristics of the population being served. The state rent supplement for homeless families and individuals is critically necessary to address homelessness”.

I am a resident on the Leeward side of O‘ahu and homelessness is prevalent. I live right across the street from an encampment in a rental subsidized unit. I have felt the hardships of trying to make ends meet being a single parent of seven children and if I was not a beneficiary of a rental subsidy program, I could not imagine where my children and I would be.

I am grateful for the hand up that I have been given because it has allowed me to provide my children with the basic necessities. I am currently a student at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa in pursuit of my bachelors degree in social work and am currently working with clients that face housing hardships. This appropriation of funding is necessary to reduce and hopefully prevent the homeless crisis that many residents face.

I know that many individuals and families that would benefit from the rent supplement program. Especially the Kupuna and veterans that are on fixed incomes, the goal of this program is to

bridge that financial gap. Programs that assist in financial stability in an ever increasing housing market would be beneficial to those on a fixed income because as prices for food, rent, and other necessities rise, fixed incomes don't.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my testimony in support of SB 1395.

Mahalo,

Angilynne Pekelo-Agpaoa



To: Representative Tom Brower, Chair  
Representative Scot Z. Matayoshi, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Housing

Support for SB1395 SD1: Relating to Housing

I am a graduate student at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa from the Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work. I strongly support for SB1395 SD1, relating to Housing, which would make an appropriation for the state rent supplement program.

The Rent Supplement Program is a State of Hawaii funded program, in which rent supplements will help eligible families pay for their monthly rent. Families must pay at least 30% of their adjusted family income for rent. The difference between the family contributing rent and the total monthly rent (up to a maximum of \$230.00 per month) is paid directly to the owner, according to Hawaii Public Housing Authority.

In addition to the high cost of living, homelessness is also a major issue in Hawaii. From the Hawaii Perspectives poll conducted by Pacific Resource Partnership, 79% of voters said "homelessness" was an issue that has gotten worse over the past couple of years. In 2018, 46 in every 10,000 Hawaii residents experienced homelessness according to the federal report. Hawaii was also ranked the nation's fourth-highest rate of unsheltered homeless people.

Implementing the funds for the State of Hawaii Rental Supplement program will definitely help residents in Hawaii to maintain housing and provide for their families. This will also help to reduce the high rates of homelessness. I urge the committee to pass SB1395 SD1. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Tiffany Marie S. Salvador  
University of Hawaii at Manoa  
Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work