

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
HONOLULU

March 16, 2020

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

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

SUBJECT: **SCR 130 / SR 90 – REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR'S COORDINATOR ON HOMELESSNESS TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT FOR VARIOUS NEIGHBORHOODS ACROSS THE STATE SEPARATE REGIONAL PLANS THAT COORDINATE SHELTER FACILITIES AND SERVICES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE HOMELESS POPULATION AND CONCERNS OF IMPACTED COMMUNITIES**

Hearing: Monday, March 16, 2020, 3:10 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

POSITION: The Governor's Coordinator appreciates the intent of this measure and offers comments.

PURPOSE: The purpose of these resolutions are to request the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness to develop and implement separate regional plans for various neighborhoods across the State to coordinate the services and shelter facilities of public agencies and nonprofit organizations to meet the concerns of impacted communities and needs of the homeless population.

The actions requested by the resolutions appear to duplicate responsibilities already required by statute. Section 346-381(b), Hawaii Revised Statutes, requires the Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH), which is chaired by the Coordinator, to "formulate, and advise the governor on the implementation of, a unified ten-year statewide plan to address homelessness in all Hawaii counties." The ten-year statewide plan and a unified framework to address homelessness have been adopted by the HICH and are available at: <https://homelessness.hawaii.gov/hich/>. The Coordinator presents and reviews quarterly dashboards on progress towards the plan at the regular meetings of the HICH.

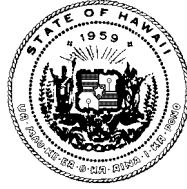
The Coordinator respectfully disagrees with the statement “the State is failing to collaborate with various local nonprofit organizations throughout the state to address homelessness.” The Coordinator actively works to align State efforts with the work of the county homeless coordinators in Honolulu, Maui, Kauai, and Hawaii, as well as with the local Continua of Care (CoCs) for Oahu and the neighbor islands. With input from the counties and the CoCs, the Coordinator established regular monthly meetings with federal, state, and county agencies that fund homeless services, as well as monthly meetings with technical assistance providers and consulting groups working on homeless issues in Hawaii. The discussions with the counties, funders, and CoCs informed the use of Ohana Zone funds by the State, and resulted in the development of new programs such as the Homeless Outreach and Navigation for Unsheltered Persons (HONU) program that provides mobile services to address the needs of rural areas on Oahu that do not have existing emergency shelter capacity.

The Coordinator also acknowledges the efforts of the Department of Human Services (DHS) and Department of Health (DOH) to support the efforts of nonprofit organizations addressing homelessness. In particular, DHS and the State Procurement Office recently developed and implemented training for nonprofit organizations on government procurement and other procedures related to funding for homeless services. DOH also worked in partnership with nonprofit providers to implement the Hawaii Coordinated Access Resource Entry System (CARES) in October 2019 to streamline access to substance abuse treatment services. DHS and DOH, together with the Coordinator and the CoCs, are currently working with the National Council for Behavioral Health to develop systems level approaches to better serve homeless individuals with severe mental illness and co-occurring substance use disorders.

The collaborative efforts between the State and counties contributed to an overall statewide decline in the Point in Time count of homeless individuals by 19.1% (1,509 individuals) between 2016 and 2019, including a 39% decrease (1,473 individuals) in homeless families. During the same period, the number of individuals exiting from homeless programs to permanent housing increased by 73% - an increase from an average of 357 per month to an average of 616 per month.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on these resolutions.

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 15, 2020

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

FROM: Pankaj Bhanot, Director

SUBJECT: **SCR 130/SR91 – REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR'S COORDINATOR ON HOMELESSNESS TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT FOR VARIOUS NEIGHBORHOODS ACROSS THE STATE SEPARATE REGIONAL PLANS THAT COORDINATE SHELTER FACILITIES AND SERVICES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE HOMELESS POPULATION AND CONCERNS OF IMPACTED COMMUNITIES.**

Hearing: March 16, 2020, 3:10 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) offers comments.

PURPOSE: These resolutions require the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness to develop and implement separate regional plans for various neighborhoods across the State to coordinate the services and shelter facilities of public agencies and nonprofit organizations to meet the concerns of impacted communities and needs of the homeless population.

DHS disagrees with the statement that "the State is failing to collaborate with various local nonprofit organizations throughout the State to address homelessness." DHS is procuring services with community organizations and general fund appropriations as provided and instructed by the Legislature. Community providers need support and assistance to improve their organizational capacity to meet State procurement and performance measures. Through Act 162 (2019), the Legislature did provide a one-time appropriation to increase the understanding of procurement processes; the State Procurement Office (SPO) and DHS

Homeless Programs Office (HPO) developed and delivered training for community providers interested in providing services to individuals and families experiencing homelessness. However, the Legislature did not appropriate funds for community providers to improve their organizational capacity.

These resolutions duplicate current efforts. The Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness is the chair of the Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH). HICH is the forum for strategy development in context of a statewide strategy to end homelessness. All counties and the continua of care are represented at the HICH.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on these resolutions.

CYNTHIA K.L. REZENTES

To: The Honorable Senator Ruderman, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Cynthia K.L. Rezentes, Chair Kealahou West Oahu

SUBJECT: SCR130/SR90 REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR'S COORDINATOR ON HOMELESSNESS TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT FOR VARIOUS NEIGHBORHOODS ACROSS THE STATE SEPARATE REGIONAL PLANS THAT COORDINATE SHELTER FACILITIES AND SERVICES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE HOMELESS POPULATION AND CONCERNS OF IMPACTED COMMUNITIES.

Date of Hearing:: March 16, 2020

Time: 3:10 P.M.

Location: Conference Room 016, State Capitol

I sit as the chair for the non-profit Kealahou West Oahu, and am a member of various community organizations within the Wai`anae community.

I would urge caution to attempt to have the Governor's Office of Homelessness coordinator utilize his time to develop neighborhood/regional plans for communities throughout the State regarding homeless in localized communities.

Not all communities have shelters with which homeless may be offered shelter but may be asked/requested/required to utilize shelters in other regions/districts to meet the intent of the directive via these resolutions causing additional strain on the system or even having people not wishing to leave their district to have to move elsewhere for services causing more complex planning across regions/districts.

With respect to being able to work closely and effectively with the State Homeless Coordinator, I have never had occasion to not be able to consult with him to attempt to work on providing proper services for the homeless that our organization interfaces with. He is available whether during the "standard" 9-5 and beyond when I have had occasion to contact him on specific issues.

He has been open and available to our shelter and outreach organizations and keeps our teams involved in activities scheduled along the Coast. It is not unusual for him to be on site to actually assist in various actions requiring SPOs or SNOs.

My recommendation would be to provide him with the required help needed to more broadly cover the programs throughout the State that he interfaces with and to provide the resources necessary to accommodate more of the homeless into housing, i.e. shelter, housing first, permanent supportive housing, etc.

It is through us all working together to get the homeless housed and surround them with the support they need to move them forward with society.

Mahalo for your consideration.

TO: Senate Committee on Human Services

Hearing: Monday, March 16 @3:10 PM in room 016

From: Heather Lusk, Executive Director, Hawaii Health and Harm Reduction Center

Comments on SCR 130

Dear Chair Ruderman, Vice Chair Rhoads and members of the committee

The Hawaii Health & Harm Reduction Center (HHRC) would like to offer comments on SCR 130 relating to homelessness. HHRC has worked closely with Mr. Scott Morishige, the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness since he first started in the position. Mr. Morishige was instrumental in the implementation of several projects we work with including Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) where much needed linkage with the Sheriffs and other public safety stakeholders. In fact, HHRC strongly credits Scott with helping make the LEAD pilot successful with his willingness to work with our staff and the evaluators to ensure integration of our efforts into the greater homeless continuum of care. Mr. Morishige has been a much needed resource for those of us working to combat homelessness from the non-profit sector as he links us with efforts at the State and County level, helps build relationships among leaders and has shared valuable federal resources (such as from USICH) to inform our activities.

HHRC's mission is to *reduce harm, promote health, create wellness and fight stigma in Hawaii and the Pacific*. We focus our efforts on those disproportionately affected by social determinants of health, including but not limited to: people living with and/or affected by HIV, hepatitis, substance use, and the transgender, LGBTQ and the Native Hawaiian communities. We foster health, wellness, and systemic change in Hawai'i and the Pacific through care services, advocacy, training, prevention, education, and capacity building. HHRC works at the intersection of homelessness, substance use and mental health.

HHRC respectfully requests that SCR 130 be amended to include comments about Mr. Morishige's accomplishments as well as provide the flexibility for the Office of Governors' Coordinator on Homelessness so it can continue to provide the support to agencies like HHRC.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

COMMENTS on SCR 130/SR 90: Requesting the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness to Develop and Implement for Various Neighborhoods Across the State Separate Regional Plans that Coordinate Shelter Facilities and Services to Meet the Needs of the Homeless Population and Concerns of Impacted Communities

TO: Senator Russell E. Ruderman, Chair, Senator Karl Rhoads, Vice Chair; and Members, Committee on Human Services
FROM: Rob Van Tassell, President and CEO, Catholic Charities Hawaii
Hearing: **Monday, March 16, 2020; 3:10 pm; CR 016**

Chair Ruderman, Vice Chair Rhoads, and Members, Committee on Human Services:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written comments for SCR 130/SR 90, which would require the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness to develop regional plans for various neighborhoods across the State. I am Rob Van Tassell, 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. CCH has programs serving elders, children, families, homeless and immigrants. Our mission is to provide services and advocacy for the most vulnerable in Hawaii. **Our current homeless programs work very closely with the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness, Mr. Scott Morishige and his team.**

There is regular and consistent coordination and communication between all parties. In fact, Mr. Morishige's team has been vital for our Housing First Program as they help to find clients that our staff cannot locate. Mr. Morishige also brings in other entities to help identify clients to link them back to the appropriate provider. These entities include but are not limited to: staff from public libraries, Department of Transportation, City and County of Honolulu, Department of Hawaiian Homelands, and many others. In addition, we also have witnessed Mr. Morishige respond quickly and help to coordinate efforts on the neighbor islands.

He is a leader in the homeless field and has a big impact on services. This is evident in his work as head of the Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH). This assembly provides an environment for providers from across the state and counties to discuss and provide input that impacts our homeless system and resources. Mr. Morishige is fair and ensures that each provider is heard and considers all members' suggestions and comments.

As a contracted service provider with the State and the City and County of Honolulu, Catholic Charities Hawaii is concerned that assigning this additional task will take away momentum from the efficient system that Mr. Morishige has helped to build and streamline. It also would appear that it would duplicate efforts already undertaken for regional approaches to end homelessness. Furthermore, local stakeholders and services providers know the needs of their communities. Each have developed plans already for their communities and we have seen Mr. Morishige and his team very involved in supporting these regional initiatives.

We urge you to reconsider these resolutions. For questions, please contact our Legislative Liaison, Betty Lou Larson, at 373-0356 or bettylou.larson@catholiccharitieshawaii.org





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COMMENTS REGARDING SCR 130

TO: Committee Chair, Vice-Chair and Committee Members
FROM: Brandee Menino, CEO, Hope Services Hawaii, Inc.
Hearing: Monday, 3/16/20; 3:10 pm; Room 016

Thank you for the opportunity to provide **comments regarding SCR 130**, which would require the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness to develop and implement separate regional plans for various neighborhoods across the State to coordinate the services and shelter facilities of public agencies and nonprofit organizations to meet the concerns of impacted communities and needs of the homeless population.

We appreciate the legislature's recognition of the uniqueness of our counties, and the need to tailor solutions to the individual neighborhoods in which they'll be implemented, and to collaborate with the nonprofits who will implement them. We know that there is no one-size-fits-all solution to homelessness, and we are grateful that our representatives agree. In fact, the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness, Mr. Scott Morishige, has carried out this idea in every interaction I have had with him. Mr. Morishige's approach has both reflective and reflexive--taking note of the differences between Oahu and the neighbor islands, and working to ensure that the state's actions, positions, and policies support our population and our work here on Hawai'i Island.

Perhaps most importantly, Mr. Morishige is *present*. He regularly checks in to make sure we are receiving the support we need from his office, and frequently visits sites across the neighbor islands. He is exceptionally accessible and responsive, and has reliably assisted us with difficult and urgent requests.

As the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness is already cooperating with nonprofit organizations on the neighbor islands, we would like to request clarification on what outcomes are expected from this bill since local plans are developed locally by the communities on each island. Hawai'i Island's local coalition of stakeholders, Community Alliance Partners, has a data driven plan with a 3-year strategic direction that aligns with the State Plan.

Mahalo nui for your consideration of our comments **regarding SCR 130**.

Sincerely,

Brandee Menino,
Chief Executive Officer

JOIN OUR COMMUNITY



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