

STAND. COM. REP. NO. **1403**-22

Honolulu, Hawaii
, 2022

RE: **MAR 24**
S.B. No. 206
S.D. 2
H.D. 1

Honorable Scott K. Saiki
Speaker, House of Representatives
Thirty-First State Legislature
Regular Session of 2022
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce, to which was referred S.B. No. 206, S.D. 2, H.D. 1, entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO RENTAL DISCRIMINATION,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to prohibit discrimination in rental transactions, including advertisements for rental property, that are based on participation in a Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program or any permanent supportive housing program, or requirements related to participation in these housing assistance programs.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Hawaii Public Housing Authority, Stonewall Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii, Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club, American Civil Liberties Union of Hawai'i, AF3IRM Hawai'i, Elizabeth Kahanu Hawaiian Civic Club, and six individuals. Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from the Department of Human Services, Hawai'i Association of REALTORS, and one individual. Your Committee received comments on this measure from the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness, Hawaii State Council on Developmental Disabilities, Hawai'i Civil Rights Commission, Department of Housing and Human Concerns of the County of Maui, Hawai'i State Coalition Against Domestic Violence,

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Community Alliance Partners, Catholic Charities Hawai'i, Partners In Care, Community Alliance Partners, Hawaii Children's Action Network Speaks!, and two individuals.

Your Committee finds that housing assistance programs like the federal Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program are an essential means of alleviating high rental costs for struggling families. However, the Section 8 program relies on private landlords' willingness to rent to participating individuals. In an expensive and limited housing market such as Hawaii, prohibiting discrimination based on source of income will allow supportive housing vouchers or other housing assistance programs to be implemented as intended.

Your Committee further finds that data from other communities show that utilization of housing assistance vouchers increases when there are laws to prevent discrimination against renters with housing vouchers. Your Committee notes that these source of income laws do not alter or restrict standard industry practices to vet prospective renters. Rather, these laws prohibit landlords from rejecting prospective renters who receive Section 8 vouchers or other housing assistance simply because of the voucher or assistance. Low-income individuals and families need additional consumer protections from discriminatory practices to maintain housing stability, which this measure seeks to address.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Consumer Protection & Commerce that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 206, S.D. 2, H.D. 1, and recommends that it be referred to your Committee on Finance.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Consumer
Protection & Commerce,



AARON LING JOHANSON, Chair



