



HB133
 RELATING TO THE BUDGET OF THE OFFICE OF HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS
 House Committee on Finance

March 8, 2023

10:00 AM

Room 308

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **STRONGLY SUPPORTS** HB133, OHA’s 2023-2024 (FY24) and 2024-2025 (FY25) fiscal biennium budget proposal for beneficiary advocacy. **OHA respectfully requests the Committee’s support for OHA’s biennium request in its entirety.**

Since the establishment of OHA in 1978, the needs of OHA’s beneficiaries have grown amplifying OHA’s mandate as the principal public agency of the State of Hawai’i responsible for the performance, development, and coordination of programs and activities relating to the Native Hawaiian people. **OHA exists, now, to serve more than 680,000 beneficiaries, many of whom continue to suffer systemic inequities, disparate impact, and are disproportionately represented among the worst health, education, and other socio-economic conditions. OHA’s critical mission continues and the biennium budget request is summarized below in Table 1.**

Legislative Provision (Proviso)	Prog ID	FY2023-2024 (FY24)	FY2024-2025 (FY25)
Occupancy Ready	OHA 175 – Beneficiary Advocacy	\$500,000	\$500,000
Social Services		\$415,000	\$415,000
Education		\$615,000	\$615,000
Legal Services		\$600,000	\$600,000
<u>‘Āina</u> , Addressing impacts of Climate Change		\$500,000	\$500,000
<u>‘Ohana</u> Economic Stability		\$370,000	\$370,000
Total		\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000

Table 1. – FY24 and FY25 General Funds



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OHA has worked with the State Legislature in decades past to match appropriated state general funds in each fiscal biennium to support a portion of OHA's costs in advancing its critical mission. This biennium, OHA's request through HB133 is solely to support Program ID 175 – Beneficiary Advocacy (compared to prior biennium operational costs), through grants and contracts.

OHA via its FY24-FY25 budget construction process, will leverage state general funds as follows for each fiscal year:

- Occupancy-ready housing needs - \$500,000 General Funds, \$1,000,000 Trust Funds (as was approved in FY22-FY23);
- Social services - \$415,000 General Funds, \$415,000 Trust Funds;
- Education - \$615,000 General Funds, \$615,000 Trust Funds;
- Legal services and legal representation for OHA beneficiaries - \$600,000 General Funds, \$600,000 Trust Funds;
- Protection of 'āina (land), wai (water), and kai (sea), including addressing climate change adaptation, mitigation, and resilience - \$500,000 General Funds, \$500,000 Trust Funds; and
- 'Ohana (family) economic stability - \$370,000 General Funds, \$370,000 Trust Funds.

In effect, OHA's biennial budget requests have continuously sought to make the most of state general funds by extending its reach and impact to as many beneficiaries as we possibly can. OHA endeavors this by matching state general funds with OHA trust funds, while further leveraging this combination of funds with community resources, both cash and in-kind.

It is because of this ongoing partnership with the State Legislature that OHA now wishes to emphasize the far-reach of our programs and services in meeting the needs of Native Hawaiians and even the general public. In the past, OHA has successfully leveraged general funds to multiply, nearly three times the original amount, in the areas of social services, and legal services and education – that is nearly three times the amount of individuals directly impacted from this critical funding source.

OHA respectfully urges the Legislature to **PASS** HB133 for the betterment of conditions of the Native Hawaiian people. Mahalo nui loa for your time and consideration of this immensely important matter.