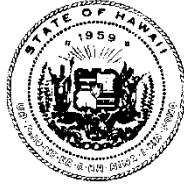


DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



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
**SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES
AND
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING**

**Thursday, March 17, 2022
1:15 PM – Room 225, Hawaii State Capitol**

In consideration of
**HB 1744, HD2
RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS**

Honorable Chair San Buenaventura, Honorable Chair Chang, and Members of the Senate Committee on Human Services, and Members of the Senate Committee on Housing, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony concerning House Bill (HB) 1744, HD2, relating to homelessness.

The Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) **supports** the enactment of HB 1744, HD2, which authorizes the issuance of general obligation bonds for the development and construction of permanent supportive housing to address the needs of chronically homeless individuals and families and other vulnerable populations, so long as it does not adversely affect the Governor's Supplemental Budget.

The HPHA views this measure to accomplish two things: Step 1 is for the HPHA to develop much needed housing, and Step 2 is for the HPHA to contract out management and supportive services needed for this population. Please know that the HPHA has the expertise and track record to collaborate with our Federal partners, sister State and County departments and agencies and non-profit community to develop and construct permanent supportive housing projects with a qualified developer/operating partner to include the full spectrum of our most disadvantaged populations that require wrap around services to address the most intense needs.

Over 17 years ago, Act 196 of 2005, as amended by Act 180 of 2006, the Housing and Community Development Corporation of Hawaii (HCDCH) was bifurcated into two separate agencies – HPHA and Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation (HHFDC). At that time the primary purpose of

the HPHA was to manage a variety of forms of housing assistance, including public housing, housing assistance payments, rental supplement, and homeless programs. However, the HPHA continued to pursue the redevelopment of its existing public housing stock as demonstrated through the submission of applications to Federal grant programs such as the HOPE VI Revitalization Grant and the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative.

In 2005, the Hawaii State Legislature and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) had the foresight to support the HPHA's efforts to engage in public private partnerships to develop a variety of housing, including public housing, affordable housing, commercial and industrial.

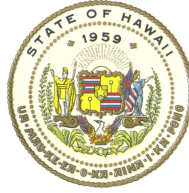
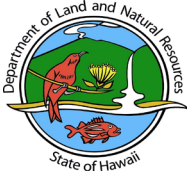
Today, as the HPHA continues to look towards the future, it continues to align itself with the current national trends in the redevelopment of its public housing inventory. As the affordable housing crisis has worsened across the nation, and has been magnified here in Hawaii, the Federal government continues to develop new tools and make funding available for PHAs to take advantage of redevelopment programs that were not available a decade and a half ago. These new programs, such as Mixed-Finance Redevelopment, emphasize the conversion of public housing and promotes the de-concentration of poverty. Through the redevelopment process, a mixture of public housing, affordable housing, market rate and commercial uses will be created to benefit the community.

HPHA's desire is not to remain a static agency, sitting on the sidelines while these opportunities pass by. Our mission and fiduciary responsibility are to constantly look to the future and to challenge ourselves to make the most of the land, financial and human resources we have to contribute to resolving the housing crisis. This bill is crucial for us to take this opportunity and to step up and collaborate with other departments and agencies to use their expertise, so that we can make a dent in what is needed for our community.

While we are not a homeless agency, the HPHA stands ready to assist the Legislature in this endeavor and looks at this measure as an opportunity to be part of the overall solution needed to address all housing and homeless related issues in Hawaii.

The HPHA appreciates the opportunity to provide the Committees with the HPHA's testimony. We thank you very much for your dedicated support.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII



**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES**

POST OFFICE BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

**Testimony of
SUZANNE D. CASE
Chairperson**

**Before the Senate Committees on
HOUSING
And
HUMAN SERVICES**

**Thursday, March 17, 2022
1:15 PM**

State Capitol, Conference Room 225, Via Videoconference

**In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 1744, HOUSE DRAFT 2
RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS**

House Bill 1744, House Draft 2 proposes to: (1) Authorize the issuance of general obligation bonds for the development and construction of permanent supportive housing to address the needs of chronically homeless individuals and families and other vulnerable populations; and (2) Permit the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation (HHFDC) to consider an application for any competitive federal low-income housing tax credits from the Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) or partner, for construction of permanent supportive housing units. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports the intent of this measure and offers the following comments.**

The proposed bill specifically prescribes that the Department shall assist HPHA by “providing suitable public lands” for this project. The Department is willing to work with HPHA to identify “suitable public lands” under the Department’s management that meets appropriate and mutually acceptable criteria relating to this measure.

The Department notes that its commercial and industrial properties in the urban areas support and fund the public trust natural and cultural resource management purposes of the Department. The revenues collected by the Department’s Land Division cover the entire annual operating budget for the Land Division, the Department’s Office of Conservation and Coastal Lands, and the Dam Safety and Mineral Resources Programs of the Department. The revenues fund over 80 Department staff positions, including 5 positions within the Commission on Water Resource Management, and provide funding support to the Division of State Parks and various resource protection programs administered by the Division of Forestry and Wildlife such as the protection of threatened and endangered species, removal of invasive species, wildland firefighting and lifeguard services.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

SUZANNE D. CASE
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

ROBERT K. MASUDA
FIRST DEPUTY

M. KALEO MANUEL
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

HB-1744-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2022 6:39:00 PM

Testimony for HMS on 3/17/2022 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kevin Moore	Testifying for DLNR	Comments	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

I am available for questions to DLNR. Please allow me Zoom access.

HB-1744-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2022 6:43:31 PM

Testimony for HMS on 3/17/2022 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Russell Tsuji	Testifying for DLNR	Comments	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

I am available for questions to DLNR. Please allow me Zoom access.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
HONOLULU

March 17, 2022

TO: The Honorable Senator Stanley Chang, Chair
Senate Committee on Housing

The Honorable Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services

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

SUBJECT: **HB 1744 HD2 – RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS.**

Hearing: Thursday, March 17, 2022, 1:15 p.m.
VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE

POSITION: The Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness supports the intent of this bill, respectfully offers comments, and suggests amendments.

If this measure proceeds, the Coordinators requests that the measure's passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the executive budget request.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this bill is to authorize the issuance of general obligation bonds to the Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) for the development and construction of permanent supportive housing to address the needs of chronically homeless individuals and families and other vulnerable populations. The bill permits the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation (HHFDC) to consider an application for any competitive federal low-income housing tax credits to HPHA for construction of permanent supportive housing units.

The Coordinator appreciates the amendments of the House Committees on Health, Human Services and Homelessness and Housing to expand the purpose of the supportive housing units to meet the needs of other vulnerable populations, in addition to chronically homeless individuals and their families.

There is a limited supportive housing inventory for individuals with acute needs who require supportive housing that provides ongoing rental subsidy and wraparound social service supports. As of December 2021, the homeless system identified 2,100 homeless individuals and 542 families participating in the Continuum of Care Coordinated Entry System and on the By Name List for housing.¹ The Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) also estimates that 3,888 supportive housing units are needed statewide for homeless and non-homeless individuals who require housing with integrated social services, including individuals stepping down from higher levels of care in institutional settings or exiting from correctional facilities. The proposed general obligation bonds would be a critical tool to close the housing gap for homeless individuals and other vulnerable populations statewide.

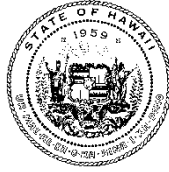
In addition to the expansion of supportive housing in the current draft of this bill, the Coordinator notes a need for additional services to meet the needs of homeless individuals with serious mental illness, chronic medical conditions, and chronic substance abuse. In particular, additional short-term shelter and triage capacity is needed to address this growing need. If this measure proceeds, the Legislature may consider amending this bill to include a targeted pilot program to support the shelter and housing needs of this vulnerable and difficult to serve population.

The need for supportive housing and a comprehensive multi-pronged effort to address homelessness is especially critical now, given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts on low-income households. In January 2021, the Economic Roundtable released a report that projected the pandemic recession would increase chronic homelessness in the United States by 49% over the next four years. Similarly, historical data for the statewide homeless Point in Time (PIT) count also indicates that demand for homeless services is likely to increase in the wake of the current economic recession. Following the last significant downturn in 2009, the statewide PIT count increased 37% between 2009 and 2016. Potential future increases in homelessness underscore the need for a comprehensive effort to address various aspects of homelessness.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

¹ Please see page 3 of DHS Annual Housing First report at: http://humanservices.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/12-28-21_CB_Section-346-378_Housing-First-combined-signed.pdf

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



BONNIE KAHAKUI
ACTING ADMINISTRATOR

STATE OF HAWAII
STATE PROCUREMENT OFFICE

P.O. Box 119
Honolulu, Hawaii 96810-0119
Tel: (808) 586-0554
email: state.procurement.office@hawaii.gov
<http://spo.hawaii.gov>

TESTIMONY
OF
BONNIE KAHAKUI, ACTING ADMINISTRATOR
STATE PROCUREMENT OFFICE

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE
ON
HOUSING
AND
HUMAN SERVICES

March 17, 2022; 1:15 P.M.

HOUSE BILL 1744, HD2
RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS

Chair Chang, Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Kahua, Vice Chair Ihara, and members of the committees, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB1744, HD2. The State Procurement Office (SPO) opposes the exemption language on page 4, SECTION 3, lines 10-13 set forth below.

“(a) To promote the expeditious construction of permanent supportive housing units authorized under this Act, the Hawaii public housing authority shall be exempt from chapter 103D, Hawaii Revised Statutes.”

To avoid long contracting delays, the passage Act 224, SLH 2021, gives agencies a time limit for a written decision to uphold or deny the protest within seventy-five (75) calendar days of receipt of the protest; and an extension, not to exceed forty-five (45) calendar days.

In addition, Act 188, SLH 2021, requires that agencies are to award contracts to responsible bidders or offerors to increase accountability, enhance performance, and utilize taxpayer dollars more efficiently by considering a contractor's past performance in the procurement process.

The SPO objects to the procurement exemption and testifies that CONSTRUCTION for this program should be conducted within the procurement code.

A recent article, “3 Reasons Federal Construction Procurement Can Be Slow,” explains why government procurement is important:

“The great irony is that government construction procurement is slow for good reasons. Even though they can be frustrating, the guardrails are there for our protection.”

The article further explains that if there are no rules to follow purchases will be left up to the individual’s discretion of cost, quality, and timeliness, resulting in inconsistent products across the board, and without procedures about how goods and services are to be purchased, corruption would have space to take hold. Even though the article centers around the Federal Acquisition Regulations (FAR) Compliance, Hawaii’s procurement code has rules and regulations to ensure that purchases are conducted in an ethical manner.

<https://www.gordian.com/resources/3-reasons-for-slow-federal-construction-procurement/>

HRS Chapter 103D, the Hawaii Public Procurement Code (Code), is the single source of public procurement policy to be applied equally and uniformly, while providing fairness, open competition, a level playing field, government disclosure and transparency in the procurement and contracting process vital to good government.

Public procurement’s primary objective is to provide everyone equal opportunity to compete for government contracts, to prevent favoritism, collusion, or fraud in awarding of contracts. To legislate that any one entity should be exempt from compliance with both HRS chapter 103D and 103F conveys a sense of disproportionate equality in the law’s application.

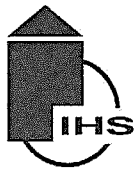
Exemptions to the code mean that all procurements made with taxpayer monies will not have the same oversight, accountability and transparency requirements mandated by those procurements processes provided in the code. It means that there is no requirement for due diligence, proper planning or consideration of protections for the state in contract terms and conditions, nor are there any set requirements to conduct cost and price analysis and market research or post-award contract management. As such, Agencies can choose whether to compete any procurement or go directly to one contractor. As a result, leveraging economies of scale and cost savings efficiencies found in the consistent application of the procurement code are lost. It also means Agencies are not required to adhere to the code’s procurement integrity laws.

The National Association of State Procurement Officials state: “Businesses suffer when there is inconsistency in procurement laws and regulations. Complex, arcane procurement rules of numerous jurisdictions discourage competition by raising the costs to businesses to understand and comply with these different rules. Higher costs are recovered through the prices offered by a smaller pool of competitors, resulting in unnecessarily inflated costs to state and local governments.”

When public bodies, are removed from the state's procurement code it results in the harm described above. As these entities create their own procurement rules, businesses are forced to track their various practices. Moreover, a public body often can no longer achieve the benefits of aggregation by using another public body's contract because different state laws and regulations may apply to the various public bodies making compliance more difficult.

Each year new procurement laws are applied to state agencies causing state agency contracts to become more complex and costly, while other public bodies, such as agencies with strong legislative influence, are exempted. Relieving some public bodies from some laws by exempting or excluding them from compliance with a common set of legal requirements creates an imbalance wherein the competitive environment becomes different among the various jurisdictions and the entire procurement process becomes less efficient and costlier for the state and vendors.

Thank you.



The Institute for Human Services, Inc.
Ending the Cycle of Homelessness

TO: Honorable Sen. Stanley Chang, Chair
Senate Committee on Housing

Honorable Sen. Joy San Buenaventura, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: Connie Mitchell, Executive Director
IHS, Institute for Human Services, Inc.

RE: HB1744, HD2 – Relating to Homelessness

HEARING: March 17, 2022, 1:15 pm via Videoconference, State Capitol Conf. Room 225

POSITION: IHS supports with comments.

IHS, the Institute for Human Services, is quite grateful for the support offered by this bill to meet the needs of chronically homeless persons with development of permanent supportive housing.

We would offer that many of our most vulnerable chronically homeless population suffer comorbid or trimorbid conditions including chronic medical conditions, chronic pain, mental illness, cognitive impairment (dementia and traumatic brain injuries), substance use disorders and severe infections. These individuals often have a difficult time taking the first step out of homelessness and need a place to be triaged and assessed. This includes being detoxed from alcohol or drugs while getting cleaned up, nourished and getting a safe night's sleep. It is a gap in our service continuum that stabilization beds and shelters can't provide. At the same time, such a service could also divert homeless persons from crowding our hospital emergency rooms and could be another place that could support police assisting homeless persons needing this elevated level of care who are taking that first step toward change.

Please consider adding some funding to allow for a pilot program of this nature that would be an important complement to homeless outreach and permanent supportive housing. Mahalo for the opportunity to offer testimony.





CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1744 HD2: RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS

TO: Senate Committees on Housing and Human Services
FROM: Rob Van Tassell, President and CEO, Catholic Charities Hawai'i
Hearing: **Thursday, March 17, 2022; 1:15 PM via videoconference**

Chair Chang, Chair San Buenaventura and Members, Committees on Housing and Human Services:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony **in strong support** of **HB 1744 HD2**, which authorizes the issuance of general obligation bonds for the development and construction of permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless individuals and families and other vulnerable populations. I am Rob Van Tassell, with Catholic Charities Hawai'i. We are also a member of Partners In Care (PIC).

Catholic Charities Hawai'i (CCH) is a tax exempt, non-profit agency that has been providing social services in Hawai'i for over 75 years. CCH has programs serving elders, children, families, homeless, and immigrants. Our mission is to provide services and advocacy for the most vulnerable in Hawai'i. Catholic Charities Hawai'i has a long history of working in the areas of affordable housing and homelessness.

If Hawai'i is to end homelessness, it must create units to house our chronically homeless people. It remains difficult to locate landlords to house this population. We must start now to develop housing and create new models and new partnerships with housing developers. While Hawai'i needs housing for all levels of incomes, there is a gap in development for people who need housing combined with coordinated services. These populations are growing. This bill is a good first step to actually create solutions!

Catholic Charities Hawaii's Housing First program has seen the critical need to link housing with ongoing support services. Chronic homelessness is what many people see on the streets of Hawai'i. The public feels that nothing is being done to solve homelessness, even though homeless service providers place hundreds of homeless families, elders and singles each year into permanent housing in the community. However, chronic homelessness is often more visible to the public and more disturbing. The ongoing problem of chronic homelessness is also very costly to the State, since health care, emergency services, public safety costs and other costs are high when individuals remain homeless for years and years.

Permanent supportive housing is a proven solution. It integrates housing with best-practice supportive services. While the upfront cost is significant, it results in great healthcare and other cost savings that, over time, outweigh the costs of construction and services for these populations. The long term impact of this bill would be great. Targeting funding to house this high need population could result in many of them being able to leave the streets and be successful in housing.

We urge your support for this bill. Please contact our Legislative Liaison, Betty Lou Larson at (808) 373-0356 or alohabettylou@hotmail.com if you have any questions.



CLARENCE T. C. CHING CAMPUS • 1822 Ke'eaumoku Street, Honolulu, HI 96822
Phone (808) 373-0356 • bettylou.larson@CatholicCharitiesHawaii.org



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 HB 1744 HD2: RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS

TO: Senate Committees on Housing and Human Services

FROM: Partners In Care

Hearing: Thursday, 3/17/22 1:15 PM; via videoconference

Chair Chang, Chair San Buenaventura, and Members, Committees on Housing and Human Services:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony **in strong support** of **HB 1744 HD2**, which authorizes the issuance of general obligation bonds for the development and construction of permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless individuals and families and other vulnerable populations. Partners In Care (PIC), a coalition of more than 60 non-profit homelessness providers and concerned organizations, works on Oahu to end homelessness.

Partners In Care directly places many homeless into permanent housing. We have just successfully placed 300 families into permanent housing. Often the most difficult to place are the chronically homeless. They cannot just be put into housing. In order to successfully maintain their housing they require a range of intensive and ongoing services. These services are essential to help them make the difficult transition from living on the streets to living in an apartment with all its rules and responsibilities. Moreover, continuing services are needed to address their mental health, substance abuse, functional disabilities or other chronic health conditions. This is what permanent supportive housing successfully provides to this vulnerable population.

Building housing units that the chronically homeless can access is the first step. The lack of landlords willing to work with our clients limits our effectiveness. The proposed funding for construction of permanent support housing would lead to partnerships of developers and experienced service providers to produce rental units. More units dedicated to the chronically homeless will result in our ability to transition many more of the chronically homeless off our streets and into permanent supportive housing. These are often the most visible of the homeless and impact the community and State services the most.

This initiative must be a priority for the State in order for Hawai'i to achieve ending homelessness. The 2020 Point in Time count conducted by Partners In Care on Oahu found that one in four of the homeless adults were chronically homeless. Without addressing the special needs of the chronically homeless, long term homelessness will continue to create burdens on the healthcare systems, emergency services and create other costs for the State and Counties.

This initial investment in housing can produce models to solve homelessness for chronically homeless individuals and families as well as other vulnerable populations. We urge your strong support for this bill.

Bob Wardlaw, Advocacy Chair, PARTNERS IN CARE, OAHU'S CONTINUUM OF CARE
200 North Vineyard Boulevard • Suite 210 • Honolulu, Hawaii 96817 • (808) 285-4451 •
PICadvocate@gmail.com

HB-1744-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2022 1:27:06 PM

Testimony for HMS on 3/17/2022 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sue Berk	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In Support of HB 1744

From: Sue Berk

Date: March 15, 2022

I support and ask your support of HB 1744 to authorize the issuance of general obligation bonds to assist in the development and construction of permanent supportive housing to address the needs of chronically homeless individuals and families and other vulnerable populations.

I am a parent of a 36 year old young man with Down Syndrome an Intellectual and Developmental Disability (IDD) a vulnerable group in our state. He is healthy and thriving in his life in east Honolulu and still lives with me and his dad. He attended elementary, middle and high schools in this area. s active in church and is pretty well known. When my husband and can no longer care for him we would like to have options for him to live with supports in this part of the island that he knows and where he has community connections.

I am also co-founder of Fuller Lives, an organization focused on raising awareness about this issue and working to build connections with other families, State and other agencies for support.

- Appropriate living options in home neighborhoods and with age-appropriate house mates are extremely limited, and individuals can wait 10 years or more for such options, and, when a vacancy is offered, it is likely many miles from their home community. Housemates can be 25+ years older. Better planning is needed. More options needed for every island.
- A survey our organization did in 2018 indicated that 67% of families surveyed, who currently have an adult with IDD living with them, will need an alternative residential placement for the person in 5 to 10 years.
- 71% of families report that they have made no plans for future placement. And don't know where to start to find information.
- 94% of the adults with IDD desire to live in or near their home community when a future placement is found.

The data above outlines the need for one segment of the vulnerable population, individuals with IDD. There are many more. Planning for and implementing good plans to provide permanent support housing is greatly needed in our community.

Thank You!!

HB-1744-HD-2

Submitted on: 3/15/2022 3:46:06 PM

Testimony for HMS on 3/17/2022 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrea Quinn	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Honorable Committee Members:

Please support HB1744.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my testimony.

Andrea Quinn

Kihei, Maui

HB 1744 HD 2 TESTIMONY

To: House Committee on Human Services
House Committee on Housing
Hearing on March 17, 2022 at 1:15 p.m.

From: John Kawamoto

Position: Support

Housing prices have steadily increased for decades in Hawaii, while wages have stagnated. Fewer and fewer people can afford housing, and as a result, homelessness has continued to grow. This bill funds the development of permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless people. Thomas Jefferson once said, "The measure of society is how it treats the weakest members." This bill elevates our entire society.

Hawaii Sen. Stanley Chang, Chair, Committee on Housing
Hawaii Sen. Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair, Committee on Human Services
Members of the Senate Committees on Housing and Human Services

Thursday, March 17, 2022

Support for H.B. 1744, H.D. 2, Relating to Homelessness



Chairs Chang and San Buenaventura and committee members:

My name is Sandra Oshiro and I'm submitting written testimony in support of H.B. 1744, H.D.2, a bill that addresses Hawaii's distressing ranking as among the states with the country's highest homelessness rates.

Permanent supported housing must be accelerated if Hawaii is to meet the need that is here and rising due to growing numbers of the elderly, those with disabilities, and people who face other debilitating circumstances that are beyond their control.

The legislation calls for the issuance of general obligation bonds for the development and construction of housing units meeting the needs of the chronically homeless and other vulnerable populations, such as those with intellectual, mental, and physical disabilities.

This bill, along with H.B. 1749, H.D. 1, take important steps in the near term by supporting the development of homes and related supports to sustain vulnerable populations in the long term.

While decision-makers must weigh competing demands for limited resources, I hope you agree that housing is among the most basic of needs. The wise have said that a measure of a society is how it treats its weakest. Here is an opportunity to prove our worth.

Thank you for your support of this crucial legislation.

Sincerely,
Sandra Oshiro
2389 Beckwith St.
Honolulu, HI 96822
ssoshiro@gmail.com