

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR

GLORIA CHANG
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
P.O. BOX 150
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT (OFAM)

WRITTEN ONLY
TESTIMONY BY CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES, &
HOMELESSNESS
ON
HOUSE BILL NO. 1824

February 10, 2022
9:00 a.m.
Room 329 and Videoconference

**MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE OFFICE OF THE LONG-TERM CARE
OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM**

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on House Bill (H.B.) No. 1824.

H.B. No. 1824 appropriates \$500,000 in general funds in FY 23 to the Executive Office on Aging to fund 5.00 full-time equivalent long-term care ombudsman program specialist positions within the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman.

B&F notes that, with respect to the general fund appropriation in this bill, the federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act requires that states receiving Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) II funds and Governor's Emergency Education Relief II funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and

- Higher education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

Further, the federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act requires that states receiving ARP ESSER funds must maintain state support for:

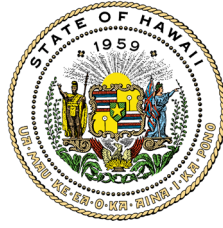
- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and
- Higher education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

The U.S. Department of Education has issued rules governing how these maintenance of effort (MOE) requirements are to be administered. B&F will be working with the money committees of the Legislature to ensure that the State of Hawai'i complies with these ESSER MOE requirements.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII

ELIZABETH A. CHAR, M.D.
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH



CAROLINE CADIRAO
DIRECTOR

Telephone
(808) 586-0100

Fax
(808) 586-0185

STATE OF HAWAII
EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON AGING
NO. 1 CAPITOL DISTRICT
250 SOUTH HOTEL STREET, SUITE 406
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-2831

Testimony COMMENTING on HB 1824
Making an Appropriation for the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES AND HOMELESSNESS
REPRESENTATIVE RYAN I. YAMANE, CHAIR
REPRESENTATIVE ADRIAN K. TAM, VICE CHAIR

Testimony of Caroline Cadirao
Director, Executive Office on Aging
Attached Agency to the Department of Health

Hearing Date: February 10, 2022
9:00 A.M.

Room Number: 329
Via Videoconference

1 **EOA's Position:** The Executive Office on Aging (EOA), an attached agency to the Department
2 of Health, is providing comments on HB1824, Making an appropriation for the Office of the
3 Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP), a program of the EOA.

4 **Fiscal Implications:** This measure appropriates \$500,000 for fiscal year 2022-2023 for five
5 FTE long-term care ombudsman program specialist positions within the Executive Office on
6 Aging.

7 **Purpose and Justification:** The LTCOP is required by federal and state law to protect the
8 human and civil rights of residents in all long-term care settings. The Long-Term Care
9 Ombudsman is required to visit facilities quarterly, respond to complaints, engage in
10 investigations, provide information, assistance and referrals to long-term residents and their
11 families, facilitate family councils statewide, provide community education, and administer the
12 program.

1 Currently, LTCOP has 1 full-time State Ombudsman, 1 contracted Oahu Ombudsman, and 3
2 part-time contracted Ombudsmen for Kauai, Maui, Lanai, Molokai, and Hawaii island. These
3 contractors are trained Ombudsmen and have assisted to expand quarterly visits; however, they
4 do not replace the unmet needs that would be filled by full-time staff. In 1995, the Academy of
5 Medicine recommended one full-time Ombudsman for every two thousand residents. Hawaii has
6 12,895 residents in 1,779 facilities statewide. Based on these statistics, LTCOP should have 6.44
7 full-time long-term care Ombudsmen.

8 EOA conducted a comparison of other LTCOP in states of similar size.

- 9 • Maine population of 1.3 million =13 full-time employees
- 10 • West Virginia population of 1.79 million =11 full-time employees
- 11 • New Hampshire population of 1.36 million = 5 full-time employees

12 To meet the goal of quarterly visits and to advocate for the most vulnerable residents in all care
13 settings, LTCOP needs to conduct 28 visits a day statewide. Based on our current data with our
14 staff, contractors, and volunteers, we average four (4) visits a day.

15 COVID revealed the critical importance and need for the LTCOP. When nursing facilities,
16 community care homes and adult foster homes are closed to family members and visitors, the
17 Ombudsmen are allowed access to these facilities and are the eyes and ears for the families.

18 **Recommendation:** The Administration's budget includes 2 FTE permanent Ombudsmen for the
19 LTCOP. This bill will add five more FTE to the LTCOP. If the EOA budget and this measure
20 passes, there will be a total of 7 FTE Ombudsmen. We support the additional funding and
21 positions for this program provided that its enactment does not reduce or replace priorities with
22 the Administration's budget request.

23 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

HB-1824

Submitted on: 2/8/2022 9:26:09 AM

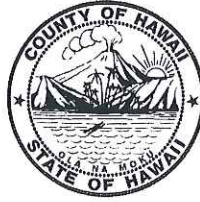
Testimony for HHH on 2/10/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Gerald Arens	Executive Office on Aging, Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program	Support	No

Comments:

I believe it is important step for the legislature to fund five additional permanent Ombudsman positions within the office of the LTCOP. There are over 1,700 facilities with a total of over 8,000 total beds. The majority of these beds are occupied by our most vulnerable state treasures, our Kupuna. There are not enough Long-Term Care Ombudsman paid staff positions to be able to visit each of our state facilities on a quarterly basis. Adding five additional permanent ombusman positions will ensure more effective oversight of the rights of all people in long term care facilities. It is important to fund this bill at the requested 500K to ensure the program can attract people interested in a long-term commitment to this worthy federally mandated and mostly unfunded program. Thank you.

Mitchell D. Roth
Mayor



William H. Farr
Executive on Aging

County of Hawai'i OFFICE OF AGING

Aging and Disability Resource Center, 1055 Kino'ole Street, Suite 101, Hilo, Hawai'i 96720-3872
Phone (808) 961-8600 ♦ Fax (808) 961-8603 ♦ Email: hcoa@hawaiiintel.net
West Hawai'i Civic Center, 74-5044 Ane Keohokālole Highway, Kailua-Kona 96740
Phone (808) 323-4390 ♦ Fax (808) 323-4398

February 8, 2022

Representative Ryan I. Yamane, Chair
Representative Adrian K. Tam, Vice-Chair
Hawaii State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

**Re: Support of HB1824, relating to MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE
OFFICE OF THE LONG-TERM CARE OMBUSMAN PROGRAM
February 10, 2022, 9:00 A.M.
Conference Room 329**

Dear Representative Yamane and Members of the Committee on Health, Human Services, & Homelessness:

Hawai'i County Office of Aging (HCOA) supports the Kupuna Caucus initiative to appropriate funds to the office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman (LTCOP) for five full-time (5.0 FTE) ombudsman specialist positions; one on Oahu, two on Hawai'i island, and one each on Kaua'i and Maui.

The National Academy of Medicine recommends an essential standard of one full-time ombudsman for every two thousand long-term care residents. As of 2021, Hawai'i had a total of 1,779 long-term facilities state-wide that housed 12,895 residents. As current demographics indicate Hawai'i's older population has continued to increase, while LTCOP staffing has remained the same for over 40 years. Due to the lack of staffing, the LTCOP cannot meet the Federal minimum requirement of visiting each facility on a quarterly basis.

As a federally-mandated program, our LTCOP continues to remain at the bottom of the list in terms of staffing and funding across the country. The proposed appropriation of \$500,000 will



*An Area Agency on Aging
Hawai'i County is an equal opportunity provider and employer.*

Representative Ryan I. Yamane, Chair
Representative Adrian K. Tam, Vice-Chair
February 8, 2022
Page 2

only meet staffing standards set in 1995, and does not take into account federally mandated changes in the Older American Act Title VII requirements. Passing this appropriation is truly a step in the right direction.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of this appropriation.

Sincerely,



William "Horace" Farr
Executive on Aging
Hawai'i County Office of Aging

HB-1824

Submitted on: 2/8/2022 9:30:26 AM

Testimony for HHH on 2/10/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
jacqueline gardner	SLTO	Support	No

Comments:

I **SUPPORT** the bill HB1824 to create positions for the neighbor island ombudsman

the oahu staff is NOT able to provide adequate support for our **FRAIL ELDERS in facilities**

they **DESERVE** a voice of their own

thank you



Kokua Council

The **Kokua Council** is one of Hawaii's oldest advocacy groups. Kokua Council seeks to empower seniors and other concerned citizens to be effective advocates in shaping the future and well-being of our community, with particular attention to those needing help in advocating for themselves.

**House of Representatives
Committee on Health, Human Services, and Homelessness
Thursday, February 10, 2022
9:00 a.m.**

To: Chair Ryan I. Yamane
Re: HB1824, Making an appropriation for the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice-Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I am Lila Mower, president of Kokua Council, and behalf of the Council, **support HB1824.**

Most of us prefer to spend our “golden” years at home (“age in place”) however there are times when circumstances do not allow us our preference and some of us must move into care facilities when we are most vulnerable.

As Hawaii’s population ages, the demand to ensure and enforce proper care in those facilities only grows. The LTC Ombudsman serves to fulfill that responsibility, but the current program is inadequately funded, depending heavily on volunteers with limited staff and limited resources to cover Hawaii’s island population.

Before John McDermott, Hawaii’s only LTC Ombudsman retires, it is essential that he trains those who will replace him. Please pass this measure and enact as soon as possible.

Mahalo.

Kokua Council advocates, informs, and educates to improve laws, policies and practices impacting the well-being of seniors, their families, and our community.



1001 Bishop Street | Suite 625 | Honolulu, HI 96813-2830
1-866-295-7282 | Fax: 808-536-2882
aarp.org/hi | aarphi@aarp.org | twitter.com/AARPHawaii
facebook.com/AARPHawaii

The State Legislature
The House Committee on Health, Human Services and Homelessness
Thursday, February 10, 2022
9:00 a.m.

TO: The Honorable Ryan Yamane, Chair
RE: Support for H.B. 1824 Relating to Long Term Care Ombudsman

Aloha Chair Yamane and Members of the Committee:

My name is Keali'i Lopez and I am the State Director for AARP Hawai'i. AARP is a membership organization of people age fifty and over, with over 140,000 members in Hawai'i.

AARP strongly supports H.B. 1824 which establishes and funds five permanent long-term care ombudsman program specialist positions to the office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman. Having adequate staffing for this office is long overdue. Up to now, Hawaii has had only one full time ombudsman serving nearly 13,000 residents residing among the 1,779 facilities spread over 6 islands. This is not acceptable. In 1995, the National Institute of Medicine recommended a minimum of 1 full-time Ombudsman per every 2,000 residents. If this bill passes, Hawaii will finally meet that 1995 standard.

The COVID-19 pandemic has heightened awareness of our frailest residents' vulnerability. Because family and friends couldn't visit, activities and social interactions among long term care residents were negatively impacted. Unfortunately, facilities were short-staffed which exacerbated the situation, and many residents were left alone. The role of ombudsman is very critical in ensuring that residents are receiving proper care and attention. The ombudsman serves as the public's eyes and ears when visiting these facilities. Having access to the residents 24/7, the ombudsman becomes their advocate and can bring their concerns and complaints to the facility and appropriate state agencies' attention to be immediately addressed and resolved.

Please provide the additional staff so that each island will have at a full-time, permanent ombudsman specialist. Hawaii's long term care residents deserve immediate access to someone who can assist them.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to **support H.B. 1824**.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Keali'i S. Lopez". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Keali'i S. López
State Director

HB-1824

Submitted on: 2/8/2022 10:16:50 AM

Testimony for HHH on 2/10/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
John A. H. Tomoso	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

02-08-22

RE: HB1824

Aloha kakou,

I am in favor of this Bill which appropriates funds to the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman (OLTCO) for 5.0 FTE ombudsman program specialist positions. I have been advocating for this over several sessions, over several years. The OLTCO has forever been under-staffed, and unable to effectively do its mandated job on a Statewide basis. I find this a travesty!

Mahalo for your serious considerations.

John A. H. Tomoso+, MSW, ACSW

51 Ku'ula Street

Kahului, Maui, HI

96732-2906

808-280-1749

john.a.h.tomoso@gmail.com

cc: PABEA-LEG

HB-1824

Submitted on: 2/8/2022 3:13:42 PM

Testimony for HHH on 2/10/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Dan Gardner	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Hawaii's Long Term Care Ombudsman's Office is currently understaffed. With Hawaii's elderly population continuing to grow at one of the fastest rates in America, please support passage of HB 1824 to enable a most necessary increase in staff support.

HB-1824

Submitted on: 2/8/2022 4:09:17 PM

Testimony for HHH on 2/10/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Jomel Duldulao	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair and Committee Members,

RE: HB 1824 MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE OFFICE OF THE LONG-TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN PROGRAM.

Aloha, my name is Jomel Duldulao and I am currently serving as a Long Term Care Ombudsman contractor in Oahu. I have been in this capacity for the past 12 months. The pandemic has truly hit our Kupuna and residents pretty hard. Many facilities I visit have restricted visitations which have led many of their residents to feel abandoned. The residents I have spoken to mentioned to me they miss seeing and holding their loved ones. The residents feel depressed and isolated. I have been making 5 facility visits a day on Oahu and it's not possible for me to meet the requirement of visiting every facility every quarter.

There are countless times when I visited a resident at a foster home and the resident thanked me personally for coming by and talking to them, and checking in on them. Many of the residents had never heard of the LTCO program and were grateful for the visit and asked me to come back again to check in with them.

Also, this past year a family member had initially called me to ask me to check in on their uncle who mentioned to them they were not happy and not eating well. I reassured the family member that I would give their uncle a call and also make a physical visit. I was able to have a wonderful talk with the Uncle and he explained to me some of things that could be improved to help him feel more at home. With the Uncle's consent, I was able to have a constructive discussion with the caregiver. The caregiver wasn't aware and was open to making the changes to help the resident feel more at home. Uncle was so delighted about the changes and was grateful that he was able to enjoy some of the simple things, like hot dogs and spaghetti. I am just grateful that I was able to make his quality of life a little better.

There are roughly 10,000 residents living in long-term care settings on Oahu. To better serve and protect our most vulnerable Kupuna and residents **Please support HB1824.**

Mahalo for giving me this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

Jomel Duldulao

Waikiki

House of Representatives
Committee on Health, Human Services, & Homelessness
Thursday, February 10, 2022
9:00 AM
Conference Room 329

Testimony in Support of HB 1824
Making an Appropriation for the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program

Aloha Chair Ryan I. Yamane, Vice-Chair Adrian K. Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing this letter in strong support of this Kupuna Caucus initiative to appropriate funds to establish and fund permanent positions within the Office of the Long-Term Care Ombudsman.

My family was one of the many who lost a close loved one during COVID-19. Until mid-2020, my loved one lived independently at home until a simple fall required admission into a nursing home for rehabilitation. The initial statewide lockdown to prevent the spread of COVID-19 meant that family members could not visit to help with the adjustment to this new situation. Isolation from family, coupled with a recent diagnosis of dementia, led my loved one to become increasingly confused, refused to eat, and no longer recognized us when we tried to FACETIME. My loved one suffered >20% weight loss and passed away less than six months after the initial fall.

I wish I could say that we were the only family who suffered this experience but a survey conducted by the National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care found that 85% of family members noted a decline in the residents' physical abilities; 87% decline in physical appearance; and 91% reported their loved one's demeanor (mental status) had declined.

I wish that Long-Term Care Ombudsmen had not been barred from entering facilities by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) from March 13, 2020 until CMS eased visitation restrictions in September 2020. Long-Term Care Ombudsmen advocate for residents and family members and respond to complaints about the quality of care and ensure residents have a good quality of life in facilities but it's impossible for a program with a staff of two to visit every facility statewide.

Please appropriate the necessary funding for the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program so these much-needed services are available to all kupuna and other vulnerable citizens who are dependent on others for their care.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to submit my testimony in support of HB 1824.

Lynn Niitani

Aina Haina

HB-1824

Submitted on: 2/9/2022 5:19:34 AM

Testimony for HHH on 2/10/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Margaret A. Perkinson, PhD	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support HB1824. Although the role of ombudsman is critically important for maintaining the quality of life of long-term care residents, the program in Hawaii is woefully understaffed. By appropriating funds to establish five full-time long-term care ombudsman program specialists, HB1824 makes an important step toward closer monitoring of care for frail kupuna.

HB-1824

Submitted on: 2/9/2022 8:07:36 AM

Testimony for HHH on 2/10/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Lourdes Scheibert	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this measure to help the elderly

HB-1824

Submitted on: 2/9/2022 8:57:11 AM

Testimony for HHH on 2/10/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Jeff Sadino	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this Bill.



**HAWAII LONG-TERM CARE
OMBUDSMAN**
SOMEONE WHO CARES

e: john.mcdermott@doh.hawaii.gov
t: (808) 586-7268
Toll-free: 1-888-229-2231
www.hi-ltc-ombudsman.org

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
THE THIRTY-FIRST LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 2022

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES, & HOMELESSNESS

Rep. Ryan I. Yamane, Chair
Rep. Adrian K. Tam, Vice Chair

Rep. Cedric Asuega Gates Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto
Rep. Sharon E. Har Rep. Gene Ward
Rep. Jeanne Kapela

NOTICE OF HEARING

DATE: Thursday, February 10, 2022
TIME: 9:00AM
PLACE: VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE
Conference Room 329
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

Strong Support for HB1824

Aloha and Good Morning. My name is John G. McDermott and I have been the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman for the past 24 years. My responsibility is to be an advocate for anyone in the State living in a nursing home, assisted living facility, expanded or regular adult residential care home or a community care foster family home.

I am a staff of ONE with a Volunteer Coordinator - plus an Oahu Ombudsman we just hired pending approval. Yes, we have wonderful volunteers, but volunteers are not a substitute for staff. In this bill we are asking for 5 positions: a full-time, permanent "local" ombudsman for Kauai, for Maui, for the Hilo side and Kona side of Hawaii, and one more for Oahu. The Neighbor Islands should not have to wait for me to show up and come to their rescue.

In 1995 the *National Institute of Medicine* recommended a MINIMUM of 1 F/T Ombudsman per every 2,000 residents. We have almost 13,000 residents. If this bill passes, we will finally meet that 1995 standard which every other state achieved years ago.

We have 1,779 facilities spread over 6 islands. For me to visit every facility quarterly (the federal requirement) I must be at 30 facilities a day, every day.

We started as a Demonstration Project in 1975. We became federal law in 1978 and state law in 1979, so the Neighbor Islands have been waiting for their own "local" ombudsman for 43 years!

Adult Protective Services have staff. Office of the Public Guardian have staff. Hawaii Disability Rights Center have staff. Office of Health Care Assurance have staff. Office of the State Ombudsman have staff. The Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program also needs staff!

COVID made it very clear why having an ombudsman on each island is the right thing to do. There were no flights to the Neighbor Islands during the worst of this pandemic. Renting a car was difficult to find and expensive. I couldn't get to these facilities to check on our kupuna.

Because family and friends couldn't visit, many residents with dementia declined dramatically. An ombudsman has access to the residents 24/7. I need staff who will monitor what's happening – call bells being answered, folks being fed, bathed, dressed – some Activities so our kupuna are not left in bed all day staring at the walls because there is nothing to do, and the facility is short-staffed.

We DO NOT duplicate the role of APS or OHCA. APS has their own screening process. They focus on protecting individuals from imminent abuse and neglect, and if the complainant doesn't meet those requirements, there is no investigation. OHCA's focus is on annual inspections. Then they're gone. Facility staff know after the surveyors leave; they are in the clear for another year. OHCA will go in if they receive a complaint but when family/friends couldn't visit during COVID - and confused residents only became more confused and left in bed – who was expected to make the complaint to OHCA??

When I fly to a Neighbor Island, the TSA security protocols require I be at the airport 90 minutes before departure – that's roundtrip, 3 hours wasted. Add time for the flight itself. Add time to pick up the rental car and drive to the facilities. That leaves me less than 4 hours on the island. If I want to talk to as many residents as possible, I need to be in the facility at least 2 hours. So much WASTED time because I don't live on that island.

A *local* ombudsman is there for evening investigations when called for; there for family councils that meet on the weekends; there for senior fairs; there for multiple, timely, follow up visits if needed for a complaint investigation; there on a regular basis to establish a rapport and trust with the residents; there to recruit local volunteers; and there to explain the Program to the Mayor, the County Council members, the local media outlets, and local senior advocacy groups looking for guest speakers.

My kupuna are the most vulnerable. Many of them are alone. Family members have moved to another island or the mainland or died. They are afraid to complain for fear of retaliation. Everything we have we owe to them, but they seem to be forgotten, hidden in their LTC facilities, no longer able to speak for themselves.

Our Neighbor Island kupuna and their families have been waiting a long time. Please don't make them wait any longer. Mahalo and thank you for this opportunity to testify.



HB-1824

Submitted on: 2/9/2022 9:03:57 AM

Testimony for HHH on 2/10/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Rick Tabor	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To: Chair Ryan I. Yamane

Re: HB1824, Making an appropriation for the Office of the Long-Term Care

Ombudsman Program

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice-Chair Tam, and Members of the Committee,

I am Rick Tabor, president of HPGS (Hawai'i Pacific Gerontological Society) vice president of Hawai'i Meals on Wheels, vice president of Kokua Council, Alzheimers Association Hawai'i ambassador/champion, Compassion and Choice Hawai'i team leader, Hawai'i Long Term Care Ombudsman volunteer, Kūpuna Caucus participant, PABEA (Policy Advisory Board for Elder Affairs) board member, and a few other NPO's.

I'm currently retired from a forty-six year career in mental health, and on behalf of the five decades of Kūpuna service, I submit my testimony in strong support for HB1824.

My mission in life has been to kokua when help is needed. Knowing life is sometimes what happens while we're busy making other plans. Data shows that **77 percent of adults 50 and older** want to remain in their homes for the long term — a number that has been consistent for more than a decade. Sadly there are times when circumstances do not allow us our preference and some find themselves needing the assistance of a care facility. It is at these times, people are most vulnerable and in need of an ombudsman to assure all is as it should be, for us as Kūpuna and our loved ones peaceof mind.

Just yesterday morning, my mother found herself in intensive care after a heart attack. And my neighbor asked for help moving his mother from a home because she had lost fifty pounds in three months. Sadly, the needs for help are many. Too many too ignore. Too many to be out of compliance with Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations.

As Hawaii's population ages, the demand to ensure and enforce proper care in those facilities will continue to grow, with us baby boomers aging in record numbers. The Hawai'i LTC Ombudsman serves to fulfill that responsibility, but the current program is inadequately funded and lacks the necessary staffing. Instead of FTE's HLTCOP relies on on volunteers, like myself. This limits adequate resources to cover Hawaii's island population.

Before John McDermott, Hawaii's director of LTC Ombudsman retires, it is essential that he trains an ombudsman for each Island and his replacement. John hopes to retire in the next year. Making this legislative session a critical one to pass HB1824.

Please pass this measure and enact it as soon as possible. To care for those who cared for us is one of life's greatest honors. To live Aloha is what makes Hawai'i Paradise. To protect, love and cherish our Kūpuna is what we're her to do.

Mahalo for your consideration and care with this essential situation. Take care.

HB-1824

Submitted on: 2/9/2022 9:49:44 AM

Testimony for HHH on 2/10/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Marcia Kimura	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this measure, with the hope that an individual with not only the essential background qualifications, but also with a sincere empathetic desire to serve the family of the vulnerable elderly, will be selected.

HB-1824

Submitted on: 2/9/2022 11:47:33 AM

Testimony for HHH on 2/10/2022 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Barbara J. Service	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam and committee members,

I am a resident of Senate District 8 and House District 19 and I'd like to bring this concern to your attention,

There are approximately 13,000 long-term care home residents in Hawaii. Since 1998, there has been only one long-term care ombudsman. The national standard is one ombudsman for every 2,000 residents. It is impossible for him to see them quarterly or even annually. Residents of these facilities are likely the most vulnerable adults in Hawaii. Many have no family in Hawaii and possibly no family at all.

Please do whatever it takes to see that these individuals receive the care and attention they need.

Barbara J. Service MSW (ret.)

Kupuna advocate

Representative Ryan Yamane
Committee on Health, Human Services & Homelessness

Justin Mortensen
1421 Hapuu Loop
Wahiawa, HI 96786

Thursday, February 10th, 2022

Strong Support for H.B. 1824

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony. We have seen nationwide horrific events that have occurred in long-term care facilities. The pandemic and growing health care worker shortages make the oversight of these facilities even more vital. As mandated by federal law, the Long-term Care Ombudsman advocates for residents in these facilities. The State of Hawaii has maintained only one ombudsman to execute the vital program, which is insufficient with our islands' geographical and logistical constraints. There are too many facilities for one ombudsman to oversee, even with the outstanding assistance of volunteers.

I strongly urge this committee to pass this crucial bill to ensure the voices of our Kupuna continue to be heard.

Very Respectfully,

Justin Mortensen

Brent Freemont
Part Time Contractor
LTCOP
Maui County Ombudsman
Kula, Maui, Hawaii

House Committee on Health,
Human Services, and Homelessness
Rep. Ryan I. Yamane, Chair
Rep. Adrian K. Tam, Vice Chair

Rep. Cedric Asuega Gates Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto
Rep. Sharon Har Rep. Gene Ward
Rep. Jeanne Kapela

Hearing Date: February 10, 2022
9:00 a.m.

House Conference Room 329

Testimony of Brent Freemont
Part Time Contractor
Maui County Ombudsman

Position: **Strong Support of HB1824**

Aloha and Good Morning. My name is Brent Freemont, and I have been the contracted Maui County Ombudsman for the last 4 years, and prior to that have been a volunteer with the program for five years. I am supporting this bill as a private citizen, not because I have an interest in obtaining any of the state positions that may become available if this bill is passed. I am Sixty seven years old, and have developed serious health issues recently. I have continued in a part time capacity in the ombudsman program because of the great need that our Elders have across our state. Retired senior citizens are the largest growing portion of our population, and our jobs as Ombudsmen are to assist and advocate for those elder residents in the various care homes that have no one else to support and speak on their behalf. Currently we only have part time contractors trying to do the job of full time employees, and the job is

overwhelming. I have remained involved due to my own personal experience. Both of my parents were residents in a care home here on Maui, and both passed away from Alzheimer's disease. At the time, there was no Ombudsman advocacy on Maui, and I was their only support and advocate. When I was offered an opportunity to volunteer in the ombudsman program, I did so and remained the only volunteer on the island for several years.

Sadly, volunteers are hard to come by. These full time positions will be a great support, and become a statewide support system for our senior population. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HB 1824.