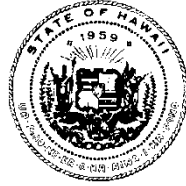


DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



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

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Thursday, February 24, 2022

12:30 PM – Videoconference – Room 308, Hawaii State Capitol

In consideration of

HB 1826, HD1

RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS

Honorable Chair Luke, and Members of the House Committee on Finance, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony concerning House Bill (HB) 1826, HD1, relating to homelessness.

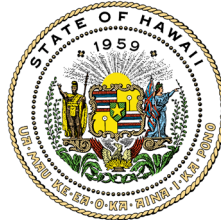
The Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) **supports** the enactment of HB 1826, HD1, which establishes the long-term rental assistance pilot program for kupuna to be administered by the HPHA for individuals over sixty-two years of age or older and are homeless, or at imminent risk of becoming homeless, so long as it does not adversely affect the Governor's Supplemental Budget.

The HPHA would truly appreciate the opportunity to administer the long-term rental assistance pilot program and has the expertise and track record to collaborate with the non-profit community to develop and manage this program to assist our most disadvantaged kupuna. 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 Committee with the HPHA's testimony. We thank you very much for your dedicated support.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII

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



CAROLINE CADIRAO
DIRECTOR

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

Testimony in SUPPORT of HB1826 HD1
Relating to Homelessness

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
REPRESENTATIVE SYLVIA LUKE, CHAIR
REPRESENTATIVE KYLE T. YAMASHITA, VICE CHAIR

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

Hearing Date: February 24, 2022
12:30 PM

Room Number: 308
via Videoconference

1 **EOA's Position:** The Executive Office on Aging (EOA), an attached agency to the Department
2 of Health, supports HB1826 HD1, Relating to Homelessness.

3 **Fiscal Implications:** This measure appropriates an unspecified amount of funds from the
4 general revenues of the State for fiscal year 2022-2023 to the Hawaii Public Housing Authority
5 for a long-term rental assistance pilot program for older adults who are sixty-two years of age or
6 older and are homeless or at eminent risk of becoming homeless. The measure also includes two
7 full-time equivalent (2.0 FTE) public housing specialist positions within the Hawaii public
8 housing authority to support the rental assistance pilot program.

9 **Purpose and Justification:** The purpose of this bill is to establish the long-term rental
10 assistance pilot program for kupuna. Many of Hawaii's kupuna are on fixed incomes and with
11 the high cost of housing in Hawaii, many kupuna are forced to cut back on essential expenses,
12 such as food, transportation, and medical care to just afford their housing needs. Any setback in

1 our Kupuna's income can put them at risk for becoming homeless. Creative, long-term,
2 affordable housing options and creative, alternative housing strategies are direly needed to
3 prevent our financially struggling kupuna to prevent homelessness.

4 **Recommendation:** The EOA supports the intent of this measure for the Hawaii Public Housing
5 Authority to develop a long-term rental assistance pilot program that will prevent Hawaii's low
6 income Kupuna from becoming homeless.

7 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
HONOLULU

February 24, 2022

TO: The Honorable Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
House Committee on Finance

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

SUBJECT: **HB 1826 HD1 – RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS.**

Hearing: Thursday, February 24, 2022, 12:30 p.m.
VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE

POSITION: The Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness supports this measure, provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the executive budget request.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the bill is to establish the long-term rental assistance pilot program to be administered by HPHA for individuals aged sixty-two years or older who are homeless, or at imminent risk of becoming homeless. The bill also appropriates funds.

The Coordinator appreciates the amendments made by the House Committee on Housing to amend the age criteria to qualify for participation in the program and making it voluntary for participants under the pilot to participate in the Continuum of Care Coordinated Entry System (CES) for homeless services.

This measure will address a key barrier to housing for seniors over age 62, including those experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness, by providing ongoing subsidies for rental housing. The Coordinator notes nearly one-third (27%) of renter households in Hawaii are severely housing cost-burdened, meaning that over half of their monthly income goes to rent and utilities. The housing cost burden is especially acute for seniors on a fixed income, such as Social Security or disability benefits, with limited family support.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR

GLORIA CHANG
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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

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

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 FINANCE
ON
HOUSE BILL NO. 1826, H.D. 1

February 24, 2022
12:30 p.m.
Room 308 and Videoconference

RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

House Bill No. 1826, H.D. 1: 1) establishes the Long-Term Rental Assistance Pilot Program (LTRAPP) in the Hawai'i Public Housing Authority (HPHA) for a period of three years; 2) sets requirements for program eligibility, participation, and services provided; 3) sets a cap on the amount of rent a participant will pay to no more than 50% of net income; 4) provides HPHA procurement and rule-making exemptions; 5) sets reporting requirements for HPHA; and 6) appropriates an unspecified amount of general funds to HPHA in FY 23 to hire 2.00 temporary public housing specialist positions and administer the LTRAPP.

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.



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facebook.com/AARPHawaii

The State Legislature
The House Committee on Finance
Thursday, February 24, 2022
12:30 p.m.

TO: The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair

RE: Support for H.B 1826 H.D. 1, Relating to Homelessness

Aloha Chair Nakamura 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 supports H.B. 1826 H.D.1** which establishes the pilot long-term rental housing assistance program for individuals over sixty-two years old who are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless.

Hawaii's high cost of housing is making it unaffordable for many, but especially for those at low or fixed income. These residents are more vulnerable of becoming dependent on other family members for shelter, or face homelessness. Until recently, the federal relief funds have assisted many residents with their housing expenses during this COVID-19 pandemic. However, those funds are diminishing or have stopped which now put many at risk in losing their place of residence. According to 2021 Statista/AARP analysis of census data available by United States Census Bureau (USCB), there were 310 evictions and 2,150 homeless among Hawaii residents 55 years and older. The 2022 forecast is grimmer. It shows that the number of evictions for older residents will jump from 310 to 1,050, and homeless kūpuna will rise to 2,980. It is essential to assist older adults from facing housing crisis and therefore, the proposed S.B. 2677 will help many vulnerable kūpuna from being displaced from their residence.

AARP supports this measure and recommends an amendment in Section 2 (a) (2), which states "individuals participating in the program should not pay more than 50% of their income on rent." This typically refers to the extremely low-income residents being eligible for the subsidy. Since this program is also intended to assist "low-income" kupuna who are rent burdened, we respectfully recommend changing the percentage from 50% to "30%" so that more low-income individuals can qualify for this rental assistance. Thank you very much for the opportunity to **support H.B. 1826 H.D.1.**

Sincerely,

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

Keali'i Lopez, State Director

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1826, HD 1

TO: Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Yamashita, & Committee Members

FROM: Nikos Leverenz
Grants & Advancement Manager

DATE: February 24, 2022 (12:30 PM)

Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center (HHHRC) **supports** HB 1826, HD 1, which establishes the long-term rental assistance pilot program to be administered by the Hawaii Public Housing Authority for individuals over sixty-two years old who are homeless, or at imminent risk of becoming homeless.

HHHRC underscores the finding language noting that many seniors who are on fixed incomes face the prospect of homelessness given ever increasing rents. Housing costs have accelerated even during this pandemic period, and seniors are especially vulnerable to price inflation outside of the context of housing.

HHHRC Executive Director Heather Lusk currently serves as Board Chair of [Partners in Care O'ahu](#), a planning, coordinating, and advocacy alliance that develops recommendations for programs and services to fill needs within O'ahu's continuum of care for homeless persons.

HHHRC's mission is to reduce harm, promote health, create wellness, and fight stigma in Hawai'i and the Pacific. We work with many individuals impacted by poverty, housing instability, and other social determinants of health. Many have behavioral health problems, including those related to substance use and mental health conditions. Many of our program clients and participants have also been deeply impacted by trauma, including histories of physical, sexual, and psychological abuse.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAI'I

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1826 HD1: RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS

TO: House Committee on Finance
FROM: Rob Van Tassell, President and CEO, Catholic Charities Hawai'i
Hearing: **Thursday, 2/24/22; 12:30 PM; via videoconference**

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Yamashita, and Members, Committee on Finance:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony **in Strong Support of HB 1826 HD1**, which would establish a long-term rental assistance pilot program, for individuals sixty-two years or older who are homeless, or at imminent risk of becoming homeless. 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 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.

Catholic Charities Hawai'i has a Housing Assistance Program that counsels and assists elders to obtain affordable housing. Our biggest challenge is the lack of rentals that our clients can afford on their low incomes. This Program currently has 53 seniors who are over 62 on our urgent waitlist (homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness). The average age is 75 years old! They are often long term renters who have been displaced. D. is homeless and living in a car since 2018, since he could not stay where he had been living. DW's lease ended and could not afford a new rental due to low income, so is living in a van. C's brother died and the heirs want her out in a few months. These sad stories go on and on.

Another case that should never happen just walked into our offices recently. An 81 year old woman with limited English had become homeless (now living at a bus stop) after she fell ill and could no longer work (at 81!). Although alert and able to use public transportation, all we could do immediately was to help her get on a waitlist for an emergency shelter which was full. She kept repeating, "I have never had to ask for help before."

The proposed long term rental assistance program to be operated by the Hawai'i Public Housing Authority is much needed for our elders who face homelessness. We strongly support housing counseling and landlord assistance and other services to enable the most vulnerable elders to access housing. The economic stress of homelessness and the anxiety of facing no place to go when a lease ends or rent is increased, can have a huge impact on their health. In order for this program to provide timely services, we strongly support funding for two full-time public housing specialist positions within the Hawaii Public Housing Authority.

Please help. Please provide our kupuna with the assistance to find housing and pay the ongoing rent. Please contact our Legislative Liaison, Betty Lou Larson at (808) 373-0356 or alohabettylou@hotmail.com if you have any questions.



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 HB 1826 HD1 RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS

TO: House of Representatives, Committee on Finance,
FROM: Partners In Care (PIC)
Hearing: Thursday, February 24th, 2022, 12:30 pm via videoconference
Position: **SUPPORT**

Chair Luke and Members of the House Committee on Finance :

Partner In Care, Oahu's Continuum of Care, stands in support of **HB 1826 HD1 RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS.**

Kupuna have a deep and honored position in our Hawaii community. Our Kupuna should be honored and respected and should be seen as living treasures, but that is not the case for so many of our senior community members. Due to the high cost of living in Hawaii, we are pricing our Kupuna out of housing and much of their support system is moving away from the islands.

Partners In Care has assisted many seniors with housing assistance and this is one of the most difficult populations to find housing for due to their fixed income and complex health needs. This measure proposes housing assistance that will allow seniors 62 years of age and older that does not exceed 50%. We should continue to work to get more affordable senior housing in our community. Hawaii has a large aging population and we need to recognize this and support our Kupuna.

Our Kupuna deserve better, our elders deserve affordable housing so that they can be a resource and a teacher for our generation and beyond.

Thank you for the opportunity to testifying on this measure. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Aloha

February 22, 2022.

To: The Honorable Representative Sylia Luke, Chair
Honorable Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair

Subject: **HB 1826**

Hearing: Thursday, February 24, 2022
12:30 pm
VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE
Conference room 308
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

Honorable Chair Luke, and Members of the House Committee on Finance, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony concerning House bill HB 1826, relating to homelessness. My name is Billie Yutaka and I **strongly support bill HB 1826**. This bill would create a pilot rent subsidy program under the Hawai'i Public Housing Authority. Kupuna 62 years and older who are homeless or on the brink of immediate homelessness would be eligible. It would ensure kupuna do not pay more than half of their net income for rent. According to data by Missouri Economic Research and Information Center (MERIC), Hawaii's cost of living in 2019 was the highest in all the U.S. states. Generally, the cost of things in Hawaii is 30% more than on the mainland and housing is no different. Families feel the pressure and are priced out of Hawaii, leaving them to move to the mainland. Kupuna are now left without their support system. Our kupuna face challenges that are unique to their situation like a fixed income and specialized medical care. These situations leave them vulnerable and at risk of homelessness. Please support bill HB 1826 and help the homeless kupuna of Hawaii and the kupuna that are facing homelessness because they deserve better.

Mahalo for your time and consideration..

Billie Yutaka

(808) 383-1554

HB-1826-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/23/2022 7:54:41 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/24/2022 12:30:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Leimomi Khan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Urge passage of this bill that would establish the long-term rental assistance pilot program for kupuna to be administered by the Hawaii public housing authority for individuals who are sixty-two years of age or older and are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless. Unfortunately, retirement income such as Social Security, has not kept up with the high cost of living in Hawaii. Costs for medicare went up 5.9% in 2022. Reports of various agencies involved with tracking inflation and the costs of living in Hawaii all reflect significant increases in living costs, for example, UHERO (the Economic Research organization of the University of Hawaii) reports that we pay an average of about 37 cents for a kilowatt hour of electricity. "That's a lot, between three and four times the average price on the mainland and by far the largest price of any state." Costs for food, housing, health and transportation have all increased. Our kupuna are a vulnerable population for homelessness since their income is mostly derived from fixed retirement. The long-term rental assistance pilot program may help to deter the potential of kupuna becoming homeless.