

JAN 19 2024

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that homelessness is one
2 of the most pressing problems in the State. Hawaii has the
3 highest homelessness rate in the nation, which is driven by
4 insufficient affordable housing. Through improved coordination
5 and investment in proven programs such as housing first, Hawaii
6 is turning the tide on the homelessness crisis. In 2017, the
7 State saw its first reduction in the rate of homelessness in
8 years. However, given the magnitude of homelessness in the
9 State, Hawaii must continue to increase investments in housing
10 and other supports to fully address homelessness.

11 Chronic homelessness is distinct from other forms of
12 homelessness and is defined by being continuously homeless for a
13 year or more, or having had at least four episodes of
14 homelessness in the past three years. The unaddressed problem
15 of chronic homelessness is a particularly costly problem for
16 Hawaii that places a large burden on the State's health care and
17 emergency service systems. Addressing chronic homelessness



1 across the State will result in significant cost savings for
2 health care and emergency services systems and create a solid
3 foundation for addressing other forms of homelessness.

4 The legislature also finds that, according to the Partners
5 in Care 2023 point in time report, there are at least four
6 thousand twenty-eight people experiencing homelessness in Oahu.
7 Permanent supportive housing is the best way to address
8 homelessness. Permanent supportive housing is an approach to
9 homelessness that integrates permanent, affordable rental
10 housing with best practice community-based supportive services
11 to allow individuals and households who have serious and long-
12 term disabilities such as mental illnesses, developmental
13 disabilities, physical disabilities, substance use disorders,
14 and chronic health conditions to maintain stable housing in the
15 community.

16 An initial investment of \$60,000,000 will cover the
17 development and construction costs of one hundred permanent
18 supportive housing units.

19 The purpose of this Act is to authorize the issuance of
20 general obligation bonds and appropriate bond proceeds to the
21 Hawaii public housing authority to begin the development and



1 construction with a qualified developer or operator of permanent
2 supportive housing units to meet the housing needs of
3 individuals in the State, including those individuals who are
4 exiting correctional facilities, those with severe mental
5 illness or developmental disabilities, and those who are
6 stepping down from a higher level of care in institutional
7 settings.

8 SECTION 2. The Hawaii housing finance and development
9 corporation shall consider any applicable competitive federal
10 low-income housing tax credits allowed under section 42 of the
11 Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, that are needed for
12 the construction of permanent supportive housing units developed
13 and constructed pursuant to this Act to the Hawaii public
14 housing authority, the developer or operator partnered with the
15 Hawaii public housing authority for the construction of
16 permanent supportive housing units, or both.

17 SECTION 3. (a) The Hawaii public housing authority shall
18 include the status of the development and operation of permanent
19 supportive housing units authorized under this Act in its annual
20 report to the legislature required pursuant to section 356D-20,
21 Hawaii Revised Statutes.



1 (b) The department of land and natural resources shall
2 assist the Hawaii public housing authority by providing suitable
3 public lands for this Act.

4 (c) The Hawaii public housing authority may partner with
5 other appropriate government and non-government entities to
6 ensure that sufficient and appropriate services are accounted
7 for in the development and operation of permanent supportive
8 housing units.

9 (d) In determining eligibility for the permanent
10 supportive housing units, the Hawaii public housing authority
11 may verify whether an individual or household qualifies as
12 homeless, using the existing process of homeless verification
13 letters provided by recognized homeless services providers.

14 SECTION 4. The director of finance is authorized to issue
15 general obligation bonds in the sum of \$60,000,000 or so much
16 thereof as may be necessary is appropriated for fiscal year
17 2024-2025 for the initial phase of development and construction
18 of up to one hundred permanent supportive housing units to meet
19 the housing needs of individuals and families in the State,
20 including those who are exiting correctional facilities, those
21 with severe mental illness or developmental disabilities, and



1 those who are stepping down from a higher level of care in
2 institutional settings.

3 SECTION 5. The appropriation made for the capital
4 improvement project authorized by this Act shall not lapse at
5 the end of the fiscal biennium for which the appropriation is
6 made; provided that all moneys from the appropriation
7 unencumbered as of June 30, 2026, shall lapse as of that date.

8 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2024.

9

INTRODUCED BY:

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S.B. NO. 2344

Report Title:

Permanent Supportive Housing; Low-Income Housing Tax Credit; GO Bonds; HPHA; HHFDC; Appropriation

Description:

Authorizes the issuance of general obligation bonds to the Hawaii Public Housing Authority for the development and construction of permanent supportive housing for certain vulnerable individuals. Requires the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation to consider any available federal low-income housing tax credits needed for construction of permanent supportive housing units.

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