

**STATE HEALTH PLANNING  
AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH - KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII  
KE KIA'ĀINA O KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII

**KENNETH S. FINK, MD, MGA, MPH**  
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH  
KA LUNA HO'ŌKELE

**John C. (Jack) Lewin, M.D.**  
ADMINISTRATOR

---

1177 Alakea St., #402, Honolulu, HI 96813 Phone: 587-0788 Fax: 587-0783 www.shpda.org

**Senate Committee on Labor and Technology**  
**Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Chair**  
**Senator Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair**

**Senate Committee on Health and Human Services**  
**Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair**  
**Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair**

**S.B. 2661 Relating to Homelessness**

**Testimony of John C. (Jack) Lewin, M.D.**  
**SHPDA Administrator**

**Monday, February 12, 2024**  
**3:00 p.m.**

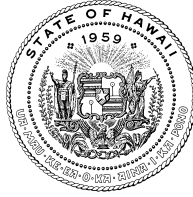
1 **Agency's Position: Support**

2 **Fiscal Implications: None**

3 **Purpose and Justification:** Homelessness is a rampant and increasing problem in Hawai'i  
4 and the nation at large. The DHS is saddled with a huge responsibility in these regards and  
5 needs adequate funding to reach out effectively to this population of people who have  
6 worrisome but preventable health risks and higher morbidity, mortality, and lower longevity.

7 Linking homeless individuals with job opportunities is a creative and positive concept for  
8 this pilot project. SHPDA enthusiastically supports it as a means of promoting health and well-  
9 being in this high-risk population.

10 Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS  
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA

Testimony of **John Mizuno**  
Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness  
Before the  
**Senate Committee's on Health and Human Services/ Labor and Technology**  
February 12, 2024  
3:00 p.m., Conference Room 224

In consideration of  
**Senate Bill No. 2661**  
**RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS**

Aloha Chair San Buenaventura, Chair Aquino, Vice Chair Moriwaki and Committee Members,

I am writing in strong support of SB2661 which will establish a Homeless Employment Grant pilot program within the Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions (SOHHS). This measure will **test new solutions** to address homelessness and **clear the obstacles along the pathway from street to home**, both of which are priorities set forth by Governor Green.

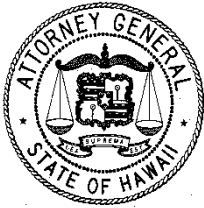
According to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, one of the most effective strategies to support individuals to move out of homelessness and into permanent housing is increasing access to meaningful and sustainable job training and employment. Many homeless individuals want to work, but may encounter the following obstacles when seeking employment: Limited work history, lack of on-demand job skills and credentials, low education levels, lack of access to adequate transportation, involvement in the justice system, and mental or behavioral health issues. This measure will help to address these obstacles by connecting individuals to employment and supportive services.

This program will also help to address the labor shortages across the state in both the public and private sector. This program will offer training and support to homeless individuals on the pathway to permanent employment. It will assist them to do so in the future by training and creating more workers. As the bill points out, many other states have established similar programs, such as the "There's a Better Way" program in Albuquerque, New Mexico. As of 2018, this program has resulted in 1,575 homeless individuals working, 422 homeless individuals pursuing permanent employment information, and 76 homeless individuals gaining permanent employment. This program will help bring people home while diversifying and strengthening our economy.

If we add the Homeless Employment Grant program into our Continuum of Care and pair it with deeply affordable, permanent housing, our state will reduce homelessness. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of this measure.

Mahalo,

John Mizuno  
Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness



**TESTIMONY OF  
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL  
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA  
THIRTY-SECOND LEGISLATURE, 2024**

---

**ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:**

S.B. NO. 2661, RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS.

**BEFORE THE:**

SENATE COMMITTEES ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AND ON  
LABOR AND TECHNOLOGY

**DATE:** Monday, February 12, 2024      **TIME:** 3:00 p.m.

**LOCATION:** State Capitol, Room 224 and Videoconference

**TESTIFIER(S):** Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or  
Melissa L. Lewis, Deputy Attorney General

---

Chairs San Buenaventura and Aquino and Members of the Committees:

The Department of the Attorney General provides the following comments.

This bill: (1) establishes a three-year homeless employment grant pilot program to be developed by the Department of Human Services (DHS) and administered by a contracted service provider or other qualified person or entity; and (2) appropriates funds for the establishment of the homeless employment grant pilot program to be expended by the DHS.

The bill provides an appropriation of public money, in section 4 (page 5, line 19, through page 6, line 2), for the purpose of contracting with a service provider to provide grants to homeless individuals. Article VII, section 4, of the Constitution of the State of Hawaii provides, "[n]o grant of public money or property shall be made except pursuant to standards provided by law." This bill does not include standards by which the service provider contracted by the DHS is to select and distribute the funds to program participants. We therefore recommend that this bill be amended to insert sufficient standards for the homeless employment grant pilot program. Examples of existing statutes that provide standards for agencies to provide grants are part II of chapter 9, and sections 10-17, 210D-11, and 383-128, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), which provide standards for the administrative grant of public money. Additionally, we have

attached draft standards to this testimony as a sample to work from and we are happy to work with the committees to develop more specific standards.

We note that the creation of this employment work program could have unintended consequences that may impede implementation of, or conflict with, other existing programs. For instance, the DHS currently has authority for assignment of persons in need of public assistance to work on public projects, codified in sections 346-31 and 346-32, HRS:

**§346-31 Assignment of persons in need of public assistance to work on public projects.** The department of human services as far as permissible under the then existing federal laws, may assign persons in need of public assistance to work on state, county, or other public projects whether or not the projects are conducted in cooperation with any federal agency for the relief of unemployment.

The amount of assistance to be paid to such persons shall be fixed by the department, taking into consideration the work performed, and may exceed the amount or value of the grant of public assistance, which would have been made had no such assignment to a work project been made, but in no event shall such additional assistance, granted because of assignment to a work project, exceed the amount necessary to provide for extra expenses, incurred by the recipient for food, clothing, transportation, and incidentals.

**§346-32 Application of chapter 386 to persons in need of public assistance assigned to work projects.** Chapter 386 shall apply to recipients of public assistance assigned to work on public projects pursuant to section 346-31, who shall be deemed employees for the purposes of chapter 386, and an award may be made against the State or a county or other public body according to the project upon which the person injured was engaged at the time of the injury.

It is not clear how the homeless employment grant program created by this bill would be reconciled with the existing authority under sections 346-31 and 346-32, HRS. In addition, receipt of a grant for employment in the homeless employment grant program may affect a homeless individual's eligibility for public assistance programs such as general assistance or Medicaid.

One way to address these issues may be to characterize the grant as a public assistance program. The DHS currently has a duty to establish "[e]stablish and administer programs and standards, and adopt rules as deemed necessary for all public

assistance programs[,]" pursuant to section 346-14(1), HRS. Rather than a program of grants to homeless individuals, the bill could establish a pilot program for public assistance with the same general purposes that the DHS can then develop under its existing authority and in coordination with its other needs-based public assistance programs. Either way, whether as grants or as public assistance, we would note that the DHS will need to adopt rules to implement the program.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

## SAMPLE STANDARDS FOR HOMELESS EMPLOYMENT GRANTS

### I. DEFINITIONS

**Definitions.** As used in this Act, unless the context clearly requires otherwise:

"Department" means the department of human services or its designee.

"Grant" means an award of state funds to a specified recipient to support the activities of the recipient and permit the community to benefit from those activities.

"Homeless" and "Homelessness" are used interchangeably and mean:

- (1) An individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, meaning:
  - (A) An individual with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground;
  - (B) An individual living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals); or
  - (C) An individual who is exiting an institution where he or she resided for ninety days or less and who resided in an emergency shelter or place not meant for human habitation immediately before entering that institution;
- (2) An individual who will imminently lose their primary nighttime residence, provided that:
  - (A) The primary nighttime residence will be lost within 14 days of the date of application for homeless assistance;
  - (B) No subsequent residence has been identified; and
  - (C) The individual lacks the resources or support networks, e.g., family, friends, faith-based or other social networks, needed to obtain other permanent housing; or
- (3) Any individual who:
  - (A) Is fleeing, or is attempting to flee, domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or other dangerous or life-threatening conditions that relate to violence against the individual or a family member, including a child, that has either taken place within the individual's primary nighttime residence or has made the individual afraid to return to their primary nighttime residence;
  - (B) Has no other residence; and

- (C) Lacks the resources or support networks, e.g., family, friends, and faith-based or other social networks, to obtain other permanent housing.

"Recipient" means a person receiving a grant.

## II. APPLICATIONS

**Applications for grants.** Requests for grants shall be submitted to the department in accordance with the administrative rules adopted by the department to administer the grant program. Each request shall at a minimum state:

- (1) The name of the individual requesting grant funds;
- (2) The name of the individual's current case worker; and
- (3) A description of the individual's current living and housing situation.

## III. STANDARDS

**Qualifying standards for grant funds.** An individual receiving the grant shall meet the following standards; specifically, the applicant shall provide proof that the applicant:

- (1) Has United States citizenship or permanent United States resident alien status and is a resident of the State of Hawaii at the time of application;
- (2) Is homeless;
- (3) Complies with other federal, state, or county statutes, rules, or ordinances, necessary to conduct the activities or provide the services for which a grant is awarded;
- (4) Agrees not to use state funds for entertainment, lobbying activities, or any other unauthorized uses if the funds are provided as assistance to remove barriers related to obtaining employment;
- (5) Satisfies any other standards that may be required by the source of funding; and
- (6) Meets all other standards prescribed in rules adopted by the department to implement the grants.

#### **IV. REVIEW OF APPLICATION**

**Required review of requests for grant funds.** (a) Every request for grant funds shall be reviewed in accordance with this section.

(b) Every request for a grant shall be submitted to the department on an application form provided by the department.

(c) The department shall review each request to determine whether the applicant is eligible to receive grant funds.

(d) The department shall make a final decision on each request.

(e) The department shall inform each grant applicant of the disposition of the application's request.

(f) The appeal process in the department's rules shall be available for any applicant who is denied a request for grant funds.

#### **V. CONTRACTS**

**Contracts.** The department shall not release the public funds approved for a grant unless a contract is entered between the department and the recipient of the grant. The department shall develop and determine, in consultation with and subject to the review and approval of the attorney general, the specific contract form to be used.

#### **VI. ALLOTMENT**

**Allotment.** Appropriations for grants to be made under this Act shall be subject to the allotment system generally applicable to all appropriations made by the legislature.

#### **VII. MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

**Monitoring and evaluation.** (a) Every department grant contract shall be monitored by the department to ensure compliance with this Act.

(b) Every department grant contract shall be evaluated annually to determine whether the grant attained the intended results in the manner contemplated.

#### **VIII. DUTY TO DISCLOSE AND PENALTY**

**Continued eligibility.** Any recipient of a grant who withholds or omits any material fact or deliberately misrepresents facts to the department shall be in violation of

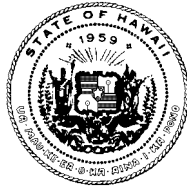


this Act. In addition to any other penalties provided by law, any recipient found by the department to have violated this Act or the terms of its contract shall be prohibited from applying for any department grants for a period of five years from the date of termination.

#### **IX. RULES**

**Rules.** The department shall adopt rules, which may be done without regard to chapter 91, to administer the three-year homeless employment grant program.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



CATHY BETTS  
DIRECTOR  
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

TRISTA SPEER  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**  
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA LAWELAWE KANAKA  
Office of the Director  
P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

February 9, 2024

To: The Honorable Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair  
Senate Committee on Health & Human Services

The Honorable Senator Henry J.C. Aquino, Chair  
Senate Committee on Labor & Technology

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 2661 – RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS.**

Hearing: Monday, February 12, 2024, 3:00 p.m.  
Conference Room 224, State Capitol & Video Conference

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent of this bill, offers comments, suggests amendments, and defers to the Department of the Attorney General. DHS respectfully requests that any appropriation not reduce or replace priorities identified in the executive budget or forthcoming Governor's messages.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this bill is to establish the Homeless Employment Grant Program, a three-year-pilot program, that provides homeless individuals with work opportunities and connects them with service providers. Requires DHS to report to the Legislature. Declares that the general fund expenditure is exceeded. Makes an appropriation.

In addition to shelter, outreach, legal services, rapid rehousing, and Housing First programs that serve individuals and families experiencing homelessness, DHS currently administers job training and support services to homeless clients with children as well as individuals. The [SEE Hawaii Work](#) program, assists families with children who receive

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) / Temporary Assistance for Other Needy Families (TAONF) financial benefits and enrolled in the First To Work program. The Supplement Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Employment and Training (E&T) program provides similar services for individuals who receive SNAP benefits.

In FY23, the First to Work program provided support and benefit services to 1,926 participants, and the SNAP E&T program provided support for an additional 326 participants. During that same period, out of 1,258 total employed participants in First to Work, nearly one-third (30.2%) experienced increases in their wages.

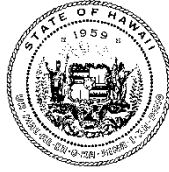
Additionally, the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) provides vocational rehabilitation to individuals with disabilities who are interested in employment. Services include job training, job placement, assistive technology, and assistance with education.

DHS respectfully suggests that the Legislature consider a general fund appropriation to existing employment programs instead of creating additional administrative and programmatic processes and expenses. With a direct appropriation, instead of a grant, DHS can supplement existing skills-building and employment programs.

DHS has concerns regarding (d), lines 8-10. If individuals experiencing homelessness engage in public work or public service, they should be treated as employees with dignity, be able to work in a safe environment that is free from harassment or other risks and experience employment as any other employee hired by the State. Additionally, DHS will work with the Office of Wellness & Resilience and its proposal to create more pathways for peer specialists.

If this measure proceeds, DHS will provide an estimate of the resources needed to implement this measure. We also request an extended effective date.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer comments on this measure.



**STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII**  
**STATE PROCUREMENT OFFICE**

P.O. Box 119  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96810-0119  
Tel: (808) 586-0554  
email: [state\\_procurement\\_office@hawaii.gov](mailto:state_procurement_office@hawaii.gov)  
<http://spo.hawaii.gov>

TESTIMONY  
OF  
BONNIE KAHAKUI, ACTING ADMINISTRATOR  
STATE PROCUREMENT OFFICE

TO THE SENATE COMMITTEES  
ON  
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES  
AND  
LABOR AND TECHNOLOGY  
FEBRUARY 12, 2024, 3:00 PM

SENATE BILL 2661  
RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS

Chair San Buenaventura, Chair Aquino, Vice Chair Aquino, Vice Chair Moriwaki and members of the committees, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on Senate Bill 2661. The State Procurement Office (SPO) supports the intent to establish the pilot Homeless Employment Grant Program and comments on Section 2, page 2, lines 19 to 21, and page 3, lines 1 to 4.

**Comment:** While the SPO supports the need to help our homeless population, we understand that agencies may perceive competitive procurement processes as impediments to the delivery of such goods and services. However, contracts for the Homeless Employment Grant Program should be competitively procured and selection of a qualified service provider or person or entity should be procured in accordance with HRS Chapters 103D and 103F to ensure fair, open competition and to prevent favoritism, collusion, or fraud in awarding of contracts. This also ensures oversight, accountability, and transparency in the procurement and contracting process which is vital to good government.

**Recommendation:** "SECTION 2, page 2, lines 19 to 21 through page 3, lines 1 to 4(b) The department of human services shall contract with a service provider or other qualified person or entity to administer the program; provided that the contract shall be ~~exempt from~~ in accordance with chapters 103D and 103F, Hawaii Revised Statutes; provided further that the period of performance of these contracts shall not exceed the three-year term on the homeless employment grant program."

Thank you.



## CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

### TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2661: RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS

TO: Senate Committees on Labor and Technology, and Health and Human Services,

FROM: Rob Van Tassell, President and CEO, Catholic Charities Hawaii

**Hearing: Monday, 2/12/24; 3:00 PM; CR 224 and Videoconference**

Chair Acquino, Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Moriwaki, Vice Chair Acquino, and Members, Committees on Labor and Technology, and Health and Human Services:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony **in support of SB 2661**, which would establish a 3 year pilot program to provide homeless individuals with work opportunities and connect them with service providers. I am Rob Van Tassell with Catholic Charities Hawaii. We are also a member of Partners In Care.

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

Catholic Charities Hawaii supports the intent of this bill which would provide a new source of temporary income for homeless individuals. Work gives dignity as well as income to people. We hope that this pilot program could not only link homeless persons to temporary jobs in public service, but could also assist them to create micro businesses or micro economic projects or other job opportunities. **We suggest that the Purpose of this Act be amended to include other job opportunities besides public service.**

This bill also includes assessments for employment and shallow funding to remove barriers to obtaining employment. Along with financial literacy training and the focus on coordinating with service providers, it would provide a range of services that are essential to helping people access and retain permanent housing.

**We urge your support for this bill to give hope to homeless persons who are capable of working.** If you have any questions, please contact our Legislative Liaison, Betty Lou Larson at (808) 527-4813.





# HAWAI`I YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK

677 Ala Moana Blvd., Suite 904

Honolulu, Hawai`i 96813

Phone: (808) 489-9549

Web site: <http://www.hysn.org> E-mail: [info@hysn.org](mailto:info@hysn.org)

Vonnell Ramos, President  
Cyd Hoffeld, Vice President  
Sione Ford Naeata, Treasurer  
Greg Tjapkes, Secretary

Judith F. Clark, Executive  
Director

***Network Membership***

*Big Brothers Big Sisters Hawai`i  
Big Island Substance Abuse  
Council*

*Bobby Benson Center  
Child and Family Service  
Coalition for a Drug-Free Hawai`i  
Collins Consulting, LLC  
Domestic Violence Action Center  
EPIC `Ohana, Inc.*

*Family Programs Hawai`i  
Family Support Hawai`i  
Friends of the Children's Justice  
Center of Maui*

*Get Ready Hawai`i  
Hale Kipa, Inc.*

*Hale `Opio Kaua`i, Inc.  
Hawai`i Children's Action  
Network*

*Hawai`i Health & Harm  
Reduction Center  
Hawaii Island Community'  
Health Center*

*Ho`ola Na Pua  
Ho`okele Coalition of Kaua`i  
Ka Hale Pomaika`i  
Kahi Mohala*

*Kokua Kalih Valley  
Kaua`i Planning and Action  
Alliance*

*Maui Youth and Family Services  
Na Pu`uwai Molokai Native  
Hawaiian Health Care  
Systems*

*P.A.R.E.N.T.S., Inc.  
Parents and Children Together  
PHOCUSED*

*PFLAG - Kona, Big Island  
Planned Parenthood of the  
Great Northwest, Hawaii  
Alaska, Kentucky, Indiana*

*Residential Youth Services  
& Empowerment (RYSE)*

*Salvation Army Family  
Intervention Services*

*Sex Abuse Treatment Center  
Susannah Wesley Community  
Center*

*The Catalyst Group*

February 8, 2024

Senator Henry Aquino, Chair  
And members of the Committee on Labor and Technology

Senator Joy San Buenaventura, Chair  
And members of the Committee on Health and Human Services

## **COMMENTS ON SB 2661 RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS**

Hawaii Youth Services Network (HYSN) is providing comments on SB 2661 Relating to Homelessness.

Homeless youth who are living on their own on the streets without support or guidance from their families are the most vulnerable segment of our homeless population. They are children who have not completed their education and lack employment experience.

While on the streets they have few options for meeting their basic survival needs. Homeless youth often trade sex for food, money or a place to sleep. They may be forced to eat food from garbage cans or panhandle.

An employment program would give them safer ways to meet basic needs while building the relationships and trust with support staff that will lead to leaving the streets. They would gain work experience that could lead to longer-term, competitive employment.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Judith F. Clark  
Executive Director

**SB-2661**

Submitted on: 2/7/2024 3:50:23 PM

Testimony for HHS on 2/12/2024 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Greg Misakian	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Greg Misakian and I currently serve as 2nd Vice President of Kokua Council, and Sub-District 2 Vice Chair of the Waikiki Neighborhood Board.

I strongly support SB2661.

**SB-2661**

Submitted on: 2/8/2024 1:12:53 PM

Testimony for HHS on 2/12/2024 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Betsy Scolnik	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

support



**SB-2661**

Submitted on: 2/11/2024 10:45:23 AM

Testimony for HHS on 2/12/2024 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Maria Corazon E. Cariaga	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm in support for this SB 2661 to help homeless individuals find a better place for themselves. This way they can help themselves to find a job that can support their daily needs. And not be a burden to anyone.

Thank you for allowing me to submit my testimony.