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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO KUPUNA HOUSING.

**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 Hawaii, which requires a  
3 robust, comprehensive, long-term solution to address the State's  
4 affordable housing and homelessness crisis. One important  
5 component of the solution is ensuring that low-income kupuna are  
6 not forced into homelessness through a combination of fixed  
7 incomes and rapidly rising rents.

8           The legislature further finds that, over the last fifty  
9 years, the number of cost-burdened renters, or those paying more  
10 than thirty per cent of their income for rent, has significantly  
11 increased. Today, almost half of all renters in the State pay  
12 more than thirty per cent of their income for rent. High  
13 housing costs have driven more and more Hawaii residents into  
14 homelessness, and now the homelessness rate per capita in Hawaii  
15 is among the highest in the nation.

16           The legislature additionally finds that by making smart  
17 investments in homelessness and housing, using data-driven



1 practices, and improving coordination, Hawaii has gradually  
2 begun to turn the tide in the homelessness crisis. In 2017,  
3 Hawaii's homelessness rate went down for the first time in  
4 years, a trend that continued in 2018. During the regular  
5 session of 2018, the legislature made unprecedented levels of  
6 investment in low-income housing and homelessness, appropriating  
7 \$200,000,000 for the rental housing revolving fund, \$30,000,000  
8 for ohana zones, and \$13,500,000 for proven-effective and  
9 promising homelessness programs.

10 The legislature also finds that to turn back fifty years of  
11 growth in Hawaii's housing and homelessness crisis, investments  
12 of this scale must be made consistently in the coming years.  
13 Hawaii must prioritize programs that are the most cost-effective  
14 and target the most vulnerable populations, such as the State's  
15 kupuna. The 2017 Homeless Service Utilization Report found that  
16 there are 1,386 homeless elders in the State. Many more elders  
17 face homelessness as rents skyrocket. Due to the fixed incomes  
18 of elders, a state rent supplement program targeted toward  
19 kupuna that expands on the existing state rent supplement  
20 program administered by the Hawaii public housing authority is  
21 needed.



1           The purpose of this Act is to temporarily expand the state  
2 rent supplement program to specifically target qualified kupuna  
3 who are sixty-two years of age or older and are homeless or at  
4 imminent risk of becoming homeless and appropriate funds for  
5 this purpose.

6           SECTION 2. Chapter 356D, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
7 amended by adding a new section to part VIII to be appropriately  
8 designated and to read as follows:

9           "§356D-           State rent supplement program for kupuna. (a)

10 There is established the state rent supplement program for  
11 kupuna to be administered by the authority to provide state rent  
12 supplement assistance and other services under this section.

13           (b) The authority shall:

14           (1) Provide state rent supplement assistance specifically  
15           for qualified kupuna; provided that an individual who  
16           qualifies for the state rent supplement program for  
17           kupuna shall participate in the Continuum of Care  
18           Coordinated Entry System for homeless services;

19           (2) Provide housing counseling and landlord assistance to  
20           assist qualified kupuna; and



1           (3) Coordinate with mental health services and other  
2           supportive services to assist qualified kupuna in  
3           obtaining or retaining permanent housing.

4           (c) The authority may enter into memoranda of agreement  
5 with the counties or specialized non-profit organizations as  
6 necessary to implement this section.

7           (d) The Hawaii public housing authority shall be exempt  
8 from chapter 103D in selecting a qualified non-profit  
9 organization to administer the long term rental assistance  
10 program for kupuna, and shall, without regard to chapter 91  
11 establish rules and qualification standards for participants of  
12 the long-term rental assistance pilot program.

13           (e) The authority shall submit to the legislature an  
14 annual report of its findings and recommendations regarding the  
15 state rent supplement program for kupuna, including any proposed  
16 legislation, no later than thirty days prior to the convening of  
17 each regular session.

18           (f) As used in this section, "qualified kupuna" means an  
19 individual who is sixty-two years of age or older and is  
20 homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless and who



1 otherwise meets the requirements for a qualified tenant under  
2 section 356D-153."

3 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general  
4 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
5 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 and  
6 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal  
7 year 2024-2025 for the state rent supplement program for kupuna  
8 established under section 356D- , Hawaii Revised Statutes,  
9 including full-time equivalent ( FTE) public housing  
10 specialist positions within the Hawaii public housing authority;  
11 provided that any funds appropriated under this section shall be  
12 in addition to the base budget of the Hawaii public housing  
13 authority for the state rent supplement program.

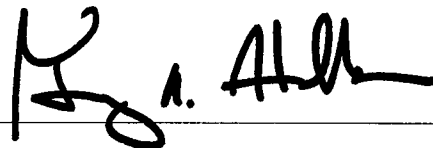
14 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the Hawaii  
15 public housing authority for the purposes of this Act.

16 SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

17 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2023, and  
18 shall be repealed on June 30, 2026.

19

INTRODUCED BY:



JAN 20 2023



# H.B. NO. 648

**Report Title:**

HPHA; State Rent Supplement Program for Kupuna; Reports; Appropriation

**Description:**

Temporarily expands the state rent supplement program to specifically target qualified individuals who are sixty-two years of age or older and are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless. Requires HPHA to submit annual reports to the legislature. Appropriates funds. Repeals 6/30/2026.

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

