



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
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WRITTEN
TESTIMONY ONLY

**Testimony in SUPPORT of HB2309 HD1
RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS**

REPRESENTATIVE Kyle T. Yamashita, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

February 26, 2024, 10:00 AM Room Number: 308

1 **Fiscal Implications:** The Department of Health (“Department”) requests up to \$1,600,000 in
2 funding for this measure to expand services and staff support for one (1) year at one (1) facility,
3 provided it does not supplant requests outlined in the Governor's executive budget request.

4 **Department Position:** The Department supports this measure and offers comments.

5 **Department Testimony:** The Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division (ADAD) provides the
6 following testimony on behalf of the Department.

7 The bill establishes a homeless triage center program with the ADAD and appropriates funds for
8 implementation.

9 Either way one slices the latest 2023 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count data, about 30 percent of
10 individuals and families experiencing homelessness, whether sheltered or unsheltered, have
11 reported a substance use problem, and about 40 percent have reported a mental illness.

12 The Department also welcomes more discussion with the community and service providers to get
13 clarity on the needed triage and withdrawal management aka “detox” services to better prepare a
14 competitive procurement, and how the triage center program could be utilized in the community.

15 **Offered Amendments:** None.

16 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



HB2309 HD1 Homeless Triage Center

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair

Rep. Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

Monday, Feb 26, 2024: 10:00: Room 329 Videoconference

Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition Supports HB2309 HD1:

ALOHA CHAIR, VICE CHAIR, AND DISTINGUISHED COMMITTEE MEMBERS. My name is Alan Johnson. I am the current chair of the Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition (HSAC), a statewide organization for substance use disorder and co-occurring mental health disorder treatment and prevention agencies and recovery-oriented services.

HSAC recommends amendments to the following:

§346 (b) (5) Behavioral health services including **co-occurring disorder treatment**; and (6) Trauma-informed, cultural-based life skills groups for shelter guests to maximize engagement and retention

Most of the people who need temporary care suffer from homelessness that includes **substance abuse, and mental health which is called co-occurring disorder.**

HSAC supports that this service be managed by the Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division so they can prepare a comprehensive state-wide plan for the

best utilization of their resources for mild detoxification and initiating psychiatric medication as well as urgent health care.

This is a great opportunity to stabilize them and then refer to co-occurring disorder treatment (treats both mental illness and substance abuse in one setting) because once housed, 50% to 70% of homeless will want some form of recovery through treatment.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony and are available for questions.

HB-2309-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 9:50:43 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ellen Godbey Carson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support Homeless Triage Centers. They offer the best chance for our chronically homeless persons to get the help they need for recovery. When a homeless person is finally ready to get help for addiction or mental illness, we need these centers to offer immediate beds and assistance, to help break the cycle of continuing homelessness.

I'm a volunteer for IHS (formerly president) and have seen what a major impact these Homeless Triage Centers can make in the lives of those we serve.

The cost for services for these homeless individuals will be much less through these centers than through the revolving door of police, hospitals, and jails that are likely their fate without effective assistance.

Thank you for consideration of my testimony

Ellen Godbey Carson, Honolulu, Hawaii

HB-2309-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 1:28:48 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/26/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leilani B Domingo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am Leilani B Domingo, caregiver for 17 years. I am in support of HB 2309, I cannot continue this business if you will not give us increase because inflation is high and the money we are receiving is not enough to support our families.

Sincerely,

Leilani B Domingo Foster Home

