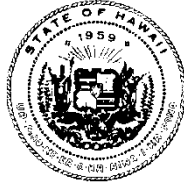


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
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IN REPLY, PLEASE REFER TO:

Statement of
Hakim Ouansafi, Executive Director
Hawaii Public Housing Authority

Before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Wednesday, February 28, 2024
10:01 AM – Room 211, Hawaii State Capitol

In consideration of
SB 3120, SD1
RELATING TO THE HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY

Honorable Chair Dela Cruz, and members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill (SB) 3120, SD1, relating to the Hawaii Public Housing Authority.

The Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) is in **strong support** of the enactment of SB 3120, SD1. This Administrative measure establishes, exempt from chapter 76, HRS, the position of a Housing Policy and Program Coordinator in the Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA), whose salary shall be set by the Executive Director of the HPHA. Clarifies that the employment of certain positions and the adjustment of salaries are authorized by the Executive Director and not the Board of Directors. Deletes the wage ceiling requirement for positions in the HPHA.

This bill will add the new Housing Policy and Program Coordinator position that will be responsible for the overall policy and program research and execution of program rules and regulations for the HPHA's Rental Assistance Program (Section 8), Federal Low-Income Public Housing, Moving-to-Work (MTW) Demonstration Program Designation, and other subsidized housing programs.

The United States Congress and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) have created numerous rule changes through the Housing Opportunity Through Modernization Act and Fair Housing Act. There is also the future program implementation of HUD's National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate (NSPIRE) to assist in improving low-income public housing quality, health, and safety. All of these new and future policy and program changes will be effectively and efficiently researched, coordinated, implemented, and monitored by the Housing Policy and Program Coordinator to keep the HPHA compliant with all current and future laws, rules and regulations.

Additionally, this bill will also clarify the title of the Chief Financial Officer, and codify into statute the currently exempt positions of Chief Compliance Officer, Housing Contract and Procurement Officer, and Human Resources and Safety Officer positions, which were established exempt from section 76-16(b) before 2014, clarify that the staff report to the Executive Director, and authorize the Executive Director to hire staff that may need salaries that are required to be above the Governor's salary due to the HPHA's redevelopment efforts.

The HPHA appreciates the opportunity to provide the Committee with the HPHA's testimony. We thank you very much for your dedicated support.