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IN REPLY, PLEASE REFER TO:

Statement of
Hakim Ouansafi, Executive Director
Hawaii Public Housing Authority

Before the
SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

Tuesday, March 19, 2024
1:20 PM – Room 225, Hawaii State Capitol

In consideration of
SCR 226 / SR 202

REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR, IN COLLABORATION WITH THE COUNTY OF MAUI, TO PROVIDE A CLEAR STRATEGY FOR ADDRESSING THE SHORT AND LONG-TERM HOUSING NEEDS FOR RESIDENTS DISPLACED BY THE AUGUST 2023 MAUI WILDFIRES

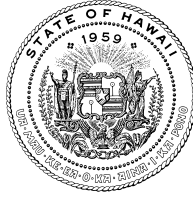
Honorable Chair Chang, and members of the Senate Committee on Housing, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Concurrent Resolution (SCR) 226 / Senate Resolution (SR) 202.

The Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) **offers comments** on SCR 226 / SR 202 which requests the Governor, in collaboration with the County of Maui, to provide a clear strategy for addressing the short and long-term housing needs for residents displaced by the August 2023 Maui wildfires.

The August 2023 Maui wildfires caused tremendous loss of life and burned more than 2,500 acres across the historic town of Lahaina, destroying homes and businesses in the region, which included the HPHA's David Malo Circle and Piilani Homes low-income public housing properties. Both low-income public housing properties suffered major damages to the structures, infrastructure and the grounds and remaining structures are contaminated with combustion by-products.

Please know that these low-income public housing properties are federally subsidized by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the HPHA is currently going through the HUD process. The HPHA looks forward to collaborating with all stakeholders with the future planning and development efforts of these properties.

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



LATE

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA

Senate Committee on Housing

Tuesday, March 19, 2024

1:20 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 225 and Videoconference

With Comments

S.C.R. No. 226 / S.R. No. 202, Requesting a Maui Housing Strategy

Chair Chang, Vice Chair Hashimoto, and members of the Senate Committee on Housing:

The Office of the Governor offers the following comments on S.C.R. No. 226 / S.R. No. 202, *Requesting the Governor, in Collaboration with the County of Maui, to Provide a Clear Strategy for Addressing the Short- and Long-Term Housing Needs for Residents Displaced by the August 2023 Maui Wildfires*.

The Governor and his Administration are committed to meeting the short- and long-term housing needs of survivors displaced by the August 2023 Maui wildfires in coordination with Federal, County, and Private partners. As recognized in the resolution, the State's commitment includes 450 units of interim housing at Kala'iola, the purchase of the Haggai Institute in Kihei, the reconstruction of HPHA and HHFDC properties in the burn area, and other initiatives. Because the situation on the ground in West Maui changes from moment to moment, strategies must also be flexible. The Office of the Governor has to date concentrated on clear statements of goals and policy, as with the *Maui Interim Housing Plan*—which commits \$500 million to a pool of more than 3,000 stable housing units, the *DR-4724-HI Maui Wildfire Disaster Housing Strategy*, dated February 28, 2024, which documents strategies, resources, and processes for disaster housing solutions, and the tax amnesty program submitted as HB2416 and SB3105 for consideration by the Legislature. The Administration will continue to collect and share information about specific housing strategies and projects with the Legislature as these are finalized, primarily through the work of the State Disaster Recovery Coordinator and in partnership with the Joint Housing Task Force for DR-4724-HI.

For context, the State of Hawai'i State Disaster Recovery Coordinator (SDRC) has the role of coordinating and planning for recovery and resiliency efforts for the Maui Wildfire impacts in support of the County of Maui. This contrasts with emergency response which is led by HI-EMA under Emergency Support Functions.

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Last fall the Governor identified seven RSFs and their corresponding State Leads. The RSFs include: Natural Resources & Cultural Resources RSF coordinated by Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources; Community Planning and Capacity Building RSF coordinated by Office of Planning and Sustainable Development; Housing RSF coordinated by Hawai'i Housing Finance and Development Corporation; Infrastructure RSF coordinated by Hawai'i Department of Transportation; Economic RSF coordinated Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism; Public Health & Healthcare Services RSF coordinated by Hawai'i State Department of Health; and Social Services RSF coordinated by Hawai'i Department of Human Services. These RSFs and their state leads have been working closely with County of Maui, federal partners, and private organizations.

This approach—a State Coordinator coupled with RSFs—is consistent with the National Disaster Recovery Framework, a FEMA structure and process developed from the collective experience of disaster recovery managers nationwide. If you have any questions on the role of SDRC or the State RSFs, we ask that you contact Luke Meyers, State Disaster Recovery Coordinator, for further information and a dialog on this proposal during the legislative session.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.