



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA

JOHN MIZUNO
DIRECTOR
STATEWIDE OFFICE ON HOMELESSNESS & HOUSING SOLUTIONS

Testimony of **John M. Mizuno**
Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness
Before the
**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES
& HOMELESSNESS**
Thursday, February 6, 2025
10:00 a.m.
Conference Room 329, State Capitol

In consideration of
House Bill No. 1420
RELATING TO SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

Aloha Chair Marten, Vice Chair Olds, and Committee Members,

My name is John Mizuno. I am the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness and the Director of the Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions (SOHHS).

First, on behalf of my office and Governor Green, I want to thank the Speaker of the House of Representatives for introducing HB1420.

I am writing in strong support of **House Bill 1420**, a crucial piece of legislation that clarifies the funding mechanism for the supportive housing pilot program and extends its sunset date to 6/30/2030.

We support the amendment in **HB 1420** that the Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions shall administer payments for supportive services, including employment services, that assist the residents participating in the pilot program in retaining housing, improving their health status, and maximizing their ability to live and, when possible, work in the community.

We also agree that supportive services may include mental health, substance abuse, counseling, and daily living activities and that supportive services payments shall not exceed \$800 per unit per month. Further, we strongly support the provision that the Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions may enter into a memorandum of agreement with the counties or specialized nonprofit organizations as necessary to implement this section.

Supportive housing is an innovative and proven solution that combines affordable housing with access to services to help special needs populations, such as chronically homeless individuals and families, individuals with physical or severe mental disabilities, individuals who are transitioning from incarceration, or those with alcohol or drug addiction, and our Kupuna, to be able to live more stable and productive lives. One example is the Fernhurst YWCA women's re-entry housing program on Oahu. Funded by SOHHS, the program provides housing, meals, education, and employment training for women recently released from a correctional facility, allowing them to transition to supportive housing with wrap-around services and potential rental subsidies.

Furthermore, supportive housing helps build strong, healthy communities by improving neighborhood safety and beautifying city blocks with new or rehabilitated properties, thereby increasing or stabilizing property values over time.

The passage of the supportive services pilot program will help the state determine the impacts of supportive housing for vulnerable populations and provide urgent housing amid the state's homelessness crisis and ongoing housing shortage.

Thank you, Chair Marten, Vice Chair Olds, and Committee Members, for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of **House Bill 1420**. I want to reiterate our unwavering support for this important measure and the positive impact that it will have.

I urge you to pass **House Bill 1420**.

Mahalo!

Brandon Mitsuda
Office of Homelessness and Housing Solutions
Special Assistant



HB1420 Supportive Housing
COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & HOMELESSNESS

Rep. Lisa Marten, Chair

Rep. Ikaika Olds, Vice Chair

Thursday, Feb 6, 2025: 10:00: Room 329 Videoconference

Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition Strongly Supports HB1420:

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.

This is the most wonderful and potentially the most impactful solution for those homeless who have the more chronic mental health and substance use disorder conditions.

Chronic homelessness is distinct from other forms of homelessness and is the most expensive to healthcare. Moreover, the chronic homeless can be helped more cost-effectively by more supportive services with housing and needed services.

SAMHSA reports that 50% to 70% chronic homeless, once housed with benefits, will seek treatment because now they want recovery, they want wellness with a better quality of life. Connection, support, sobriety, employment, and quality of life are all significant outcomes for people in recovery.¹

Combining housing with employment services, substance use disorder treatments, mental health counseling and daily living activities helps Supportive Housing (SH) to provide for higher needs people moving from homelessness to independent, supportive living.²

Supportive housing helps homeless people live in a stable place, increase their skills and their income, and gain more control over the decisions that affects their lives.

The Hawai'i Supportive Housing Work Group was formed by the Hawaii Interagency for Homelessness through funding by the 2022 Hawaii State Legislature to establish a broad

¹ SAMHSA Affordable Housing Models and Recovery <https://www.samhsa.gov/homelessness-programs-resources/hpr-resources/affordable-housing-models-recovery>

² HUD Exchange SHP Supportive Housing Program <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/shp/>

stakeholder group that could develop supportive housing, by pairing a housing unit with a rental subsidy and supportive services that fit the residents' needs.

- Local and national studies demonstrate the benefits of supportive housing on individual residents, our public systems, and our entire community.
- **Medicaid or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) can help with funding.**

Study after study has shown that supportive housing not only **resolves homelessness** and increases housing stability but also improves health and **lowers public costs by reducing the use of publicly funded crisis services, including shelters, hospitals, psychiatric centers, jails, and prisons.**

- The SH model has been demonstrated to permanently keep the majority of people who enter the program from ever becoming homeless again.
- A primary goal is to address those significant challenges to help people avoid future episodes of homelessness.
- It's a higher level than a shelter that often limits the hours when a person can be onsite, resulting in homeless individuals wandering through the neighborhood during the day.

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



HB1420 Supportive Housing

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & HOMELESSNESS

Rep. Lisa Marten, Chair

Rep. Ikaika Olds, Vice Chair

Thursday, Feb 6, 2025: 10:00am: Room 329 Videoconference

Hina Mauka Strongly Supports HB1420:

*ALOHA CHAIR, VICE CHAIR, AND DISTINGUISHED COMMITTEE MEMBERS.
My name is Brian Baker. I am the Chief Operating Officer for Hina Mauka, a mental health and substance use disorder treatment and prevention agency for thousands of adults and adolescents on Oahu and Kauai, including recovery-oriented services and housing transitional living programs.*

Hina Mauka provides this testimony as a community treatment and prevention provider, as well as a member of the Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition (HSAC).

Chronic homelessness is highly expensive to healthcare. The bright side is that chronic homeless has been proven to be helped by supportive services with housing and needed services.

Per SAMHSA 50% to 70% chronic homeless, once housed with benefits, will seek treatment because now they want recovery, they want wellness with a better quality of life. Connection, support, sobriety, employment, and quality of life are all significant outcomes for people in recovery.¹

Combining housing with employment services, substance use disorder treatments, mental health counseling and daily living activities helps Supportive Housing (SH) to provide for higher needs people moving from homelessness to independent, supportive living.²

Supportive housing helps homeless people live in a stable place, increase their skills and their income, and gain more control over the decisions that affects their lives.

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

¹ SAMHSA Affordable Housing Models and Recovery <https://www.samhsa.gov/homelessness-programs-resources/hpr-resources/affordable-housing-models-recovery>

² HUD Exchange SHP Supportive Housing Program <https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/shp/>



The Institute for Human Services, Inc.
Ending the Cycle of Homelessness

TO: Honorable Rep. Lisa Marten
Chair, House Committee on Human Services & Homelessness

Honorable Rep. Ikaika Olds
Vice Chair, House Committee on Human Services & Homelessness

FROM: Angie Knight, Community Relations Manager
IHS, Institute for Human Services, Inc.

RE: HB 1420 - RELATING TO SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

DATE: February 3, 2025

POSITION: IHS supports the passing of HB 1420.

IHS, The Institute for Human Services has been providing emergency shelter services to adult men, women, and families with children on Oahu for over 46 years. Currently, IHS operates supportive housing solutions such as Kahauiki Village for families and kupuna, re-entry homes for formerly incarcerated, and those in recovery from substance use disorders.

The transition from living unhoused to housed comes with a steep learning curve for many, this is especially true for our chronically homeless neighbors. Supportive Housing provides wrap-around support during the housing transition period and thereafter, providing individuals connections to stabilizing programs and/or supportive rehabilitation services that promote independent living and building a new network of support in the community.

During initial intake with service providers, homeless individuals are entered into the Coordinated Entry System and assessed for needs. These assessments highlight the types of support that households need to maintain permanent housing. Supportive services look different per client but can include: ongoing case management, employment support, navigating mental and physical health care systems to access and sustain treatment, financial literacy, nutrition, and interpersonal skill training. IHS delivers these services daily through our City-funded Housing First, HUD-funded Permanent Supportive Housing and Community Care Services (CCS) programs, helping individuals and families learn to live in their apartments and in new communities.

Recognizing the benefits of supportive housing, IHS strongly supports the continued focus on supportive services with permanent housing. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



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The State Legislature
House Committee on Human Services and Homelessness
Thursday, February 6, 2025
Conference Room 329, 10:00 a.m.

TO: The Honorable Lisa Marten, Chair
FROM: Keali'i S. López, AARP State Director
RE: Support for H.B. 1420 Relating to Supportive Housing

Aloha Chair Marten and Members of the Committee:

My name is Keali'i Lopez and I am the State Director for AARP Hawai'i. AARP is a nonpartisan, social impact organization that advocates for individuals age 50 and older. We have a membership of nearly 38 million nationwide and nearly 135,000 in Hawaii. We advocate at the state and federal level for the issues that matter most to older adults and their families.

AARP supports H.B 1420 which clarifies the funding mechanism for the supportive housing pilot program with the goal of increasing and maintaining supportive housing opportunities for individuals with special needs; and extends the sunset date for the program.

We appreciate that the State continues to focus on creating supportive housing services especially for the extremely low income households who are at or below 30% AMI. Affordable supportive services have been the missing component in keeping residents with special needs to reside in a safe and clean residence and reducing homelessness in the state. Having services such as mental health, substance abuse counseling and activities of daily living support would benefit vulnerable and at risk residents including Hawaii's kūpuna and allow them to maintain their independence and quality of life.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify in support **H.B. 1420**.



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Honolulu, HI 96813
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1566 Wilder Avenue
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45-35 Kāneʻohe Bay Drive
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Bill Number: Hawaii HB1420

Bill Title: Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions; Supportive Housing Pilot Program

Subject: Written Testimony

Aloha Chair Marten, Vice Chair Olds and committee members,

I am testifying in support of Hawaii HB1420, Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions; Supportive Housing Pilot Program as a representative of YWCA Oahu.

Through the Supportive Housing Pilot Program, YWCA Fernhurst has provided 38 women from vulnerable populations with affordable housing and support services that are helping them achieve a more stable and productive life. This includes job training and employment support, financial literacy, job retention, professional development, life skills training, case management, resources and referrals.

Key Performance Indicators (KPI): as of 7/1/2024

1. Served 38 women
2. 100% of residents have achieved one goal related to self-sufficiency.
3. 100% of residents received educational and training opportunities.
4. 97% have secured and maintained employment within the first year of residence.

Outcomes: Residents have gained life skills, are making better decisions, managing a savings account fund and completing educational programs.

Here is a testimony from a resident who moved to Fernhurst from a substance treatment program.

When I walked into the doors of Fernhurst, I walked in without a future. I didn't have the confidence within myself to believe that I deserve a better future. My case manager assisted me with resources I needed to address my mental health issues. She also helped me to learn and further my education and to maintain my employment. Through Fernhurst, I learned to follow a budget and save my money for my future. It is possible because the program provides my basic necessities to help me get back on my feet. Living at Fernhurst gave my life structure in every way possible. I learned that the only way to get anything done is to have a goal and a purpose.

YWCA Oahu has been empowering women in our community for 125 years. We believe in this program, have witnessed successful results and support Hawaii HB1420, Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions; Supportive Housing Pilot Program.

Mahalo, Chair Marten, Vice Chair Olds and committee members for the opportunity to testify.

Terri Funakoshi
Chief operating Officer, YWCA Oahu