



EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA

JUN YANG
GOVERNOR'S HOMELESS COORDINATOR
STATEWIDE OFFICE ON
HOMELESSNESS & HOUSING SOLUTIONS

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY & HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

Tuesday, April 1, 2025

2:00 p.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 325, and Videoconference

COMMENTS on

HCR 180 HD1 - REQUESTING THE STATEWIDE OFFICE ON HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING SOLUTIONS, DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT, HOMELESS COORDINATORS OF EACH COUNTY, COUNTY LAW ENFORCEMENT, AND SOCIAL SERVICES PROVIDERS TO WORK COLLABORATIVELY AND EFFECTIVELY TO ADDRESS HOMELESSNESS IN HAWAII.

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members:

The Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions (SOHHS) would like to provide comments to HCR 180.

The purpose of HCR 180 is to request the Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions, the Department of Law Enforcement, the homeless coordinators of the county of Oahu, Maui, Hawaii, and Kauai, county law enforcement, and social services providers, to work collaboratively and effectively, as vital stakeholders to address homelessness in Hawaii.

Our office's priorities focus on expanding the deeply affordable housing inventory for individuals experiencing homelessness as well as affordable rental units for individuals, couples, and families who are at risk of homelessness due to the high costs of living in Hawaii. In large part we are able to do this through the Kauhale Initiative, which is a statewide partnership between State, Counties, services providers, and the community to create deeply affordable spaces for housing and healing our people. This is a unique and innovative approach that strives to demonstrate a new, cost-effective model that centers housing as a critical component of healthcare. Residents of Kauhale are provided with access to robust wrap-around services, including case management and medical care to build healthy and resilient communities that help people stay successfully housed long-term.

SOHHS, the State, and the Counties continue to have a robust dialogue and are actively working together as partners to create other various programs as well to shelter and house individuals experiencing homelessness, such as the Homeless Outreach and Navigation for Unsheltered

Jun Yang Comments on HCR 180 HD1
House Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs
March 31, 2025
Page 2

people (HONU). This is a partnership between the State and the City & County of Honolulu, and the Honolulu Police Department to provide 24/7 short-term shelter services and navigation to connect individuals and families on Oahu to longer-term shelter and other housing options, as well as providing a tool for law enforcement officers to divert homeless individuals from citation and arrest.

We support the intent of this resolution for collaboration among all these different vital stakeholders in order to effectively address this multi-faceted issue and are committed to play our part in the solution. As the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness, I am honored to further the important work of this office and the administration to reduce and prevent homelessness across the state.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.



March 31, 2025

To: Chair David A. Tarnas, Vice Chair Mahina Poepoe, and Members of the Committee on Judiciary & Hawaiian Affairs

Date: Tuesday, April 1, 2025 **Time:** 2:00 pm

Place: Via videoconference and Conference Room 325

From: Health Committee

Subject: Testimony in Support of HCR180 HD1 Working collaboratively and effectively to address Homelessness in Hawai'i.

Aloha Chair Tarnas, Vice Chair Poepoe, and Members of the Committee,

As Chair and Vice Chair of the Health Committee of the Democratic Party of Hawai'i, we strongly support **HCR180 HD1**, which requests the Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions, Department of Law Enforcement, homeless coordinators of each county, county law enforcement, and social services providers to work collaboratively and effectively to address homelessness in Hawai'i.

Homelessness continues to be one of the most pressing and pervasive challenges affecting our state. It is a complex issue that requires coordinated efforts across multiple agencies and organizations to ensure that the needs of individuals and families experiencing homelessness are met comprehensively and humanely. **HCR180 HD1** represents a critical step forward in addressing this issue through collaboration, resource-sharing, and accountability.

Supporting Arguments:

- **Holistic and Coordinated Approach:** Homelessness is not a single-issue problem. By engaging multiple agencies—including law enforcement, social service providers, and housing authorities—this resolution ensures that all aspects of homelessness are addressed, from immediate shelter needs to long-term housing solutions and mental health support.

- **Prioritizing Housing First Strategies:** Collaborative efforts under this resolution would allow for the implementation of proven strategies like "Housing First," which has been demonstrated to reduce chronic homelessness effectively by focusing on stable housing as the foundation for success.
- **Enhancing Public Safety and Community Well-Being:** Coordinating with law enforcement and social service providers will help ensure that individuals experiencing homelessness receive the necessary support without criminalization, fostering safer and more compassionate communities.
- **Leveraging Resources and Expertise:** With input from the Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions, county homeless coordinators, and social service providers, Hawai'i can optimize existing resources and expertise to create a more efficient and impactful system of care.

We commend this Committee for recognizing the urgency of addressing homelessness and the importance of cross-sector collaboration to create lasting solutions. Passage of **HCR180 HD1** will send a clear message that Hawai'i is committed to compassionately addressing homelessness while improving public health, safety, and quality of life for all residents.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this critical resolution.

Respectfully Submitted,

Alan Burdick. Chair, Health Committee

Melodie Aduja, Vice Chair, Health Committee

HCR-180-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 6:02:46 PM

Testimony for JHA on 4/1/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jean Shimabuku	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I live in the Kapahulu/Moiliili area and I do not feel safe as a kupuna.

1. Dec. 17, 2024 I was walking over the overpass bridge to go to the graveyard and my dog and I was attacked by a homeless man's dog. I fell down 6 stairs and fell on my rt. shoulder and twisted my back. The man and his dog left in his Honda van as I lay there on the grass. What made it worse was no one stopped to help. My son had to take me to Urgent care and till today I'm still suffering from shoulder and neck pain. What's wrong with this world that we live in??

2. The homeless encampments under the bridges near Kaimuki High school. Sometimes I pass the bridge with my dog and

can smell something burning.

3. I've called in missing and abandoned shopping carts to stores like Down to Earth, Walmart, etc.

4. Near the overpass bridge people leave their rubbish, beer cans/bottles, stolen bikes and mopeds. Young kids have been hanging out there in the evenings and yelling at people from the top. Back in the day we could say something but these days we can't for fear of retaliation.

I just want our streets and areas to be safer.

Please help clean out our areas.

Thank you and God bless you.

HCR-180-HD-1

Submitted on: 3/31/2025 6:37:26 PM

Testimony for JHA on 4/1/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Betsy Kawamura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I've been active on homelessness issues and found many times that lack of coordination really challenged progress on how to Intervene with the homeless. This could be seen especially with the homeless around bus stops and streams that were considered state and or city properties

HCR-180-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/1/2025 1:07:52 AM

Testimony for JHA on 4/1/2025 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jo Ann Ochi	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support whatever measures it takes to get the homeless off the streets, out of our parks, away from schools and businesses and any place they are being a nuisance and affecting the safety, meaning posing a danger and also safety of our health.

We have been concentrating only on finding solutions to the homeless problem, but not the people they are affecting. We need to focus on helping those who are sincerely seeking help and who are willing to do whatever it takes to get out of a homeless situation. If they choose not to help themselves and continue to break the law then they need to be cited and removed as a criminal and not make an exception because of their situation of being homeless. The status should not be considered as an excuse for breaking the law. Government and the judicial system have been the most enabling towards homeless breaking the law. The law should be followed and punishment should be given according to the law with no exception for status! We need to be protected as many of the homeless are becoming a danger to us especially those taking drugs. Isn't illegal drugs illegal to take and is it not a crime? It seems like taking illegal drugs in the US is an acceptable practice with no repercussion. Other countries sentence anyone taking or selling drugs to death. Drugs are a danger , but we DONOT give harsh punishment for this behavior or theft.

None of our politicians seem to have what it takes to make stricter laws and unless that happens nothing will happen or change!!