



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 HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Thursday, March 20, 2025

10:15 a.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 329, and Videoconference

COMMENTS on

HR 88 / HCR 92 - REQUESTING THE GOVERNOR'S COORDINATOR ON HOMELESSNESS AND THE CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU TO ESTABLISH A TWO-YEAR HOMELESSNESS SANTUARY PILOT PROGRAM.

Aloha Chair Marten, Vice Chair Olds, and Members:

The Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions (SOHHS) would like to provide comments to HR 88 / HCR 92.

The purpose of HR 88 and HCR 92 is to request the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness and the City and County of Honolulu to establish a two-year homelessness sanctuary pilot program.

While the issue of homelessness remains, Hawaii has made significant strides. Under Governor Green's leadership and within the administration's first term, SOHHS set new priorities which include the ambitious goal of halving unsheltered homelessness (by November 2026). This means helping to shelter and house nearly 2,000 unsheltered people. Several of SOHHS'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.

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. Our goal is to further expand deeply affordable housing inventory and supportive services for individuals experiencing homelessness through the state's Kauhale Initiative.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

HR-88

Submitted on: 3/19/2025 10:42:18 AM

Testimony for HSH on 3/20/2025 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Taryn Do	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support this resolution.

Homelessness is a growing concern, and providing a designated safe space for the houseless community would be beneficial overall to our community's safety. This resolution recommends the needed resources for the houseless individuals that would help create a healthy environment.

HR-88

Submitted on: 3/19/2025 11:03:13 AM

Testimony for HSH on 3/20/2025 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Krista Vessell	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I FULLY SUPPORT THIS BILL! As a resident of O'ahu who experienced houslessness 10 years ago with my disabled husband and 2 children who were 3 and 1 years old at the time, a simple safe space to park a car and sleep and access to a bathroom is the VERY LEAST the City and County could have been providing to houseless residents, ESPECIALLY considering how many times a "state of emergency" has been declared over houseleness. "Ohana zones" were discussed when Ige was governor, but for some reason, the leftover Big 5 like Castle & Cooke decided that it was more important to use their "nonprofit" affiliation with HomeAid Hawaii to push "tiny homes" - toolsheds that Josh Green has decided to try to brand as "kauhale." We don't need toolsheds! We don't need tax write-off "charities" for real estate developers getting in the way and trying to mooch off federal funding for houselessness. WE NEED EMERGENCY SAFE SPACES FOR HOUSELESS PEOPLE. Finland was able to address their houseless crisis with Housing FIRST. Not "clean and sober first," not "employed first." HOUSING FIRST. This emergency safe space is the first step to realizing this. Shelter people FIRST, address wrap-around service needs SECOND. And for God's sake, STOP LETTING LANDLORDS DICTATE THE RULES ON HOUSING! More and more people will end up houseless as long as landlords can continue to increase rents WHILE WAGES STAY STAGNANT, you will continue to have a houseless crisis! No, states aren't "shipping their homeless here." Houselessness is a HAWAII-GROWN problem. Was 10 years ago, still is today. The number of homeless non-locals who find a way to get here (including buying a 1-way ticket) is MINISCULE compared to the number of HOUSELESS LOCALS. Every time you all look into this, the "it's a mainland problem" always gets debunked. Stop kicking the can! And the 1 thing I would change about this bill is I would add a requirement that any contractor that has anything to do with this safe space is audited continuously! I've watched the biggest names in the "nonprofit" sector literally squander OUR TAXPAYER DOLLARS AND DONATIONS on "administrative costs" over the past 10 years. And I first witnessed this after being houseless myself. DO NOT let "nonprofits" have carte blanche with our money. Hold them accountable to actually abide by their mission statements and HELP SOLVE THIS HOUSELESS CRISIS WHILE TREATING PEOPLE WITH DIGNITY.

HR-88

Submitted on: 3/19/2025 12:55:56 PM

Testimony for HSH on 3/20/2025 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Charlene Lum	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support having a plan to address the problems of homelessness. As the cost of living increases in Hawaii, we have to address in ways to help the homeless population.

HR-88

Submitted on: 3/19/2025 3:34:35 PM

Testimony for HSH on 3/20/2025 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joy Shimizu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in SUPPORT of this resolution. Our homelessness problem is increasing and something needs to be done. In establishing a sanctuary, the homeless community can obtain services. Their needs can be addressed, monitored and taken care of with the goal of rehabilitation. Rather than having our homeless in countless areas all over our state, this pilot program can be their own area where they can hopefully get back on their feet.

HR-88

Submitted on: 3/19/2025 6:24:37 PM

Testimony for HSH on 3/20/2025 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Judy Ilar	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Is there a data on who these people are? We all know that a good number of homeless people are from another country and another state. Let's send them all back to their original home. If they are not US citizens, they have to be deported first of all. Work with ICE on this one. Whoever is left, send them back to the mainland. The local homeless is what we need to deal with. What are their issues? I'm sure they have families.

Homeless people should get random drug tests. They should not be getting taxpayers money if they are drug addicts. I heard that they buy something with their card and then sell it. then use that money to buy drugs.

Deal with these issues first. enough wasteful spending.

HR-88

Submitted on: 3/19/2025 10:08:23 PM

Testimony for HSH on 3/20/2025 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Laura Nakanelua	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Aloha repspected Legislators,

I am in support of HCR-92, which requests that the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness and the City and County of Honolulu establish a two year homelessness sanctuary pilot program to provide a safe location on public land for homeless individuals and families to reside and access services.

We have been contending with the issue of homelessness in Hawai'i for decades and have witnessed the problem grow.

Every human being is precious and the homeless population in our state deserve to be provided both support and the opportunity to live with dignity.

I hope that you will also support and pass this legislation. I want to thank the legislators SHIMIZU, IWAMOTO, MATSUMOTO, OLDS, REYES ODA, WARD for proposing this much-needed bill.

Respectfully,
Laura

Laura Nakanelua
Lauranakanelua@gmail.com

HR-88

Submitted on: 3/19/2025 10:08:47 PM

Testimony for HSH on 3/20/2025 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Louella Vidinha	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I'm in support.

Hawaii resident

HR-88

Submitted on: 3/19/2025 10:14:06 PM

Testimony for HSH on 3/20/2025 10:15:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Daniel Chinen	Individual	Support	In Person

Comments:

Dear chair, vice chair, and members of the committee,

Thank you so much for your service and leadership to make it state a better place in addressing our homelessness. I am in strong support of this measure. Please take it into consideration. Thank you.