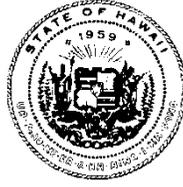


JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



HAKIM OUANSAFI  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BARBARA E. ARASHIRO  
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I  
**HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY**  
1002 NORTH SCHOOL STREET  
POST OFFICE BOX 17907  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96817

IN REPLY PLEASE REFER TO:

25:OED

Statement of  
**Hakim Ouansafi, Executive Director**  
**Hawaii Public Housing Authority**

Before the  
**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING**

**Friday, March 14, 2025**  
**9:00 AM – Room 430, Hawaii State Capitol**

In consideration of  
**SB 65, SD2**  
**RELATING TO HOUSING**

Honorable Chair Evslin, and members of the House Committee on Housing, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill (SB) 65, SD2, which appropriates funds to the Hawaii Public Housing Authority for the rehabilitation, remodeling, renovation, and repair of housing units. The HPHA **strongly supports** the passage of this measure and is grateful to the Legislature for its steadfast commitment to addressing Hawaii's housing needs.

The HPHA is dedicated to providing Hawaii's residents with safe, affordable housing and fostering equitable living environments free from discrimination. Through our public housing and rental assistance programs, we serve some of the state's most vulnerable populations, including families earning less than 30% of the Area Median Income (AMI), individuals with disabilities, and elderly residents.

The age of Hawaii's public housing inventory presents significant challenges. Many properties were constructed over 50 years ago and require extensive updates to remain safe and habitable, and the HPHA faces a capital needs backlog of approximately \$720 million. Additional funding is urgently needed to address this backlog and to ensure public housing units remain safe, decent and sanitary and available to those who need them most. As the HPHA relies on federal funding for approximately 90% of its operations, and as this funding is tied to unit occupancy, the rehabilitation of vacant units is critical to maximizing federal support. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) does not subsidize vacant units,



and HPHA's administrative fees to pay staff are also tied to occupancy, compounding the urgency of this work.

The Legislature's support over the past two years, combined with Governor Green's prioritization of affordable housing, has led to remarkable progress in reducing the number of vacant public housing units. In the past year alone, 214 units were rehabilitated and made available to our most disadvantaged families. This funding would build on that momentum by addressing critical rehabilitation needs such as lead abatement, electrical and plumbing upgrades, roof replacements, spall repairs, painting, unit modernization, and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). While ADA compliance remains a significant expense, the average cost of renovating a unit, excluding ADA-related improvements, is approximately \$73,000.

The HPHA remains deeply appreciative of the Legislature's dedication to advancing affordable housing and addressing the needs of Hawaii's most vulnerable residents. With your continued support, the passage of SB 65, SD2 would allow us to further our mission of providing safe, decent, and affordable housing for those in need.

Thank you again for your thoughtful consideration of this measure and for your unwavering commitment to supporting public housing in Hawaii. We look forward to continuing our partnership to improve the quality of life for all residents.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



RYAN I. YAMANE  
DIRECTOR  
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**  
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA LAWELAWE KANAKA  
Office of the Director  
P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

TRISTA SPEER  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

March 13, 2025

TO: The Honorable Representative Luke A. Evslin, Chair  
House Committee on Housing

FROM: Ryan I. Yamane, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 65 SD2 – RELATING TO HOUSING.**

Hearing: March 14, 2025, 9:00 a.m.  
Conference Room 430 & Videoconference, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the measure's intent and defers to the Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) for the general fund appropriation amount. As a source of low-income and affordable housing in Hawaii, maintaining and upgrading the existing public housing inventory is essential to maintain housing stability for eligible low-income residents. DHS supports HPHA's executive budget requests that include additional items and means of financing, including appropriations for two capital improvement requests of \$68,000,000 in bond funds (C) for the Ka Lei Momi Project. DHS respectfully requests that any appropriation included in this measure does not reduce or replace a budget request in the executive biennium budget.

**PURPOSE:** This bill appropriates funds to the Hawai'i Public Housing Authority for the rehabilitation, remodeling, renovation, and repair of housing units. Effective 7/1/2050. (SD2)

The Committee on Housing has amended this measure by inserting an appropriation amount of \$10,147,000. The Committee on Ways and Means amended the measure by:

(1) Changing the appropriation to an unspecified amount; and

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- (2) Changing the effective date to July 1, 2050, to facilitate further discussion on the measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this measure.



## CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

### TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 65 SD2: RELATING TO HOUSING

TO: House Committee on Housing

FROM: Tina Andrade, President and CEO, Catholic Charities Hawaii

**Hearing: Friday, 3/14/15; 9:00 AM; Room 430 & Videoconference**

Chair Evslin, Vice Chair Miyake, and Members, Committee on Housing:

Catholic Charities Hawaii **supports SB 65 SD2**, which appropriates funds to the Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) to rehabilitate, remodel, renovate, and repair housing units.

Catholic Charities Hawaii (CCH) is a tax exempt, community-based organization that has been providing social services in Hawaii for over 77 years. CCH has programs serving elders, veterans, children, families, houseless persons and immigrants. Our mission is to provide services and advocacy to the most vulnerable of the people in Hawaii. We serve over 40,000 people each year throughout the state. Creating affordable housing and ending homelessness are our top priorities.

We support this funding since this will expedite opening up affordable rental units which can assist to house homeless persons and many elders who face homelessness. The HPHA offers the most affordable housing available to the community. Tenants pay only 30% of their incomes for rent. This makes these units affordable even to homeless persons, seniors struggling with limited income, and very low-income families. However, many units cannot be occupied due to health and safety issues in the units. These units must be brought into shape ASAP to house our state's residents with extremely limited incomes.

**These units are "low hanging fruit" that should be immediately repaired to add them to our inventory of safe and decent housing.** These units do not need to wait years for permits or construction. Legislative funding would make them available very fast compared with funding for new construction.

Catholic Charities Hawaii urges your support for \$10 million in this bill. This will bring hope to so many local families and kupuna.

If you have any questions, please contact our Legislative Liaison, Betty Lou Larson, at (808) 527-4813.





MAKAKILO/KAPOLEI/HONOKAI HALE NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD NO. 34

c/o NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION • 925 DILLINGHAM BLVD SUITE 160 • HONOLULU, HAWAII, 96817  
PHONE (808) 768-3710 • FAX (808) 768-3711 • INTERNET: <http://www.honolulu.gov>

**RESOLUTION**

**SUPPORTING THE FUNDING FOR THE REPAIR AND ACTIVATION OF THE HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY UNITS TO ADDRESS HOMELESSNESS**

Whereas, the Makakilo/Kapolei/Honokai Hale Neighborhood Board No. 34 (“Board”) is a citizens’ advisory board whose purpose is to “increase and assure effective citizen participation in the decisions of government” per the City and County of Honolulu’s Neighborhood Plan of 2008; and

Whereas, the state of Hawaii is grappling with an ongoing homelessness crisis, with a growing number of individuals, including seniors and low-income families, struggling to secure affordable housing; and

Whereas, the Board recognizes that approximately 400 of our district neighbors are unsheltered, and nearly three thousand individuals across the state face similar hardships, making it exceedingly difficult for them to access nutritious food and essential resources (Point In Time Count 2024); and

Whereas, the Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) provides the most affordable housing options available to the community, with tenants paying only 30% of their income for rent, making these units accessible to individuals experiencing homelessness, seniors on fixed incomes, and families with very low incomes; and

Whereas, a significant number of HPHA units remain vacant due to health and safety issues, preventing these units from being occupied by those in urgent need of housing; and

Whereas, these HPHA units represent “low-hanging fruit” that can be swiftly repaired and made available for residents in need, as they are already built and only require necessary repairs to meet health and safety standards; and

Whereas, immediate legislative funding would allow for rapid repairs, making these units available far more quickly than starting new construction or waiting for permits, thus offering an expedited solution to housing the homeless and those at risk of homelessness; and

Whereas, the swift activation of these HPHA units will help meet the housing needs of the most vulnerable residents, including homeless individuals, seniors with limited incomes, and families struggling to make ends meet; and

Whereas, by allocating funding for the repair and activation of these units, the state can maximize the use of existing infrastructure and provide safe, affordable housing options to those in need as quickly as possible; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, that the Makakilo/Kapolei/Honokai Hale Neighborhood Board No. 34 supports the funding for the repair and activation of Hawaii Public Authority Units to address homelessness; and be it

*Resolved*, that we urge the prompt release of these funds to facilitate the repair process and bring these housing units into safe, livable conditions as soon as possible to address the critical housing needs of Hawaii's most vulnerable residents; and be it

*Resolved*, that the board supports the intent of [SB65 \(2025\) Relating to Housing](#); and be it

*Ordered*, that copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Mayor of the City and County of Honolulu, Honolulu Council Members, Area Legislators, and all Neighborhood Boards.

Adopted by the Makakilo/Kapolei/Honokai Hale Neighborhood Board No. 34 at its February 26, 2025 Regular Board Meeting, 8-0-0 (**Aye**: Dudley, Ferreira, Khan, Lidstone, Moon, Singleton, Taala, Paris; **Nay**: None; **Abstain**: None)

Kunia Village Title Holding Corporation  
PO BOX 100  
Kunia, HI 96759  
808-228-0272

## **TESTIMONY BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING**

### **SB 65 SD 1 Relating to Housing**

Chair Evslin and Members of the Committee:

My name is Stephanie Whalen, President of the Kunia Village Title Holding Corporation. I am testifying in strong support of SB65 SD1 Relating to Housing. The Kunia Village is the former Del Monte agricultural worker camp with accessory agricultural buildings. It is owned and operated by Kunia Village Title Holding Corporation, a subsidiary of Hawaii Agriculture Research Center. Its goal is to provide the infrastructure needed for agriculture such as work force housing, community support facilities and value-added opportunities for agricultural businesses.

In 2017 with partners, it was able to renovate 82 units of a total of 135 for agricultural workers; it included renovation of 47 units and new construction of 35 units at a cost of ~\$34M (\$414,600 per unit). Funding is through 2-1% loans of \$3M each from USDA, state and federal tax credits, historic tax credits, energy tax credits, developer and owner loans and a conventional bank loan.

It has been self-financing the repair and renovation of the remaining 53 units- one at a time with a line of credit. These included the oldest units dating back to the 1920s. Finding financing to rehabilitate very old homes is very difficult. This measure would provide that needed funding. Focus has been on improving the existing infrastructure: potable and wastewater which are privately provided.

The village has been able to rehabilitate about 1 unit every year as repairs to infrastructure and normal maintenance occupies much of its resources. Currently 82% of the units are rented to low (35) or extremely low (67) income tenants.

With the infrastructure already in place rehabilitating additional units is certainly more cost effective than new construction if the funds were available.

Agricultural workers are among the lowest paid in the state, which excludes them from conventional rental housing. The Kunia Village has been extremely beneficial to this needy group of Oahu's labor force. However, it needs reasonable access to funding for the rehabilitation of its remaining units. Then these units can be brought to standards more efficiently and economically to provide additional units for our agricultural workers.

Thank you for this opportunity **to strongly support SB65 SD1.**