

EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
KE KE'ENA O KE KIA'ĀINA

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA

House Committee on Finance

Wednesday, March 5, 2025

9:00 a.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308, and Videoconference

In Support

H.B. No. 300, Relating to the State Budget

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

The Office of the Governor supports H.B. No. 300, Relating to the State Budget. We respectfully ask for your favorable consideration of our Executive Budget requests.

On December 16, 2024, Governor Green, M.D., submitted the Executive Budget for the 2025-2027 Fiscal Biennium (FB) to the Legislature. The Administration's total requests include \$10.5 billion in general funds and \$3.4 billion in Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2026, and \$10.5 billion in general funds and \$2.5 billion in CIP for FY 2027. These requests include funding for priority areas to address significant needs in the following areas:

1. Affordable housing, infrastructure, and homelessness

- \$50,000,000 in general funds for each fiscal year to restore and increase general fund support for the development, maintenance, and operation of kauhale;
- \$50,000,000 in general obligation (G.O.) bonds for each fiscal year for cash infusions to the Rental Housing Revolving Fund (RHRF);
- \$75,000,000 in G.O. bonds for each fiscal year for cash infusions to the RHRF for Tier II affordable housing projects;
- \$20,000,000 in G.O. bonds for each fiscal year for infusions to the Dwelling Unit Revolving Fund (DURF);
- \$12,102,000 in G.O. bonds for FY 26 and \$17,898,000 in G.O. bonds for FY 27 for the 99-Year Leasehold Program, Phase 2;
- \$25,000,000 in G.O. bonds for each fiscal year for UH Mānoa, Student Housing Services Improvements;
- \$56,000,000 in G.O. bonds for FY 26 for Mayor Wright and Ka Lei Momi.
- \$5,000,000 in G.O. bonds for FY 26 and \$45,000,000 in G.O. bonds for FY 27 for UH West O'ahu infrastructure, phase 2; and

- \$6,500,000 in G.O. bonds for FY 26 and \$4,500,000 in G.O. bonds for FY 27 for UH West O'ahu to renew, improve, and modernize.

2. Healthcare

- \$15,000,000 in general funds for each fiscal year for the Healthcare Education Loan Repayment Program (HELP);
- \$87,000,000 in each fiscal year in operating subsidy to support rural health care systems; and
- \$44,000,000 in CIP funding for Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation (HHSC) facilities, including Kea'au Outpatient Center and Kona Community Hospital Emergency Department.

3. Hazard mitigation

- \$2,212,000 in general funds for each fiscal year for the Office of the State Fire Marshal to transfer to the Department of Defense;
- \$15,000,000 in general funds for FY 26 for the Department of Transportation to construct fire breaks; and
- 27.00 positions and \$2,200,000 in general funds for each fiscal year to increase the base level of positions at the Hawai'i Emergency Management Agency (HI-EMA) for long-term disaster preparedness.

To support the responsibilities of the Office of the Governor, we respectfully ask for your favorable consideration of the following request:

- Six full-time (6.00 FTE) permanent positions and \$725,000 in general funds for each fiscal year for federal affairs and boards and commissions positions.

The federal landscape has changed drastically within the past few months, with more changes likely on the horizon. Keeping abreast of federal affairs, establishing working relationships with federal agencies, and conducting advocacy on behalf of the State are needed now more than ever. The Office of the Governor requests the addition of 5.00 federal affairs positions, 3.00 to be stationed in Washington, D.C., and 2.00 to be here in Hawai'i. As the State continues to navigate these uncertain times, these federal affairs positions will provide a crucial lifeline through which to facilitate quick responses to and advocacy around federal funding and resources.

The final 1.00 position requested will support the State's more than 170 boards and commissions. Over 1,400 state residents serve on a state board or commission, and the Office of the Governor's Boards and Commissions Team, which is currently comprised of one person,

Testimony of the Office of the Governor

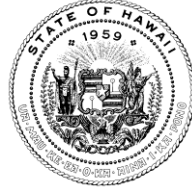
H.B. No. 300

March 5, 2025

Page 3

requires further assistance to ensure each applicant and nominee is thoroughly vetted and supported throughout the application and hearing process.

The Office of the Governor appreciates your consideration of our request. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS

NADINE Y. ANDO
DIRECTOR | KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR | KE KIA'ĀINA
SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA

DEAN I HAZAMA
DEPUTY DIRECTOR | KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

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Testimony of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs

**Before the
House Committee on Finance**

**Wednesday, March 5, 2025
9:00 a.m.**

Conference Room 308 & Via Videoconference

**On the following measure:
H.B. 300, RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET**

Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

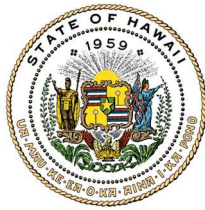
My name is Nadine Ando, and I am the Director of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs' (Department). The Department supports this bill.

The purposes of this bill are to appropriate funds for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027.

We appreciate the Committee's time at our budget briefing in January and we continue to support our submitted budget requests. For the Committee's information, the relevant program appropriations for the Department are on pages 52 to 53 of this measure.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII
**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
AND REHABILITATION**
*Ka 'Oihana Ho'omalua Kalaima
a Ho'oponopono Ola*
1177 Alakea Street
Honolulu, Hawaii'i 96813

TOMMY JOHNSON
DIRECTOR

Melanie Martin
Deputy Director
Administration

Vacant
Deputy Director
Correctional Institutions

Sanna Muñoz
Deputy Director
Rehabilitation Services
and
Programs

No. _____

TESTIMONY ON HOUS BILL 300
RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET.

By
Tommy Johnson, Director
Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

House Committee on Finance
Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Representative Jenna Takenouchi

Wednesday, March 5, 2025; 9:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

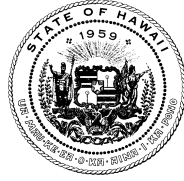
Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) supports House Bill (HB) 300, that appropriates funds for the operating budget and capital improvement program (CIP) for fiscal years (FY) 2025-2026 and 2026-2027.

DCR's FY 2025-2026 additional operating budget request is \$5,274,288 and FY 2026-2027 is \$4,547,494. In total, DCR's request for FY 2025-2026 is 2615.60 permanent positions, 43.00 temporary positions, and \$320,555,674 for all means of financing, and for FY 2026-2027, its request is 2615.60 permanent positions and 43.00 temporary positions, and \$319,828,880 for all means of financing.

Additionally, DCR's CIP request includes an additional \$132.5 million in FY2025-2026, and \$5 million in FY 2026-2027.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 300.



STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII STATE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM
'OIHANA HALE WAIHONA PUKE AUPUNI O KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
OFFICE OF THE STATE LIBRARIAN
44 MERCHANT STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Wednesday, March 5, 2025
9:00 am
Conference Room 308

By Stacey A. Aldrich
State Librarian

H.B. 300 RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET

To: Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Finance

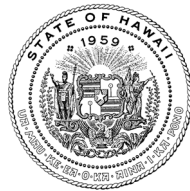
The Hawai'i State Public Library System (HSPLS) **supports H.B. 300**, which appropriates funds for the operating and capital improvement budgets of the Executive Branch for Fiscal Years 2026-2028.

The HSPLS supports HB 300, as it provides the funding necessary to meet the mission and vision of the HSPLS as we support 51 communities statewide on 6 islands.

Specifically, our request for FY2026-2028 includes:

- \$1,200,000 to maintain existing security guard services at approximately 40 public libraries statewide;
- \$484,000 to lease space for temporary libraries due to impending construction at Makawao, Wahiawa, and Pearl City libraries;
- \$31,548 for a new branch manager for the new Waikoloa Public Library. Full-year funding will be requested in the next biennium budget;
- \$500,000 to address deferred repair and maintenance at public libraries and support offices statewide;
- \$500,000 in FY26 and \$250,000 in FY27 to increase efficiency in the circulation of over 3 million physical items statewide;
- \$25m in FY26 and \$25m in FY27 to complete CIP projects already in progress statewide; and
- \$3m in planning and design for a new Kapaa Public Library.

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



JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR

SABRINA NASIR
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
Ka 'Oihana Mālama Mo'ohelu a Kālā
P.O. BOX 150
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT

TESTIMONY BY LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
ON
HOUSE BILL NO. 300

March 5, 2025
9:00 a.m.
Room 308 and Videoconference

RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET

The Department of Budget and Finance strongly supports this bill.

House Bill No. 300 is the FB 2025-27 Executive Biennium Budget bill. It requests appropriations for the Executive biennium operating budget and capital improvement program for FB 2025-27.

The Committee has heard detailed testimony from all of the Executive departments and agencies regarding their biennium budget requests. And departmental staffs have responded to your Committee staff's questions and provided the additional information requested.

The Administration believes that we have sound justification for our biennium budget requests and urge the Committee to pass the bill with minimal amendments.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.



HAWAII HEALTH SYSTEMS

C O R P O R A T I O N

Quality Healthcare For All

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

Wednesday, March 5, 2025

9:00 a.m.

Via Videoconference
Conference Room 308
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

Testimony in Support with Requested Amendments to House Bill 300

RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET.

Adjusts and requests appropriations for fiscal biennium 2025-2027 funding requirements for operations and capital improvement projects of Executive Branch agencies and programs.

Edward N. Chu
President and Chief Executive Officer
Hawaii Health Systems Corporation

On behalf of the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation (HHSC) Corporate Board of Directors, thank you for the opportunity to present testimony in **support with requested amendments to H.B. 300** that adjusts and requests appropriations for fiscal biennium 2025-2027 funding requirements for operations and capital improvement projects of Executive Branch agencies and programs.

Hawaii Health Systems Corporation (HHSC) plays a vital role in the healthcare delivery system for the State of Hawaii. In fiscal year 2024, HHSC's acute discharges for the four HHSC regions were 14,017, which accounts for approximately 13% of all acute care discharges in the State of Hawaii. In fiscal year 2024, HHSC's emergency department visits for the four HHSC regions were 91,459, representing approximately 19% of all emergency department visits statewide.

The impact of HHSC's facilities on the neighbor islands is even more impressive.

- For residents of the County of Hawaii, HHSC's facilities cared for over 70% of all acute care discharges and 81% of all emergency department visits.
- For residents of the County of Kauai, HHSC's facilities cared for approximately 22% of all acute care discharges and 40% of all emergency department visits.

3675 KILAUEA AVENUE • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96816 • PHONE: (808) 733-4020 • FAX: (808) 733-4028

Healthcare Landscape

Healthcare providers operate in a very complex, highly regulated, and rapidly changing environment with constant pressure from payors to deliver higher quality care at a lower cost. Development of health information technology, physician networks, quality improvement, and expertise in healthcare compliance rules and regulations and the revenue cycle is essential for successful hospital operations. Private hospitals have invested substantially in these areas while HHSC, with limited resources, is challenged to keep pace.

Historical Challenges

HHSC's facilities face challenges such as:

- Large percentage of Medicaid/QUEST and uninsured patients. Government payors (i.e. Medicare and MedQUEST) accounted for approximately 74% of HHSC's payor mix for fiscal year 2024.
- Inadequate government and third-party reimbursements for healthcare services.
- Labor costs well above industry norms. HHSC's fringe benefit rate as a state agency is 64% as compared to the average private Hawaii hospital fringe benefit rate of 30%. Given HHSC's salaries expense, that difference alone represents \$90 million of HHSC's need for general fund appropriations.
- Difficulty in attracting and retaining specialized health sector workforce in rural communities due to cost of living and lack of education and training opportunities.
- High cost contracted nursing and other clinical personnel to meet staffing shortages.
- Small-scale operations which are costly to maintain.
- The need for capital investment in new medical technology.
- Aging facilities, with life and safety code issues and deferred maintenance, well beyond the average for similar facilities across the country.
- The impact of national changes to healthcare policy, federal mandates, and federal budget reductions.

Accomplishments

In spite of its many challenges, HHSC continues to provide high quality healthcare to the island communities it serves and is making progress in key areas. The following are some of the major accomplishments over the past year:

- Commitment to Providing Quality Care:
 - Hale Ho'ola Hamakua, Hilo Benioff Medical Center, Leahi Hospital, Maluhia, and Samuel Mahelona Memorial Hospital achieved the highest possible overall five-star rating from Medicare's Nursing Home Compare website.
- Focus on Growing Revenue: Despite the challenges of staffing shortages and increased operational costs, HHSC managed to increase its operating revenues for fiscal year 2024 approximately 11.3% from fiscal year 2023 and 24.3% from fiscal year 2022. Two primary drivers of this revenue growth are:

- Achieving Equity with Hawaii Private Hospitals in Commercial Contract Negotiations: Utilizing the resources of a consulting firm and published payment rates available as a result of federal price transparency legislation, HHSC continued its negotiation of contracts for its commercial lines of business that will bring HHSC's reimbursement rates for healthcare services up to par with those of the private hospitals in the State of Hawaii. The increases in reimbursement rates have contributed to HHSC's revenue growth in fiscal year 2024, and will continue into the future as new contracts are negotiated.
- Focus on Revenue-Generating Services that Improve Services to the Community: In fiscal year 2024, Hilo Benioff Medical Center developed revenue generating services by continuing to expand their specialty care services including dermatology and plastic surgery. A new CT scanner was installed at Samuel Mahelona Memorial Hospital in fiscal year 2024. Not only did it generate new revenue for the facility, it provided residents on the east and north sides of Kauai with CT services that previously did not exist. The closest facility with CT services required residents to drive nearly 30 miles from their home. Samuel Mahelona Memorial Hospital also became a provider of meals to homebound seniors on the island of Kauai for the Meals on Wheels program. With the successful expansion of their meal service delivery, the facility also sells meals to the local community.
- Maximizing Federal Funding Opportunities: HHSC's East Hawaii and Kauai Regions have continued to convert some of their outpatient clinics to rural health clinics to achieve enhanced Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement for those services. As a result of the conversions to rural health clinics, in fiscal year 2024, revenue increased by approximately \$16 million from the previous fiscal year. HHSC worked with the State of Hawaii MedQUEST Division to establish a public hospital uncompensated care pool which provides federal funds to partially subsidize HHSC's losses from providing care to Medicaid, MedQUEST, and uninsured patients. HHSC received over \$66 million in funds in fiscal year 2024 from this program. HHSC has also been successful in working with Hawaii's Congressional delegation to obtain Congressional Directed Spending grants, receiving \$2.5 million for electronic medical records optimization for the HHSC-West Hawaii Region.
- Seeking Philanthropy: HHSC's facilities have always worked with their associated foundations to provide funding for medical equipment and other needed items for the facilities. HHSC facilities have successfully sought private funding through philanthropy. In fiscal year 2024, the HHSC-East Hawaii Region secured an astonishing \$50 million donation to help build out critical areas of care of the existing hospital, including a state-of-the-art family birthing center and intensive care unit. The donation will also support a neurosurgical program and behavioral health services.

HHSC BUDGET REQUEST

HHSC-Regions Fiscal Years 2026-2027 Budget Request (HTH 210 & 212)

Please note that the funding amounts and requests under HTH 212 do not include the Oahu Region of HHSC, as Act 248, SLH 2022, established a new organization code for the HHSC-Oahu Region (HTH 215). As a result, HTH 212 (HHSC-Regions) is now comprised of the HHSC East Hawaii, West Hawaii, and Kauai Regions.

A summary of the amounts appropriated for fiscal years 2024 and 2025, the total funding requested by HHSC-Regions for fiscal years 2026 and 2027, and recommended by the Governor for fiscal years 2026 and 2027 are summarized below.

HTH 210, 212: HHSC REGIONS, CORPORATE OFFICE								
Funding Type	FY 2024	FY 2025	HHSC FY 26 Request	HHSC FY 27 Request	FY 2026 Gov Rec	FY 2027 Gov Rec	FY 2026 Gov Dec	FY 2027 Gov Dec
General Fund Appropriations for Operations (A Funds)	160,286,303	160,286,303	216,537,303	199,816,303	151,363,303	151,363,303	151,363,303	151,363,303
CIP APPROPRIATIONS								
General Obligation Bonds	25,947,000	31,783,000	53,944,000	58,259,000	38,000,000	29,300,000	39,339,000	41,209,000
General Funds	64,300,000	15,500,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL CIP APPROPRIATIONS	90,247,000	47,283,000	78,583,000	58,259,000	38,000,000	29,300,000	39,339,000	41,209,000

For context, the HTH212 percentage of general fund appropriation received as compared to Total Expenditures (Operating Expenses and Non-Operating Expenses) was approximately 22% for fiscal year 2024. The HTH212 requested level of general fund appropriations for fiscal years 2026 and 2027, represent approximately 24% and 22%, respectively, of HTH212’s projected Total Expenditures, which is remarkable given the increases in costs that have occurred since that time.

The amount of HHSC’s request appears larger than it would normally be because the ARPA funds and general fund appropriations HHSC received in fiscal years 2022 and 2023 and additional general fund appropriations in fiscal year 2025 were marked as nonrecurring. These nonrecurring amounts total approximately \$76 million that was reduced from HHSC’s fiscal year 2024 and 2025 funding amounts resulting in a base is that is below this year’s expenditures. The justifications for HHSC’s requests are shown below:

	HTH212	
	FY 26	FY 27
Base Budget per B&F	84,047,903	84,047,903
Justification for Additional Funding Requests:		
Restoration of ARPA Funds Provided to Maui Health System in FY 23	8,923,000	8,923,000
Restoration of ARPA (V Funds) Provided in FY 22 and FY 23	32,315,400	32,315,400
Restoration of Additional General Fund (A Fund) Appropriations provided in FY 25	35,000,000	35,000,000
Loss of Enhanced Uncompensated Care Revenue	938,000	-
Unfunded Collective Bargaining Raises from Prior Year FY 25	12,415,000	12,415,000
Unfunded Fringe Benefit Rate Increases from Prior Year FY 25	31,653,000	31,653,000
IT Infrastructure	13,230,000	2,282,000
Net Regional Initiatives less Inflation	(1,985,000)	(6,820,000)
Total Additional Funding Requests	<u>132,489,400</u>	<u>115,768,400</u>
Total General Fund Appropriations Requested	<u>216,537,303</u>	<u>199,816,303</u>

Details for the loss of supplemental pandemic related funding are as follows: First, HHSC received Federal Provider Relief Fund grants totaling approximately \$63.5 million from fiscal year 2020 through fiscal year 2022 that provided HHSC with the working capital needed to lower its general fund appropriation needs in fiscal years 2022 and 2023. In addition, HHSC received \$19.8 million in SBA Paycheck Protection Program loans which also lowered the need for HHSC to receive general fund appropriations in fiscal years 2022 and 2023. A third factor are the changes in the DHS uncompensated care payments of \$19.2 million to HHSC was a result of the federal Coronavirus state of emergency.

These federal funds helped to finance the State mandated increases in fringe benefit rates and prior unfunded collective bargaining raises during fiscal years 2022 and 2023. Together, federal funds received provided approximately \$102 million in funding that would otherwise have to come out of general fund appropriations. These federal funds do not even address the increase in costs associated with the unfunded mandates such as healthcare inflation costs, collective bargaining pay and fringe benefit rate increases for fiscal years 2024-2027.

In November 2025, the East Hawaii region is implementing a new electronic medical record (EMR) system that will meet the needs of its providers and staff, providing a platform with enhanced workflows, functionality, and the ability to collaborate with other hospitals within Hawaii. The \$13.2 million in fiscal year 2026 and \$2.3 million in fiscal year 2027 for information technology (IT) infrastructure costs represent the resource costs needed to standup the system build and support on an ongoing basis. There are other HHSC regions exploring joining the region on the EMR system at a future date.

Oahu Region Fiscal Years 2026-2027 Budget Request (HTH 215)

A summary of the amounts appropriated for fiscal years 2024 and 2025, the total funding requested by HHSC-Oahu Region for fiscal years 2026 and 2027, and recommended by the Governor for fiscal years 2026 and 2027 are summarized below.

HTH 215: OAHU REGION								
Funding Type	FY 2024	FY 2025	Oahu Region FY 26 Request	Oahu Region FY 27 Request	FY 2026 Gov Rec	FY 2027 Gov Rec	FY 2026 Gov Dec	FY 2027 Gov Dec
General Fund Appropriations for Operations (A Funds)	20,189,000	23,372,000	8,000,000	14,000,000	8,000,000	14,000,000	8,000,000	14,000,000
CIP APPROPRIATIONS								
General Obligation Bonds	2,000,000	500,000	5,600,000	5,110,000	5,600,000	5,110,000	5,600,000	5,110,000
General Funds	3,000,000	3,000,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL CIP APPROPRIATIONS	5,000,000	3,500,000	9,700,000	5,110,000	5,600,000	5,110,000	5,600,000	5,110,000

The Governor’s recommendation includes the same amounts as the HHSC-Oahu Region’s funding requests.

Kahuku Medical Center Fiscal Years 2026-2027 Budget Request (HTH 211)

A summary of the amounts appropriated for fiscal years 2024 and 2025, the total funding requested by Kahuku Medical Center for fiscal years 2026 and 2027, and recommended by the Governor for fiscal years 2026 and 2027 are summarized below.

HTH 211: KAHUKU MEDICAL CENTER								
Funding Type	FY 2024	FY 2025	KMC FY 26 Request	KMC FY 27 Request	FY 2026 Gov Rec	FY 2027 Gov Rec	FY 2026 Gov Dec	FY 2027 Gov Dec
General Fund Appropriations for Operations (A Funds)	1,800,000	2,032,500	4,422,500	3,932,155	2,157,500	2,032,500	2,157,500	2,032,500
CIP APPROPRIATIONS								
General Obligation Bonds	-	-	13,135,000	36,000,000	5,800,000	5,000,000	5,800,000	5,000,000
General Funds	1,000,000	5,000,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL CIP APPROPRIATIONS	1,000,000	5,000,000	10,000,000	36,000,000	5,800,000	5,000,000	5,800,000	5,000,000

Kahuku Medical Center is requesting approval of its full funding requests and will be submitting their testimony to that effect.

This testimony addresses only the amounts that would go to HTH 210, HTH 211, HTH 212, and HTH 215. We expect Maui Health System (HTH 214) will provide their own testimony in support of the amounts appropriated for those entities in this bill.

CONCLUSION

Despite our progress in financial and operational performance as indicated under “Accomplishments” above, HHSC is unable to keep up with collective bargaining pay increases and future mandated increases in the fringe rate for pension and retiree health insurance costs (OPEB). As documented in various media publications, access to high-

quality healthcare services in Hawaii's rural communities is a growing need, and HHSC is uniquely positioned to meet the State of Hawaii's constitutional obligation to ensure that those communities receive the healthcare services they deserve as citizens of the State of Hawaii.

As a result, HHSC is respectfully requesting approval of its full funding request at a total funding level of \$216,537,303 in fiscal year 2026 and \$199,816,303 in fiscal year 2027.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure **in support with requested amendments.**



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
KA 'OIHANA HO'ONA'AUAO
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

Date: 03/05/2025

Time: 09:00 AM

Location: 308 VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE

Committee: House Finance

Department: Education

Person Testifying: Keith T. Hayashi, Superintendent of Education

Bill Title: HB 0300 RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET.

Purpose of Bill: Appropriates funds for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027.

Department's Position:

The Hawai'i State Department of Education (Department) supports HB 300 with comments.

With your assistance, we can keep the momentum moving forward for public education and our students to prepare them to be globally competitive, locally committed.

The budget as proposed includes increases to negotiated salaries (collective bargaining) for school employees, supports priority initiatives that provide services to schools – such as summer learning, Hawaiian education, and middle school after-school programs – and addresses the impact of inflation on centralized services, including school utilities and school service contacts.

In addition, the Department respectfully requests the Committee's support for an emerging issue with our school food services budget.

Operating Budget:

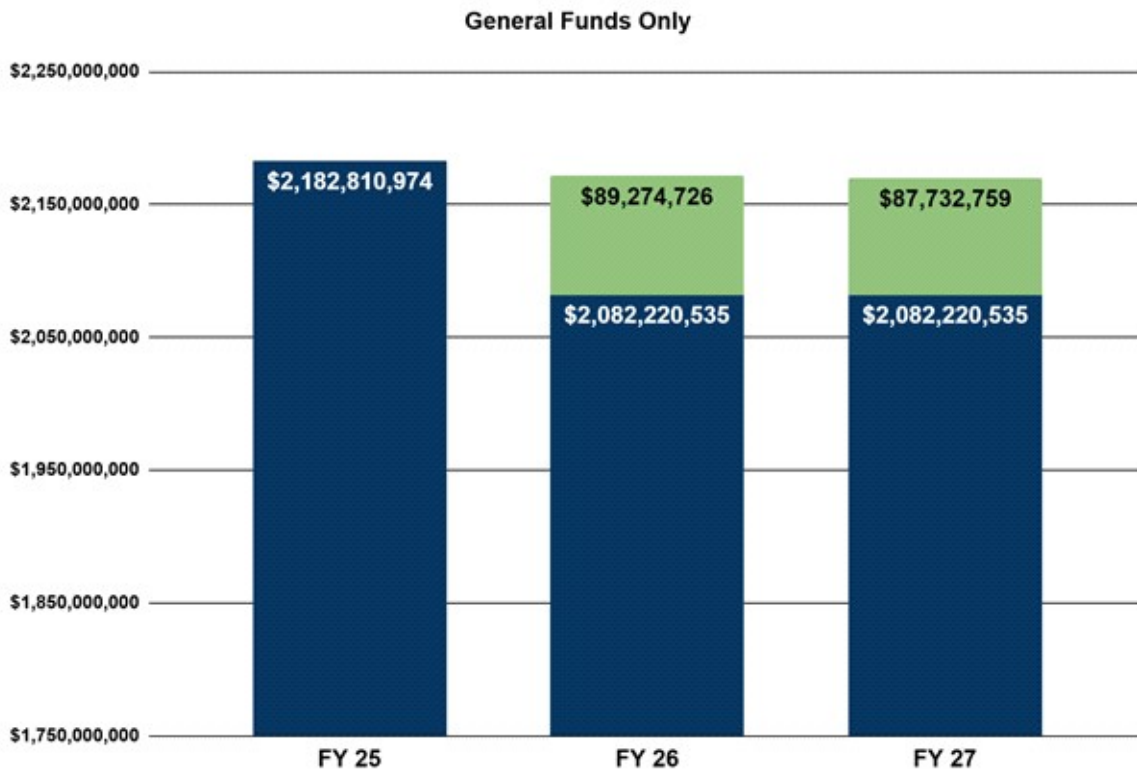
The biennium budget presents opportunities to address the myriad challenges facing the Department and the urgent needs of our schools and students. These challenges include inflationary pressures on core operating expenses, hiring and retaining a highly-qualified workforce, overcoming the lasting impacts of the pandemic, and alarming federal uncertainty.

As such, our proposed budget:

1. Aligns with our Strategic Plan goals to ensure investments contribute to student success;

2. Incorporates fiscal prudence as communicated by lawmakers and Executive Branch budget instructions; and
3. Strives to provide predictable, reliable, and adequate funding for our public schools statewide.

In comparison to the current general fund budget for Fiscal Year (FY) 25, the Department proposed a “flat” budget for FY 26 and FY 27. The following chart provides a high-level perspective, which excludes the amounts for previously approved collective bargaining agreements.



The first bar (all blue) shows the Department’s FY 25 general fund operating budget of \$2.18 billion and includes \$100.59 million in funding that will not be available in FY 26 and FY 27.

The second and third bars show the FY 26 and FY 27 general fund base appropriations (in blue) of about \$2.08 billion plus the Executive Budget requests of \$89.27 million in FY 26 and \$87.73 million in FY 27 (in green) for a total of \$2.17 billion and \$2.16 billion respectively. The operating budget as proposed, excluding collective bargaining amounts, decreases by \$11.32 million in FY 26 and \$12.86 million in FY 27 for a “flat” budget.

The Department grouped its requests into categories or “buckets” shown in the following table.

Request Category	Category Description	FY 26 \$ Amount (% of total)	FY 27 \$ Amount (% of total)
Non-recurring	Recurring expenses funded in	\$65,486,370	\$65,186,370

Appropriation Reappraisal	FY 25 only, but needed in FY 26 & FY 27	(73.4%)	(74.3%)
High Impact Strategic Priorities	Priorities to meet the Department's Strategic Plan goals	\$15,783,868 (17.7%)	\$15,201,140 (17.3%)
Inflation	Cost increases to maintain current programs & services	\$6,323,793 (7.1%)	\$6,403,733 (7.3%)
Other Operating Needs	Additional requests for various operating needs	\$5,814,455 (6.5%)	\$7,608,043 (8.7%)
B&F Adjustment	Adjustments included by the Department of Budget & Finance	\$1,740,000 (1.9%)	\$1,740,000 (2.0%)
Realignment (Reduction)	Reductions identified through review of operating expenses	-\$5,873,760 (-6.6%)	-\$8,406,527 (-9.6%)
Total General Fund Request		\$89,274,726 (100.0%)	\$87,732,759 (100.0%)

The largest single category is for “Non-recurring Appropriation Reappraisal”, making up nearly 75% of the Department’s general fund budget requests. The Department is seeking predictable, reliable, and adequate funding for these recurring expenses.

To avert the projected deficit of the school food services program, the Department humbly requests that the Committee include an additional \$20 million for FY 26 and \$24 million for FY 27.

Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) Budget:

The Department appreciates and supports HB 300 and is hopeful that if revenues allow, additional CIP funding in the amounts approved by the Hawai'i State Board of Education can be included.

The Department’s CIP request is significant because the Department manages over 21.5 million square feet of facilities across 266 sites statewide. Prior approaches to the implementation of the Department’s CIP have not been effective in managing school facilities and meeting the needs of students across all islands. As such, the Department is returning to a risk-based and proactive approach to address facilities and infrastructure needs.

Much of our CIP budget is organized into categories or “buckets” (except for two line items for specific schools). For each bucket, we have developed a prioritized list of school projects. These lump-sum buckets allow the Department to manage and execute projects with greater efficiency to meet the needs of schools and students.

To address concerns regarding the Department’s ability to implement CIP projects, the Department returned to a risk-based approach to prioritize and manage CIP projects. This CIP budget is the Department’s first step toward a more fiscally responsible, targeted and sustainable strategy to distinguish between “necessities” and “wants” to address the infrastructure needs of an evolving and dynamic public education system.

The table below summarizes the Department’s CIP budget proposal. The means of financing (i.e. source of funds) is general obligation bond funds unless otherwise noted.

CIP Categories (Buckets)	Description	FY 26 \$ Amount	FY 27 \$ Amount
Health & Safety	Replace fire alarms, replace and/or modernize elevators, upgrade electrical infrastructure, address traffic safety and parking issues, mitigate flood risks, install security fencing, etc.	\$23,000,000	\$0
Deferred Maintenance Projects	Major Repair and Maintenance (R&M) to replace and improve infrastructure and/or facilities deemed critical and in need of repairs or replacements to prolong its useful life.	\$20,000,000	\$0
Compliance	Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) improvements for public accommodations, provide program access for public and student accommodations, corrective actions for Career and Technical Education audits, gender equity improvements for girls' athletics, and cesspool conversions per the Environmental Protection Agency.	\$20,000,000	\$0
Project Completion	Construction management services and additional contingencies to ensure that construction milestones, inspections, and requests for information for change orders are coordinated, processed, and completed. Also includes funding to furnish new buildings and facilities.	\$20,000,000	\$0
Temporary Facilities	Relocation of students and/or staff displaced during construction, or to address capacity issues until a new facility can be assessed. Temporary facilities may include portable classrooms, trailers, or modular structures.	\$6,000,000	\$0
Planning, Design and Land Acquisition	To address potential land acquisition, site studies, master planning, and a new updated statewide facility assessment management plan. The last assessment was completed in 2017-2018.	\$1,000,000	\$0
Capacity	New classroom buildings for schools where current or projected enrollment exceeds capacity.	\$3,000,000	\$0
Support Facilities	New facilities or expansions for	\$2,000,000	\$0

	administration, libraries, cafeterias, physical education/athletics, state, and district offices.		
Instructional	Facility upgrades and/or renovations for special education and the medically fragile, band rooms, science, technology, engineering, arts, math, and career and technical education spaces.	\$2,000,000	\$0
Telecommunication Infrastructure	Improvements or replacements of schools' bell and paging systems.	\$3,000,000	\$0
Federal Grants (Department Share)	The Department's 20% matching funds for the United States Department of Defense, Office of Local Defense Community Cooperation's Public Schools on Military Installations (PSMI) grant to renovate, expand, or replace eight Department schools.	\$60,000,000	\$30,000,000
Federal Grants (Federal Match)	Federal matching funds (Means of Financing is Other Federal Funds)	\$240,000,000	\$120,000,000
West Maui Elementary School (Lahaina Elementary School)	To replace the King Kamehameha III Elementary School that was destroyed in the August 2023 wildfires.	\$131,000,000	\$0
Honouliuli Middle School	Signalization and pedestrian improvements to meet the City and County of Honolulu Department of Transportation Services' requirements after completion of the final phase of the project.	\$3,000,000	\$0
Total CIP Request		\$534,000,000	\$150,000,000

Conclusion:

The Department appreciates the Legislature's long standing support for, and investment in, public education and is hopeful that the Committee can accommodate our budget requests, including the latest request for school food services.

The State's commitment to public education is enshrined in the State Constitution, Article X, Section 1: "The State shall provide for the establishment, support and control of a statewide system of public schools"

The Reinventing Education Act of 2004 recognized that many responsibilities are laid upon education.

“. . . ultimately education must do no less than advance the endowment of human culture itself, so

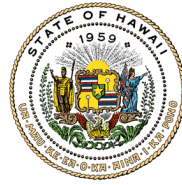
that each succeeding generation finds itself further along the road towards peace, social justice, and environmental sustainability in a society guided by creativity, compassion, and curiosity.”

The mission of the Department of Education is to develop the academic achievement, character development, and social-emotional well-being of our students. We are deeply committed to working alongside our families, communities, and stakeholders to ensure that every student can achieve their aspirations — from early learning to post-secondary education and citizenship. This mission is at the heart of every decision we make and is the foundation of our proposed budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for your continued support of public education.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
Governor

SYLVIA LUKE
Lt. Governor



SHARON HURD
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

DEAN M. MATSUKAWA
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawai'i
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
KA 'OIHANA MAHI'AI
1428 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96814-2512
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

**TESTIMONY OF SHARON HURD
CHAIRPERSON, BOARD OF AGRICULTURE**

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

**MARCH 5, 2025
9:00 A.M.**

**HOUSE BILL NO. 300
RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET**

Chairperson Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 300. This bill appropriates funds for the operating and capital improvement budget for the Fiscal Biennium 25-27. The Department supports this bill.

We respectfully request that budget items that are in the Executive Budget as well as adjustments proposed in Governor's Message No. 1 be considered for this bill. Operating requests include funds for the continued support of the personnel and programs appropriated in Act 231, SLH 2024 for biosecurity, funds for aquaculture research and the farm to foodbank program.

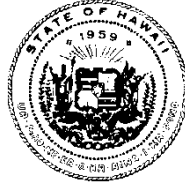
Capital improvements program requests includes funds for various irrigation improvements statewide, major repairs to department facilities, and various projects to improve agricultural infrastructure including the development of the Kunia Agricultural Park.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR



DEAN MINAKAMI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM
HAWAII HOUSING FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
677 QUEEN STREET, SUITE 300
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
FAX: (808) 587-0600

Statement of
DEAN MINAKAMI
Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation
Before the

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

March 05, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Room 308

In consideration of
H.B. 300
RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET.

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the Committee.

HHFDC **supports** HB 300, which appropriates funds for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027.

HHFDC requests the committee's consideration of the following for the biennium (unless otherwise noted):

\$40,000,000 (MOF: C) for BED 160 Dwelling Unit Revolving Fund Infusion, Statewide

The Dwelling Unit Revolving Fund (DURF) may be used for the acquisition of real property; development and construction of residential, commercial, and industrial properties; interim and permanent loans to developers; development of regional infrastructure; and all things necessary to carry out the purposes of HHFDC's Housing Development Program, including administrative expenses.

The \$40,000,000 infusion will provide additional financing resources to support the development of workforce and affordable housing statewide, as well as infrastructure improvements, including but not limited to, interim loans for affordable housing projects, infrastructure improvements in Transient-Oriented Development areas that support affordable housing projects, rehabilitating infrastructure in the Villages of Kapolei for dedication to the City, development of a new potable water system for the Waiahole

Valley community, continued development of the Leialii (Maui) master planned community, and planning and development of the Iwilei Master Plan.

This infusion also includes rehabilitating the Front Street Apartments and other infrastructure needs on Maui.

\$100,000,000 (MOF: C) for BED 160 Cash Infusion for Rental Housing Revolving Fund, Statewide

The Rental Housing Revolving Fund (RHRF) provides loans or grants for development, pre-development, construction, acquisition, preservation, and substantial rehabilitation of rental housing units. The state has a severe shortage of housing, and the \$100 million infusion is needed to continue to provide gap financing for the development of affordable rental housing projects. The need for RHRF is based on the demand exhibited during our 2025 (FY2026) financing application round. There were 31 applications for RHRF financing in the current round for a total requested amount of \$1.19 billion. The trends experienced in the current economic environment of rising interest rates in the private capital market, rising cost of labor, construction materials, and insurance have increased the need for additional financing as the developer equity gap increases.

\$150,000,000 (MOF: C) for BED 160 Cash Infusion for Tier II Rental Housing Revolving Fund, Statewide

RHRF Tier II provides financing for workforce rental projects targeting households earning between 60% and 140% of the AMI. This population includes households that earn too much to qualify for Low-Income Housing Tax Credit projects but not enough to buy their own homes. This group represents our workforce, such as teachers, firefighters, and nurses, and affordable housing for this group has been identified as a priority for the State. This group has been identified as the largest segment leaving Hawaii due to the lack of affordable housing. The \$150 million is critical to address the housing needs of this population as quickly as possible.

BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS:

HHFDC requests ceiling increases by \$356,200 for FY 2026 and \$185,200 for FY 2027 for Other Current Expenses (OCE), with revolving funds as the means of financing (MOF W):

\$73,600 for FY 2026 and \$73,600 for FY 2027 for Maui Travel

As the lead agency for the housing recovery support function on Maui, HHFDC staff will be required to take frequent trips to Maui for meetings with Maui officials, site visits, and planning and development meetings.

\$231,000 for FY 2026 and \$60,000 in FY 2027 for Financing Application Software

The Housing Finance branch of HHFDC reviews applications from developers and facilitates funding and tax credit awards to affordable housing projects. This software would reduce staff's time spent to input, score, and analyze data and produce reports

that are currently done manually. This may make it possible to hold additional funding application rounds if funds and/or resources are available.

The \$171,000 ceiling increase in FY 2026 is for non-recurring financing application software implementation costs including loading all the historical data into the software program. The \$60,000 recurring cost for FY2027 is for maintenance, support, and updates of the software application.

\$21,600 for FY 2026 and \$21,600 for FY 2027 for Artificial Intelligence Licenses

Hawaii is in a housing shortage crisis along with an ever-increasing workload, HHFDC is looking to implement cutting-edge artificial intelligence (AI) technology to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of staff's time and productivity. Copilot licenses for Microsoft 365 will help boost employee productivity by automating redundant tasks, assisting with document and email drafting, and providing quick insights using natural language queries (GPT). Its integration with Microsoft SharePoint can enhance collaboration by making it easier to find relevant documents, track changes, and maintain version control across HHFDC's branches and sections. It will also help to build up HHFDC's model to create a learning, query-able AI that is specific to HHFDC's core functions; Copilot can generate summaries of SharePoint documents, facilitate project updates, and ensure that everyone is aligned.

\$30,000 for FY 2026 and \$30,000 for FY 2027 for Staff Training

It is essential for HHFDC staff to attend training workshops and conferences for new programs and best practices, to stay abreast with updates on housing programs (i.e., funding opportunities, Internal Revenue tax codes, Fair Housing), and an important aspect for employee retention and succession planning.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR

JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA
DBEDT DIRECTOR

DANE K. WICKER
DBEDT DEPUTY DIRECTOR



BRENNON T. MORIOKA
CHAIR, STADIUM AUTHORITY

CHRIS J. SADAYASU
INTERIM STADIUM MANAGER

An Agency of the State of Hawaii

Statement of
CHRIS J. SADAYASU
Interim Stadium Manager
Stadium Authority
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Wednesday, March 5, 2025
9:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

In consideration of
H.B. 300
RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET.

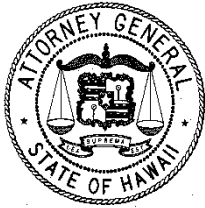
Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi and Members of the Committee on Finance.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **strong support** of House Bill 300, which provides the ceiling increase for the Stadium Development Special Fund (SDSF) for FY2026 to allow Stadium Authority (BED180/SA) to allot and expend the \$49.5M funds appropriated in Act 248, Session Laws of Hawaii 2022 and by proviso 17.3 authorized the deposit of \$49.5M appropriation into the SDSF.

The ceiling increase will provide SA with a great amount of flexibility to utilize these funds to support the New Aloha Stadium Entertainment District (NASED) project.

Additionally, the increase in SDSF ceiling will allow SA to contribute to the NASED project's long-term sustainability, ensuring its continued success and positive impact on the Hawai'i's communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 300.



**TESTIMONY OF
THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
KA 'OIHANA O KA LOIO KUHINA
THIRTY-THIRD LEGISLATURE, 2025**

ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

H.B. NO. 300, RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET.

BEFORE THE:

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

DATE: Wednesday, March 5, 2025 **TIME:** 9:00 a.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 308

TESTIFIER(S): Anne E. Lopez, Attorney General, or
Matthew S. Dvonch, First Deputy Attorney General

Chair Yamashita and Members of the Committee:

The Department of the Attorney General (Department) strongly supports this bill, specifically, those appropriations within the budget that provide funding for the continued operations of the Department for fiscal biennium 2025-2027.

Included in the Department's budget for fiscal years 2026 and 2027 are critical requests to convert the funding of four currently-staffed Investigator positions in the Investigations Division's Sex Offender Registration Unit from federal funds to general funds; salary adjustments for deputy attorneys general to recruit and retain talented attorneys and maintain the Department's competitive position against similar public and private sector employers; and an increase to the Department's line-item budget for litigation expenses given the continuing trend of rising litigation costs. The Department's budget also includes a number of housekeeping adjustments, such as trade-off/transfers and increased fringe costs for non-general funded programs to better align the Department's budget with its programmatic and organizational structure.

Finally, the Department's budget includes a request to relocate and house the physical servers of the Hawai'i Criminal Justice Data Center due to the decommissioning of the current State-operated Kalanimoku location, as well as requests from the administratively attached Hawai'i Correctional System Oversight Commission (HCSOC). For the HCSOC's budget requests, the Department defers to the testimony of the HCSOC, which is submitted independently from the Department.

We thank the Committee for allowing the Department to provide testimony and respectfully ask the Committee to pass this bill with the requested appropriations.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT GOVERNOR



Hawaii Green Infrastructure Authority

An Agency of the State of Hawaii

JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA
CHAIR

GWEN S YAMAMOTO LAU
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Testimony of
Gwen Yamamoto Lau
Executive Director
Hawaii Green Infrastructure Authority
before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Wednesday, March 5, 2025
9:00 A.M.
State Capitol, Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

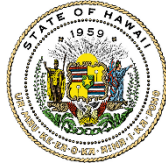
in consideration of
HOUSE BILL NO. 300
RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **strong support** of House Bill 300, which provides the Hawaii Green Infrastructure Authority (“HGIA”) (BED 138) the ability to continue administering its financing programs for underserved ratepayers, as well as bridge the access to capital gap for nonprofits, small businesses and commercial property owners statewide.

In addition to the authority’s lending ceiling, bond ceiling and operating budget for the upcoming fiscal year, we are also requesting add the Investment Fund Manager position authorized by Act 40, SLH 2024 into HGIA’s base budget.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of HB 300.



STATE OF HAWAII
Early Learning Board
2759 South King Street, Room C6
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96826

March 3, 2025

To: Representative Yamashita, Chair
Representative Takenouchi, Vice-chair
House Finance Committee

From: Elaine Yamashita, Chair
Early Learning Board

Re: HB 300 support

Aloha, Honorable Chair Yamashita, Vice-chair Takenouchi, and members of the House Finance committee:

The Early Learning Board (ELB) formulates statewide policy relating to early learning, as well as directing the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL).

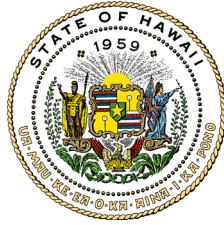
The Early Learning Board supports HB 300 which includes funding for 50 additional EOEL Pre-kindergarten classrooms across the state for the next biennium. This is a priority for the Early Learning Board.

The board also approved the EOEL request for funding for four additional family-child interaction learning (FCIL) programs. This did not make it into HB 300. However, the board is hopeful that funds permitting, this request could be accommodated. FCIL programs are an important option for families. They provide age-appropriate activities for keiki and information on promoting optimal child development for the adult caregiver, strengthening families and their support systems in the process.

Mahalo for your consideration of this request.

Respectfully,

Elaine Yamashita
Early Learning Board Chair
elb@eoel.hawaii.gov



JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII
KE KIA'ĀINA O KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII

KENNETH FINK, MD, MGA, MPH
DIRECTOR OF HEALTH
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON AGING**
NO. 1 CAPITOL DISTRICT
250 SOUTH HOTEL STREET, SUITE 406
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-2831

CAROLINE CADIRAO
DIRECTOR
Executive Office on Aging

Telephone
(808) 586-0100

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(808) 586-0185

**Testimony in SUPPORT of HB300
RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET**

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
REP. KYLE T. YAMASHITA, CHAIR
REP. JENNA TAKENOUCI, VICE CHAIR

Testimony of Caroline Cadirao
Director, Executive Office on Aging
Attached Agency to the Department of Health

Hearing: Wednesday, March 5, 2025, 9:00 A.M., Conference Room 308

- 1 **EOA Position:** The Executive Office on Aging (EOA), an attached agency to the Department of
2 Health (DOH) **strongly supports HB300**, which outlines EOA's operating budget as outlined in
3 the Program Appropriations, HTH 904, Page 36 Item No. 25.
- 4 **Fiscal Implications:** Appropriates funds for the EOA's operating budget for fiscal year 2025-
5 2026 and for fiscal year 2026-2027.
- 6 **Purpose and Justification:** EOA's operating budget includes a supplemental budget request for
7 three-line items:
- 8 1) Establish three (3) full-time permanent staff positions within the State Health Insurance
9 Assistance Program (SHIP); 2) Transfer three (3) new full-time civil service positions from
10 temporary to permanent within the Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) program; and 3) Convert one
11 new full-time civil service position from temporary to permanent.

1 **1) Establish three (3) full-time permanent staff positions (Program Specialist V,**
2 **Program Specialist IV, and Program Specialist III) within the State Health**
3 **Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP);**

4 The additional three (3) FTEs, permanent staff are needed to expand SHIP and increase
5 access to enrollment assistance for programs that can offset medical and prescription drug
6 costs such as premiums, deductibles, copayments, coinsurance, or lifetime late enrollment
7 penalties that are deducted directly from social security benefits. Without these
8 additional staff positions, less Medicare beneficiaries will be reached through education,
9 outreach and one to one Medicare counseling.

10 **2) Transfer three (3) new full-time civil service positions from temporary to permanent**
11 **positions (Program Specialist V, Program Specialist IV, and Program Specialist III)**
12 **within the Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP);**

13 Act 250, passed in the 2023 legislative session, established three (3) full-time staff
14 positions for the Hawai'i SMP to protect kūpuna from frauds and scams. Converting
15 these three (3) temporary, civil service positions to permanent, will ensure EOA can
16 provide timely, reliable, and accurate services. SMP provides a statewide toll-free
17 helpline, provides 1:1 counseling and referrals and conducts community outreach to
18 underserved groups and communities to expand access and assistance for Medicare,
19 Medicaid, and other health related scams, fraud, or abuse. If the positions are not
20 converted and funded in subsequent years, EOA will be unable to maintain the education,
21 outreach and counseling. The number of older adults who will be victimized will rise
22 proportionately with the growing aging population in Hawai'i.

1 3) **Convert the Long-Term Care Planner position from temporary to permanent.**

2 ACT 159, passed in the 2024 legislative session, provides for a Long-Term Care Planner
3 (LTC) planner within the EOA to address the serious nature of LTC in Hawai‘i. This ACT
4 will ensure our kupuna have the opportunity for optimal health and well-being through a
5 comprehensive Long-Term Care plan for Hawai‘i. Converting the 1.0 FTE position from
6 temporary to permanent, will enable EOA to move the LTC plan forward, increasing
7 awareness for a sustainable system of care throughout Hawai‘i. Without a dedicated staff
8 person to support the planning, policy, and advocacy to move forward the strategies and
9 objectives, we will be delayed in addressing this critical issue for the community.

10 Additionally, this can impact the costs of care and a reduction in options for home and
11 community-based services.

12 We appreciate your consideration of this bill.

13 **Recommendation:** EOA strongly supports this measure and respectfully requests your support
14 of EOA’s operating budget.

15 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Finance
March 5, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.

By

Kalbert K. Young

Vice President for Budget and Finance/Chief Financial Officer
University of Hawai'i System

HB 300 – RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony today. The University of Hawai'i (UH) **supports** HB 300, Relating to the State Budget. This bill appropriates funds for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027.

Many departments in state government are going to be financially impacted given projected reductions in federal funding support for a number of programs and personnel. The UH is looking at a number of programs that are already at risk. Many of them represent reductions in public services to our students, organizations, and our broader state community through research and other grant support. Given the dynamic situation, the UH's budget request does not include any funding request in these shortfall areas.

The following table provides the items included in UH's portion of the Governor's operating budget requested, as provided in his December submittal and as amended by Governor's Message No. 4 (GM4).

Campus	Item	FY26 Pos	FY26 \$\$\$	FY27 Pos	FY27 \$\$\$	MOF
Mānoa	Make Mānoa Athletics subsidy permanent		3,200,000		3,200,000	A
Mānoa	Convert Athletics Positions and Additional Support	4.00	320,000	4.00	320,000	A
Mānoa	Convert Athletics Positions and Additional Support	-	-	-	-	B
Mānoa	HIMB Positions from Act 181/23	3.00	246,118	3.00	246,118	A

Campus	Item	FY26 Pos	FY26 \$\$\$	FY27 Pos	FY27 \$\$\$	MOF
Mānoa	UHM-UHWO Nursing Collaboration Phase III	4.00	447,936	4.00	447,936	A
Mānoa	Pamantasan Council from Act 64/23	1.00	85,500	1.00	85,500	A
Mānoa	Financial Aid Counselors	6.00	199,440	6.00	398,880	A
JABSOM	Debt service for Kaka'ako Health & Wellness Campus		1,108,019		1,533,463	A
JABSOM	Ceiling Increase for Special Fund Recharge Center and Conference/Workshops		955,000		955,000	B
Cancer Center	Debt service and operational costs		9,476,352		9,441,861	A
Hilo	Make Hilo Athletics subsidy permanent		500,000		500,000	A
Hilo	Full Year funding for BS in Education Studies and Kahuawaiola Indigenous Teacher Education		142,500		142,500	A
Hilo	Increase School of Nursing cohort size	5.00	357,500	5.00	475,000	A
West O'ahu	Pre-Nursing Pathway	2.00	107,776	2.00	215,552	A
West O'ahu	Admissions and Financial Aid	1.00	37,650	1.00	75,300	A
West O'ahu	ACM Facilities & Core Services	2.00	66,888	2.00	133,776	A
Community Colleges	Windward CC Mental Health Tech Certificate of Competence Program from Act 107/24	2.00	210,150	2.00	210,150	A
Community Colleges	Maui College Practical Nursing Bridge Program from Act 74/23		330,000		330,000	A
Community Colleges	Pamantasan Council from Act 64/23	2.00	196,000	2.00	196,000	A
Mānoa	Deletion of Long-Term Vacant Positions	(2.00)		(2.00)		N
System Admin	CTE Grant Ceiling Increase	-	6,000,000	-	6,000,000	N
Mānoa	Pamantasan Council (additional funds)		175,000		175,000	A

Campus	Item	FY26 Pos	FY26 \$\$\$	FY27 Pos	FY27 \$\$\$	MOF
Mānoa	Economic and Policy Research at UHERO	2.00	480,000	2.00	480,000	A
Mānoa	Athletics (additional funds)		12,800,000		12,800,000	A
Hilo	Rat lungworm research		200,000		200,000	A
Hilo	Athletics (additional funds)		300,000		300,000	A
Community Colleges	Pamantasan Council (additional funds)		175,000		175,000	A
System Admin	Peace Program support staff	2.00	150,000	2.00	150,000	A

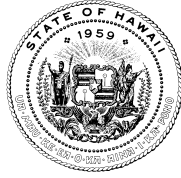
Similarly, UH's portions of the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) portion of the Governor's budget request is presented below. Note that the Means of Financing (MOF) for all of these items is General Obligation (GO) bond financing:

Campus	Project Description	FY26 \$\$\$	FY27 \$\$\$
System/Mānoa	RIM Projects	50,000,000	50,000,000
Mānoa	Student Housing Services Improvements	25,000,000	25,000,000
Mānoa	Holmes Hall	9,000,000	-
Mānoa	Mini Master Plan Phase 3 - Kuykendall Hall	5,000,000	-
Hilo	RIM Projects	15,000,000	15,000,000
UHWO	RIM Projects	6,500,000	4,500,000
CCs	Capital Renewal & Deferred Maintenance and Minor CIP	20,000,000	20,000,000
CCs	Honolulu CC - Technology Renovations, Phase 2	15,000,000	-
	Total	145,500,000	114,500,000

The UH stands ready to work with the Legislature as it deliberates the state budget for the upcoming fiscal biennium. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
STATE OF HAWAII
*Ke Kia'āina o ka Moku'āina 'o
Hawaii*

SYLVIA J. LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR
STATE OF HAWAII
*Ka Hope Kia'āina o ka Moku'āina
'o Hawaii*



KALI WATSON
CHAIRPERSON, HHC
Ka Luna Ho'okele

KATIE L. LAMBERT
DEPUTY TO THE CHAIR
Ka Hope Luna Ho'okele

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS
Ka 'Oihana 'Āina Ho'opulapula Hawaii'i

P. O. BOX 1879
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96805

TESTIMONY OF KALI WATSON, CHAIR
HAWAIIAN HOMES COMMISSION
BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
HEARING ON MARCH 5, 2025 AT 9:00AM IN CR 308

HB 300, RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET

March 5, 2025

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 300, which appropriates funds for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 and includes funding for our two (2) programs, HHL 602 – Planning and Development for Hawaiian Homesteads and HHL 625 – Administration and Operating Support. House Bill 300 includes \$16,832,072 in general funds each year for FY 2026 and FY 2027 to cover the department's existing personnel, administrative and operating costs in HHL 625.

The budget bill also includes requests for \$10 million in general funds, \$4,824,709 in special funds, \$3,740,534 in trust funds, \$7 million in revolving funds, \$24,126,731 in authorization to receive federal funds, and \$20 million in CIP funding for each fiscal year.

The Hawaiian Homes Commission approved the "Sufficient Sums" budget request, which DHHL submitted to the Governor and the Legislature as detailed in our budget testimony that can be reviewed at:

https://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/sessions/session2025/testimony/Info_Testimony_WAM_01-06-25_HHL.pdf. DHHL's obligation to make this request is clear.

We are most appreciative of the support given by the Legislature to the Hawaiian homes program. Thank you for your consideration of our testimony.



Written Statement of
Sandi Kanemori
Interim Executive Director
Hawai'i Technology Development Corporation
before the
House Committee On Finance
Wednesday, March 5, 2025
9:00 AM
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference
In consideration of
HB300
RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET.

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee.

The Hawai'i Technology Development Corporation (HTDC) strongly SUPPORTS HB300, which adjusts and requests appropriations for fiscal biennium 2025-2026 funding requirements for operations and capital improvement projects of Executive Branch agencies and programs.

In addition, this bill also includes allocation of funds for awards through HTDC, to assist businesses in applying for the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Grant Program, and the Manufacturing Assistance Program (MAP). HTDC is dedicated to initiatives that promote economic diversification and sustainable development, while fostering technology advancement and business growth. These efforts ultimately contribute to economic stability for Hawai'i's small to medium-sized businesses.

Small Business Innovation Research Program (HSBIR)

HTDC has been providing Phase I matching grants to Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) awarded companies since 1989 and started awarding Phase II and Phase III matching grants in FY16. A summary of the Phase II/III awards made by the matching grant program is listed below:

	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21/22	FY23	FY24
Appropriation	\$2MM	\$2MM	\$1MM	\$1.5MM	\$1MM		\$1.5MM	\$2MM
# of Applications	11	9	9	12	16		26	33
# of Awards	7	8	5	6	14		20	28
\$\$ Awarded	\$2MM	\$1.9MM	\$900K	\$1.4MM	\$900K		\$1.4MM	\$1.9MM
Federal SBIR \$\$ Match	\$7.9MM	\$10.9MM	\$8.0MM	\$11MM	\$53MM		\$20MM	\$31MM
Estimated New Jobs	17	70	15	135	509		243	335

The data indicates a consistent upward trend in the Federal funding awarded to the industry annually. Federal SBIR funds are highly competitive, with a fixed budget allocated each



year. Consequently, the industry is securing federal funds for Hawai'i that might otherwise be awarded to companies in other states. Each year, the number of qualified applicants exceeds the available funding. Since the Phase II/III program's inception in FY16, no applicant has received the full eligible amount. Over time, this program is expected to produce similar success metrics as the Phase I matching program.

Manufacturing Development Program (MAP)

HTDC has been providing MAP matching grants to manufacturers since FY16. A summary of the awards made by the matching grant program is listed below:

	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21/22	FY23	FY24
Appropriation	\$2MM	\$1MM	\$1MM	\$1MM	\$500K		\$1MM	\$2MM
# of Applications	82	42	51	69	45		86	69
# of Awards	51	25	29	37	18		69	62
\$\$ Awarded	\$2MM	\$932K	\$931K	\$899K	\$486K		\$1MM	\$1.7MM
Company Investment	\$31MM	\$5.5MM	\$13.6MM	\$13.4MM	\$9.0MM		\$25MM	\$95MM
Estimated New Jobs		353	230	465	281		419	895

Every year, there have been more qualified applicants than available funds. The funding awarded to companies provides a partial reimbursement (20%) for equipment upgrades and other eligible expenses. Through our federally funded INNOVATE Hawai'i program, HTDC provides wrap-around support services for the matching grants to help Hawai'i manufacturers become more globally competitive.

Hawai'i manufacturers play an important role in our economy, for food-security, sustainability, resilience initiatives, and is an important driver for innovation. The bill aims to increase workforce productivity and wages by expanding the definition of skilled workforce training as an eligible expense for the MAP Grant program.

HTDC firmly believes that these grant programs play a crucial role in leveraging resources and fostering positive economic development throughout the State of Hawai'i which will lead to job creation, sustainable development, and a more resilient and diverse economy for Hawai'i. Thank you for your consideration of supporting this bill.





STATE OF HAWAII
STATE COUNCIL
ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES
PRINCESS VICTORIA KAMĀMALU BUILDING
1010 RICHARDS STREET, Room 122
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
TELEPHONE: (808) 586-8100 FAX: (808) 586-7543

March 5, 2025

The Honorable Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
House Committee on Finance
The Thirty-Third Legislature
State Capitol
State of Hawai'i
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Representative Yamashita, and Committee members:

SUBJECT: HB 300 RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET

The Hawaii State Council on Developmental Disabilities **supports HB300**, which Appropriates funds for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027. Specifically,

HTH 905- Developmental Disabilities Council
Page 417, Item No

HTH905	FY2026	FY2027
	2.50 *	2.50 *
	HTH 262,940 A	246,563 A
	5.00 *	5.00 *
	HTH 527,570 N	527,570 N

This appropriation amount in HB300 provides the Council with current staffing and fiscal resources in order to implement 2022-2026 State Plan activities in the areas of community supports; health and children and youth; public awareness, education and training; transition and employment; and self-advocacy/self-determination.

Activities include policy development, policy implementation, and analysis; informing and educating policymakers about Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (I/DD); establishing networks and coalitions on specific issues and concerns relating to developmental disabilities;

conducting legislative advocacy training; providing leadership training; demonstrating new approaches to services and supports; fostering interagency collaboration and communication; coordinating and sponsoring the annual Day at the Capitol, transition events, and neighbor island of Oahu legislative forums, etc.

Without appropriate resources and support systems for individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities (I/DD), the consequences can be significant for individuals, families, and the broader community. With limited access to community-based services, more individuals may be placed in institutional settings rather than supported in living independently, leading to increased costs and limiting personal growth and inclusion. A lack of employment and educational opportunities creates further barriers to independence, increasing reliance on caregivers and social services, which places additional strain on families. In some cases, family members may be forced to leave the workforce to provide care, impacting household stability and reducing the overall workforce.

Additionally, gaps in essential services such as healthcare, housing, and transportation can lead to higher rates of emergency medical care, hospitalizations, and long-term dependency on costly care systems. The absence of adequate support also impacts the workforce shortages in healthcare and caregiving, as more individuals would require assistance without enough trained professionals to meet the demand. Without strong programs and services that promote inclusion, independence, and accessibility, individuals with I/DD are at risk of being left behind, leading to cycles of dependency rather than empowerment. Ensuring that essential services remain in place benefits not just individuals with I/DD, but strengthens the entire community by promoting a more inclusive and sustainable future for all.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony **in support of HB300**, relating to the specific budget items noted below.

Sincerely,



Daintry Bartoldus
Executive Administrator



KŪKULU KE EA A KANALOA
KAHO'OLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
KŌMIKINA MĀLAMA KAHO'OLAWE

811 Kolu Street, Suite 201, Wailuku, HI 96793
Telephone (808) 243-5020 Fax (808) 243-5885
Website: <http://kahoolawe.hawaii.gov>

Testimony of
MICHAEL K. NĀHO'OPTI
Executive Director

Before the House Committee on
FINANCE

Wednesday, March 5, 2025
9:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

In consideration of
HOUSE BILL 300
RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET

House Bill 300 appropriates funds for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027. The Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission (KIRC) supports this measure.

The Kaho'olawe Island Reserve Commission respectfully request the addition of Capitol Improvement Project (CIP) funding for its Project A01A: Kaho'olawe Restoration and Resilience Center, Maui (Phase 2), LNR908 in the amount of \$4,250,00 (Planning: \$350,000; Design: \$3,000,000; Construction: \$900,000).

The KIRC has the unique opportunity to build the Kaho'olawe Restoration and Resilience Center at its base yard property located adjacent to the Kīhei Small Boat Harbor. This project will not only consolidate and provide a single KIRC office on Maui but will also tell the story of Kaho'olawe's cultural significance, its ecological devastation and the efforts to restore and demonstrate our communities' resiliency to heal the damages of the past. Additionally, this facility will also create a revenue generating venue in the South Kīhei corridor to assist in Maui's economic recovery, generate additional tax revenues and create income opportunities for the KIRC to fund restoration efforts on Kaho'olawe.

Phase 2 of the project is to develop the detailed drawings and plans necessary to build this project. This includes final construction drawings and specifications, planning and development of exhibits and archive storage, final planning, design for office layout, and final design of the building infrastructure (HVAC, network).

Additionally, this request includes construction efforts to expand the current boathouse to include a larger concrete pad and two additional covered wings for additional boat storage as well as creating a small educational pavilion and restroom facilities adjacent to the current boathouse.



March 3, 2025

Position: Support of HB 300

To: Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Finance

From: Llasmin Chaîne, LSW, Executive Director, Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women

Re: Testimony in Support of HB 300, Relating to the State Budget

Hearing: Wednesday, March 5, 2025, 9:00 a.m.
Conference Room 308, State Capitol

On behalf of the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women, I would like to thank the committee for hearing this important bill. I would like to express my **strong support of HB 300** and the continued funding of the Hawai'i State **Commission on the Status of Women** (HSCSW).

In light of the current federal administrative priorities and active measures: to dissuade and disrupt gender equity policies¹; to reduce or eliminate funding for survivor advocacy² and gender-based violence prevention education³; and to promote regressive gender roles^{4,5}; **ongoing state budgetary support of the Commission on the Status of Women is especially needed and greatly appreciated.**

The HSCSW was created by executive order on May 15, 1964, to function as a central clearinghouse of resources, services and advocacy for women and girls. The Commission engages in legislative advocacy and implementation, develops programs, collaborates with community organizations and state departments, provides field placements for students, delivers trainings and technical assistance, and serves as an informational resource for Hawai'i's women and girls, on a broad range of policies and issues.

I respectfully urge this Committee to **pass HB 300**. Thank you for your consideration and this opportunity to submit testimony in support of the **continued funding of the Commission on the Status of Women**.

¹ Defending Women from Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government. Executive Order. The White House. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/01/defending-women-from-gender-ideology-extremism-and-restoring-biological-truth-to-the-federal-government/>

² Friedman, Amanda. (2025, March 1) 'We're disaster planning': Trump's funding freeze rattles domestic violence nonprofits - The DOJ Office on Violence Against Women removed all open funding opportunities from its website in February. Politico. <https://www.politico.com/news/2025/03/01/funding-freeze-domestic-violence-00206807>

³ Stone, Will. (2025, February 7) Rape crisis centers see funding delays amid Trump administration spending upheaval. NPR. <https://www.npr.org/sections/shots-health-news/2025/02/07/nx-s1-5290088/cdc-funding-delays-rape-crisis-centers>

⁴ Harrison, Steve W. (2025, February 28) New Directive on DOT spending takes community birth and marriage rates into account. NPR. <https://www.npr.org/2025/02/28/nx-s1-5303471/new-directive-on-dot-spending-takes-community-birth-and-marriage-rates-into-account>

⁵ Tarrant, Tavleen and Gregorian, Dareh. (2025, February 3) Jan. 6 conspiracy theory promoter named to a top State Department job. NBC News. <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/donald-trump/jan-6-conspiracy-theory-promoter-named-top-state-department-job-rcna190497>

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

RIKI FUJITANI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



STATE OF HAWAII
SCHOOL FACILITIES AUTHORITY
2759 S. KING STREET, ROOM H201
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96826

House Committee on Finance

Tuesday, March 5, 2025
9:00 a.m.
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 308

House Bill 300, Relating to the State Budget

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

The School Facilities Authority (SFA) **strongly supports House Bill 300**, which appropriates funds for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal years 2025-2026.

SFA focuses on building modern learning spaces for public schools and contemporary living environments for workforce housing on public lands through improved government processes that maximize the long-term value of our projects while accelerating their completion time. SFA has three main initiatives: expansion of preschools, a new Central Maui school, and workforce housing.

SFA asks the committee to approve two capital improvement program requests in Governor Josh Green's executive budget, \$100 million for a new Central Maui school (EDN450 Item No. G-14) and \$12 million for education workforce housing (EDN450 Item No. G-15).

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Riki Fujitani
Executive Director

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION
465 S. KING STREET, #103
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

LEODOLOFF R. ASUNCION, JR.
CHAIR

NAOMI U. KUWAYE
COMMISSIONER

COLIN A. YOST
COMMISSIONER

Telephone: (808) 586-2020
Facsimile: (808) 586-2066

Website: puc.hawaii.gov
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Testimony of the Public Utilities Commission

To the
House Committee on
Finance

March 5, 2025
9:00 a.m.

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

Measure: H.B. No. 300
Title: RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET.

Position:

The Public Utilities Commission ("Commission") strongly supports this measure and offers the following comments for consideration.

Comments:

The Commission is in strong support of this Administration measure that appropriates funds for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027.

First, the Commission seeks a one-time appropriation ceiling increase of \$1 million (Fiscal Year 2025-2026) for consultant services and contracts for Wildfire related services. Since the August 2023 Maui Wildfires, the Commission has taken many initiatives in response to the growing threat of wildfires and other natural hazards to the State. The Commission is currently engaged in efforts to strengthen critical infrastructure, mitigate risks, protect utility customers, and ensure resilient recovery after extreme weather events. For example, the Commission has required regulated utilities to submit natural hazard mitigation plans. In January, the Commission opened a docket proceeding to review Hawaiian Electric's ("HECO") wildfire mitigation plan (filed on January 10, 2025) and plans to open a docket proceeding to review Kauai Island Utility Cooperative's wildfire mitigation plan that was filed on January 28, 2025.

The Commission will require technical advice on many aspects, including but not limited to, natural hazard (including wildfire) mitigation plans, resilience and reliability of electric utility services, and utility organization.

Second, the Commission is requesting two critical positions: an Engineer V and an Auditor V. The Engineer V is required for implementing Act 166, Session Laws of Hawaii 2012, where the Hawaii State Legislature created new sections under Chapter 269, Hawaii Revised Statutes (“HRS”), which provides a framework for the establishment of a Hawaii Electricity Reliability Administrator (“HERA”). Pursuant to HRS § 269-142, the HERA’s scope also includes non-utility entities that operate on electric systems (i.e., independent power providers, ancillary service providers, etc.). In addition, due to the high cost of contracting for these services, the Commission plans to move HERA forward by contracting an outside consultant to be the HERA for a 12- to 18-month period. During that time, the consultant will train Commission Engineering Staff, including the new Engineer V, to perform the HERA duties, which builds much-needed engineering capacity and expertise within the Commission, as well as lowers administration costs.

The Auditor V is necessary due to the significant increase in utility rate cases, and the Commission expects this trend to continue primarily from private water and wastewater companies, as well as water carriers. In addition, the Auditor V will provide support for issues related to renewable portfolio standards and the impacts of the wildfires that have increased the number of priority dockets that address HECO’s financial stability and rate payer affordability. In 2024, 11 new rate cases were added in addition to the 6 rate cases that are still pending for a total of 17 rate cases, which includes the ongoing HECO Companies Performance Base Ratemaking docket.

Furthermore, the Legislature is currently considering multiple bills affecting the electric utilities that will require specialized expertise in the planning and implementation of any new laws. The ceiling increase will be helpful for the Commission in other areas as well with the growing threat of storm-related power outages, grid restoration and preparation for rebuilding Maui’s infrastructure, and direct impacts of other natural disasters to the State.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

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

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

DAWN N.S. CHANG
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT

RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE
FIRST DEPUTY

CIARA W.K. KAHAHANE
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES
ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

Testimony of
DAWN N. S. CHANG
Chairperson

Before the House Committee on
FINANCE

Wednesday, March 5, 2025
9:00 AM

State Capitol, Conference Room 308, and Videoconference

In consideration of
House Bill 300
RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET

House Bill 300 proposes to appropriate funds for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this bill and offers additional comments.**

Operating Budget:

The Department respectfully requests for your favorable consideration of the following requests:

LNR 401 / LNR 906

- Transfer position (#118784 Accountant IV) and funds (\$116,466) from LNR 401 to LNR 906, MOF P.

LNR 101

- Add position (Program Specialist exempt) and funds to support the Climate Change Mitigation Commission: FY 26: \$40,000; FY 27: \$80,000, MOF A.
- Add position (Administration Assistant V) and funds to support the Climate Change Mitigation Commission: FY 26: \$30,000; FY 27: \$60,000, MOF A.

LNR 172

- Add funding for improved forest and resource management for fire resilient, landscapes, wildlife habitat, and endangered species, \$5,000,000, MOF A.

LNR 402

- Continuous funding for twenty-two (22) positions currently funded by the Major Disaster Fund (MDF) for fire and emergency response, \$1,425,696, MOF A.
- Add recurring funds to the Hawai‘i Invasive Species Council (HISC), \$4,250,000, MOF A.
- Add funds to support statewide invasive ant research and control to be carried out by the Hawai‘i Ant Lab, \$500,000, MOF A.
- Add funds for fire pre-suppression, readiness, response and post-fire restoration and rehabilitation, FY 26: \$4,000,000, MOF A.
- Add funds for West Maui fire prevention, Ukumehame Wetland and Stream, Maui, FY 26: \$3,000,000, MOF A.

LNR 404

- Add funds for cooperative joint funding agreements with the United State Geological Survey (USGS), \$400,000, MOF A.
- Add funds for Central Maui Hydrologic Study: FY 26: \$250,000; FY 27: \$150,000, MOF A.
- Add funds for hydrologic investigations with priority given to the Lahaina Aquifer System, \$200,000, MOF A.
- Add funds for Hawai‘i Mesonet network of telemetered climate stations in cooperation with the University of Hawai‘i Water Resources Research Center, \$350,000, MOF A.

LNR 405

- Increase personal services funding for CREO I to II for sixty-two (62) positions, \$616,272, MOF A.
- Increase Other Current Expenditures funding to support increase in staffing/enforcement capacity, \$500,000, MOF A.
- Add funds to support contingent personal services support for disaster and emergency response operations and extended law enforcement operations, \$1,500,000, MOF B.

LNR 801

- Change MOF for three (3) Boating & Ocean Recreation Harbor Agent II (#122224, #122226, and #122227) from MOF A (\$141,012) to MOF B \$231,260.

LNR 806

- Non-recurring ceiling increase for Motor Vehicles (S312): FY 26: \$1,000,000; FY 27: \$1,000,000, MOF B.
- Non-recurring ceiling increase for Equipment (S312): FY 26: \$1,000,000; FY 27: \$1,000,000, MOF B.

LNR 810

- Add recurring funding for one (1) permanent position (Planner V) and operating funds from Act 134, SLH 2023 into the LNR 810 based budget to support the Dam and Appurtenance Improvement and Removal program, \$75,000 (Salary); \$35,000 (Operating). MOF A.
- Add recurring special fund ceiling for Dam and Appurtenances Improvement or Removal Grant Program (S350) to continue the purposes of Act 134, SLH 2023, \$5,000,000, MOF B.

LNR 906

- Add position for department's Labor Relation/EEO Program staff (Human Resources Specialist V) and funds: FY 26: \$43,188; FY 27: \$86,376, MOF A.
- Add funds to existing, filled positions to reallocate positions to comparable positions at DHRD based on delegation of recruitment activities: Human Resources Specialist IV to V (#2735, FTE 1.00) \$20,880, MOF A, and Human Resources Specialist IV to V (#120761, FTE .12) \$492, MOF A.
- Add funds to existing, filled positions to reallocate positions to comparable positions at DHRD based on delegation of recruitment activities: Human Resources Specialist V to VI (#121502, FTE 1.00) \$9,228, Human Resources Specialist IV to V (#120761, FTE .88) \$3,612, MOF B.
- Add funds for Economic Development Specialist (#125457) \$83,064, MOF A.
- Housekeeping: Act 230, SLH 2024 inadvertently provided \$151,838 in general funds instead of increasing the special fund ceiling in Personnel Costs: (\$151,838), MOF A; \$151,838, MOF B.
- Add funds for Phase III and IV development and implementation of the DLNR Website Consolidation: FY 26 \$1,448,167; FY 27 \$1,455,497, MOF A.

For the various Program IDs, the Department is also requesting inclusion of the following:

- Federal fund ceiling adjustment is being requested based on currently anticipated federal fund requirements for FY26 and FY27.
- Special fund ceiling increases due to fringe benefit adjustments.

Given the uncertainty of federal funding, we respectfully request consideration of an adjustment in the budget to convert select DLNR positions currently funded by discretionary federal funds, MOF P, to a more stable funding source, MOF A. This conversion will increase the capacity of these positions to perform other duties which are not currently performed due to the limitations associated with federal grant requirements. In addition to changing the means of financing, we are requesting the conversion of two (2) temporary positions to permanent.

The Department has identified the following positions that could be converted under this request:

PROG ID	POS NO.	POSITION TITLE	PERM/TEMP (P/T)	STATUS
LNR401	116642	Fish Disaster Relief Prg Coord	T	Vacant
LNR401	117192	Contract Specialist	P	Filled
LNR401	118784	Accountant IV	T	Filled
LNR402	121988	Program Specialist V	P	Filled

*** A copy of the formal request to the legislature is attached.

Capital Improvement Program Budget:

The Department respectfully requests that this measure include all the Department’s FB 2025-27 Executive Biennium Budget CIP requests as outlined in HB300 and the Governor’s Message No. 4 dated February 18, 2025. A list of the Department’s requests is attached.

In addition, the Department seeks the inclusion of two CIP budget requests that are priorities but were not included in the Governor’s budget. These requests are to support the construction of a new permanent Division of Conservation and Resource Enforcement (DOCARE) substation facility in the Wahiawa area.

The new substation will enhance DOCARE’s ability to provide enforcement and conservation services to central and northern Oahu due to its strategic location in Wahiawa.

- LNR 405: Add \$1,250,000 in general obligation bond funds for FY26 to supplement the \$1,000,000 FY24 CIP appropriation, ensuring sufficient funding during the land acquisition process.
- LNR 405: Add \$1,200,000 in general obligation bond funds for FY26 for the design of the new DOCARE substation facility and related work.

The Department offers the following, additional comments:

- The Department’s mission is to enhance, protect, conserve, and manage Hawai‘i’s unique and limited natural, cultural, and historic resources held in public trust for current and future generations of the people of Hawai‘i nei, and its visitors, in partnership with others from the public and private sectors.
- Projects were selected and prioritized based on wildfire recovery, public safety, compliance, and public trust resource protection, in accordance with statutory mandates that guide the Department’s vision, mission, goals and objectives to manage resources for the benefit of the public, and to protect the resources and the public.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

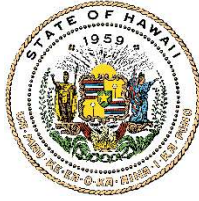
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Prog ID	Project Title	TOTAL FB 2025-27 REQUESTS & GM #4		
		FY 26	FY 27	MOF
A. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT				
LNR141	ROCKFALL AND FLOOD MITIGATION, STATEWIDE	2,000,000	2,000,000	C
D. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION				
LNR401	WAHIAWA FISHING ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS, OAHU	400,000	-	C
LNR402	POHAKEA FIRE PREVENTION AND SUPPRESSION INFRASTRUCTURE, MAUI	1,750,000	-	C
LNR404	DEEP MONITOR WELLS, STATEWIDE	2,000,000	2,000,000	C
LNR405	DOCARE MAUI BRANCH OFFICE BUILDING RENOVATION, MAUI	800,000	-	C
LNR405	DOCARE HAWAII BRANCH OFFICE BUILDING RENOVATION, HAWAII	3,000,000	-	C
LNR407	WATERSHED PROTECTION AND INITIATIVES, STATEWIDE	5,000,000	5,000,000	C
LNR401	ANUENUE FISHERIES RESEARCH CENTER ANNEX, ROOF REPAIR/PHOTOVOLTAIC SYSTEM INSTALLATION, OAHU (GM #4)	750,000		C
LNR402	INSTALL SOLAR PANELS AND BATTERIES FOR WAIMEA STATE TREE NURSERY AND BASE YARD, HAWAII (GM #4)	500,000		C
LNR407	INSTALL SOLAR PANELS AND BATTERIES IN BASEYARDS, OAHU (GM #4)	150,000		C
C. CULTURE AND RECREATION				
LNR802	STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION DIVISION (SHPD) HILO OFFICE RENOVATIONS, HAWAII	700,000		C
LNR806	STATE PARKS INFRASTRUCTURE AND PARK IMPROVEMENTS, LUMP SUM, STATEWIDE	2,650,000		C
LNR806	STATE PARKS INFRASTRUCTURE AND PARK IMPROVEMENTS, LUMP SUM, STATEWIDE	500,000		N
LNR801	LAHAINA SMALL BOAT HARBOR MAINTENANCE DREDGING, MAUI	5,000,000	-	C
LNR801	LAHAINA SMALL BOAT HARBOR RECONSTRUCTION OF OUTER MARGINAL WHARF, MAUI	8,000,000	-	C
K. GOVERNMENT-WIDE SUPPORT				
LNR101	EAST KAPOLEI TRANSIT ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT PROJECT, OAHU	500,000	-	B
LNR101	CESSPOOL CLOSURES IN ACCORDANCE WITH EPA CONSENT ORDER, STATEWIDE	1,500,000	-	B
LNR101	SHANGRI LA BREAKWATER REMOVAL, OAHU	700,000	-	B
LNR101	LOWER KAPAHI RESERVOIR REMOVAL, KAUAI	500,000	-	B

Subtotals by MOF:	3,200,000	-	B
	32,700,000	9,000,000	C
	500,000	-	N
TOTALS - ALL MOF	36,400,000	9,000,000	

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

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
KA 'OIHANA KUMUWAIWAI 'ĀINA

P.O. BOX 621
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

February 24, 2025

DAWN N.S. CHANG
CHAIRPERSON
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT

RYAN K.P. KANAKA'OLE
FIRST DEPUTY

CIARA W.K. KAHAHANE
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES
ENFORCEMENT
ENGINEERING
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE
HISTORIC PRESERVATION
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

The Honorable Donovan M. Dela Cruz
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Thirty-Third State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 208
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz:

Facing potential reductions or losses in federal discretionary funding, DLNR has assessed its federally funded positions and respectfully request consideration of an adjustment in the budget to convert select DLNR positions currently funded by discretionary federal funds (MOF P) to a more stable funding source, MOF A, which is the general funds or MOF N, where feasible.

Given the uncertainty of federal funding, conversion to MOF A is preferred by DLNR to ensure continued program stability and workforce security. This conversion will increase the capacity of these positions to perform other duties which are not currently performed due to the limitations associated with federal grant requirements – federal aid policy requires expenditures be identifiable and allocable to a particular federal award and incurred specifically for a particular federal grant. Additionally, general funded positions are recoverable indirect costs.

Typically, MOF N funding is formula-based and not subject to the same discretionary appropriations risks as MOF P funding, which often relies on competitive grants. This adjustment is a cost-neutral measure and a prudent contingency, although this type of conversion limits the position's proficiency and expertise to be used to the extent they are directly and exclusively related to the specific federal grant program, allowable and allocable to the particular grant only. This is also subject to funding reductions, as the amount allocated to each recipient is based on a set formula that is determined by federal legislation, which can be amended to decrease overall funding or change the calculation factors, leading to lower grant amounts for recipients depending on the new formula.

Additionally, given the importance of the work provided by these positions, we are requesting to convert the two (2) positions identified below from temporary to permanent. This conversion will reduce employee turnover and improve retention, thus providing the needed stability and staff continuity.

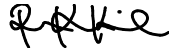
DLNR has identified the following positions that could be converted under this request:

PROG ID	POS NO.	POSITION TITLE	PERM/TEMP (P/T)	STATUS
LNR401	116642	Fish Disaster Relief Prg Coord	T	Vacant
LNR401	117192	Contract Specialist	P	Filled
LNR401	118784	Accountant IV	T	Filled
LNR402	121988	Program Specialist V	P	Filled

DLNR recommends the conversion of these positions to MOF A, to allow us to continue to operate and manage our program objectives under anticipated budget constraints, and as a secondary option, to convert them to MOF N. In addition to changing the means of financing, we are recommending the conversion of two (2) temporary positions to permanent.

We respectfully request that this adjustment be reflected in the budget to support DLNR's ability to manage its workforce effectively and ensure continuity of services. Please contact me at (808) 587-0402 should you have any questions or require further information.

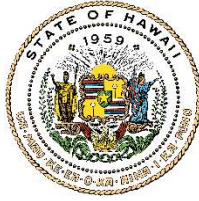
Mahalo,



RYAN K. P. KANAKA'OLE
First Deputy

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

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR | KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'
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February 24, 2025

DAWN N.S. CHANG
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BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES
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KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION
LAND
STATE PARKS

The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita
House Committee on Finance
Thirty-Third State Legislature
State Capitol, Room 306
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Aloha Chair Yamashita:

Facing potential reductions or losses in federal discretionary funding, DLNR has assessed its federally funded positions and respectfully request consideration of an adjustment in the budget to convert select DLNR positions currently funded by discretionary federal funds (MOF P) to a more stable funding source, MOF A, which is the general funds or MOF N, where feasible.

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The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita
February 24, 2025
Page Two of Two

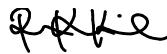
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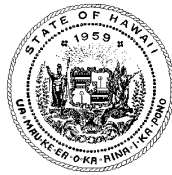
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We respectfully request that this adjustment be reflected in the budget to support DLNR's ability to manage its workforce effectively and ensure continuity of services. Please contact me at (808) 587-0402 should you have any questions or require further information.

Mahalo,



RYAN K. P. KANAKA'OLE
First Deputy



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

BRENNA H. HASHIMOTO
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR
KA HOPE KIA'ĀINA

BRIAN K. FURUTO
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT
KA 'OIHANA HO'OMŌHALA LIMAHANA
235 S. BERETANIA STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-2437

Statement of
BRENNA H. HASHIMOTO
Director, Department of Human Resources Development

Before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Wednesday, March 5, 2025
9:00AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

In consideration of
HB300, RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and the members of the committee:

The purpose of HB300 is to appropriate funds for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027.

The Department of Human Resources Development (HRD) strongly **supports** HB300 as it relates to our biennium budget requests.

Program ID:	Priority:	FY26	0.00	\$581,321
HRD102	1 of 14	FY27	0.00	\$581,321

Description of Request

Payroll Adjustments. Funding is required to address:

- 1) Collective Bargaining Adjustments. Salaries for filled positions have increased over time, while the budgeted salaries for vacant positions have not kept pace.
- 2) Advancement and retention of employees. Without adequate funding, HRD will be unable to adjust salaries as employees advance in their classification series, which will significantly hinder career progression.
- 3) Addressing Salary Disparities for Excluded Managerial (EM) positions to align with the middle of the collective bargaining schedule, which will better position HRD to retain qualified managers and prevent turnover.
- 4) Minimizing Turnover and Addressing Workforce Attrition, amid a significant number of Executive branch employees becoming eligible for retirement.
- 5) Sustaining Recruitment Success.

Program ID: HRD191	Priority: 2 of 14	FY26	0.00	\$548,647
		FY27	0.00	\$652,400

Description of Request

HRD SAAS Cost Increases. HRD's Software as a Service (SAAS) applications costs have increased dramatically. SAAS systems are rising at approximately \$70-80K per year. Costs have eclipsed HRD's operating budget. This funding request is essential. If not adequately addressed, HRD will not have sufficient funds for operations.

The request will support increasing costs for HRD's NeoGov (recruitment, onboarding), Human Resources Management System (HRMS), and Adobe Learning Manager (ALM for training content). These systems serve as the enterprise-wide foundation for the HR and payroll operations of the Executive Branch.

Program ID: HRD102	Priority: 3 of 14	FY26	2.00	\$112,186
		FY27	2.00	\$211,572

Description of Request

Add 2.00 Positions and Funds for PTO (Employee Records and Transactions). The requested 2.00 FTE HRMS Analyst positions are currently temporary, exempt from civil service, and funded with ARPA funds. Without these positions, the maintenance of the centralized, comprehensive employee information system within the Executive Branch will remain inefficient and staff will continue to be inundated with mundane tasks. Most importantly, we would jeopardize timely and accurate processing of employees' pay, benefits and employment security. The HRMS Analyst positions are working to review legacy processes and provide recommendations to maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of HR components within HIP, as well as explore other opportunities to integrate systems. These positions will also play an essential role in the EFS and ERP projects.

Program ID: HRD102	Priority: 4 of 14	FY26	6.00	\$231,728
		FY27	6.00	\$427,036

Description of Request

Add 6.00 Positions and Funds for ESD (Employee Staffing Division Recruitment and Outreach). The request to institutionalize the 6.00 ESD FTEs as permanent positions will ensure progress made in recruiting efforts remain intact. 5.00 of the 6.00 positions are currently exempt from civil service, temporary, and funded with ARPA funds. This team has enhanced recruitment and certification capabilities within ESD, enabling the State to more effectively meet its workforce needs. Without this funding and resources, the ESD remains constrained in its ability to attract and retain top-tier talent, affecting the State's ability to deliver critical public services effectively.

1.00 (Human Resources Technician VI) of the 6.00 positions will support the Certification section within ESD. Certification provides front-end and back-end support for all requested recruitments for civil service vacancies. Currently, there are only 1.00 professional and 3.00 paraprofessional staff managing over 1500 requisitions annually.

Program ID: HRD102	Priority: 5 of 14	FY26	0.00	\$41,350
		FY27	0.00	\$111,250

Description of Request

Salary Surveys and Compensation Analytics. This request includes:
 1) \$39,100, of which \$37,500 is for continued Hawaii Employers Council (HEC) membership and costs to conduct compensation surveys. Continuing HEC membership provides access to survey data on public sector wages, pay practices and benefits. Membership will also keep HRD informed on compensation laws, research, publications on latest trends and other resources beneficial for HRD as the Executive Branch's HR authority.
 2) \$2,250 Pay Equity Training.
 3) \$72,150 for compensation analytics and salary survey data. This system will save time and increase accuracy when conducting wage comparisons that are currently done manually using excel spreadsheets.

Approximately \$70,000 in expenditures will be supplemented with ARPA funds in FY26, resulting in the lower Year 1 FB request.

Program ID: HRD102	Priority: 6 of 14	FY26	0.00	\$5,491,297
		FY27	0.00	\$6,515,078

Description of Request

Workers' Compensation Claims Administration. In FY 2025, HRD is appropriated \$15,709,183, which includes \$5,225,000 in non-recurring funding. The approximately \$5.5 million and \$6.5 million request for FY26 and FY27 will replace the current \$5,225,000 non-recurring FY25 funding and account for projected increases through FY27. Costs are projected to increase by 6.5%.

Workers' compensation (WC) is a statutorily-mandated benefit which provides wage loss compensation, medical care and other related benefits to employees who suffer a work-related injury or illness.

Program ID: HRD191	Priority: 7 of 14	FY26	0.00	\$250,000
		FY27	0.00	\$250,000

Description of Request

Department-Wide Furniture Replacement Project. The request represents Phase 1 of a comprehensive furniture replacement project. The total project cost is estimated at \$1,440,000 and is designed to address the critical need for modern, ergonomic, and technology-integrated workspaces that align with current work practices and safety standards. The current furniture inventory is over 20 to 30 years old and is no longer compliant with modern safety and ergonomic standards. The department has experienced work-related injuries, such as back strains and repetitive motion injuries, due to improper setup and inadequate seating.

Program ID: HRD102	Priority: 10 of 14	FY26	1.00	\$32,954
		FY27	1.00	\$59,808

Description of Request

Add 1.00 Position (Administrative Assistant IV) and Funds for Labor Relations. Currently, two division administrators (Labor Relations and Employee Relations) share a filled Administrative Assistant IV position to handle the support functions of their divisions located on two different floors within HRD. Additionally, the current Administrative Assistant IV provides administrative support to the Office of Collective Bargaining. The addition of 1.00 FTE will provide the necessary dedicated support to Labor Relations, including performance of duties specific to labor relations and collective bargaining.

Program ID: HRD191	Priority: 12 of 14	FY26	0.00	\$30,000
		FY27	0.00	\$30,000

Description of Request

HRD Training and Professional Development. Funding will support HRD's employees with HR specific training opportunities and professional development. HRD is expected to be the State authority in human resources and to provide support and guidance to Executive Branch agencies. Training is necessary to maintain that expertise.

Program ID: HRD102	Priority: 13 of 14	FY26	0.00	\$1,000,000
		FY27	0.00	\$0

Description of Request

Classification and Compensation Study. The State Executive Branch has not done a comprehensive review of its classification and compensation systems and would need to contract services with an outside entity to assist the State and all departments. Many classes and minimum qualification requirements are outdated, hampering recruitment and retention efforts. Jobs have changed over time and so have State services. If not funded, the State will fall further behind, and will continue to struggle with turnover and recruitment, which will make it difficult for programs to provide services to the public.

Program ID: HRD191	Priority: (Added via Governor's Decisions)	FY26	0.00	\$163,600
		FY27	0.00	\$163,600

Description of Request

Transfer funds from AGS131/EA for Workers' Comp Claims Management System. HRD supports ETS' request for appropriation transfer as doing so will place the appropriation with the expending agency.

Program ID	FY26	6.00	\$470,000
HRD200	FY27	6.00	\$470,000
Description of Request		Office of Wellness and Resilience Transfer/Request	
<p><i>Transfer-in Office of Wellness and Resilience from GOV 100. Act 291, SLH 2022, temporarily placed OWR in the Office of the Governor to support and implement the statewide framework for trauma-informed care and will need to be placed in a principal department.</i></p> <p>This request transfers 6.00 FTEs and related funding.</p>			

Program ID	FY26	0.00	\$424,528
HRD200	FY27	0.00	\$424,528
Description of Request		Office of Wellness and Resilience Transfer/Request	
<p><i>Add OCE for Office of Wellness and Resilience. Act 291 temporarily placed OWR in the Office of the Governor and will need to be placed in a principal department.</i></p> <p>This request would continue to fund OWR's Other Current Expenditures (OCE) at funding levels consistent with current levels. OCE funding would support the costs of consultants and necessary supplies.</p>			

Program ID	FY26	6.00	\$876,000
HRD200	FY27	6.00	\$876,000
Description of Request		Office of Wellness and Resilience Transfer/Request	
<p><i>Add positions and funds for Act 106, SLH 2024, State of Well-Being Project. If granted, this request would continue to fund the State of Wellbeing (SoWB) program within OWR at FTE, Personal Services, and Other Current Expenditures (OCE) funding levels consistent with current levels.</i></p> <p>The Legislature established and funded the SoWB program as a temporary program housed in the OWR through Act 106, SLH 2024. The Act provided funds for personal services and OCE for the first year.</p> <p>This request would support the continued funding of 6.00 FTEs (\$475,000) and OCE (\$401,000), including consultant costs and necessary supplies.</p>			

Program ID	FY26	0.00	\$48,276
HRD200	FY27	0.00	\$48,276
Description of Request		Office of Wellness and Resilience Transfer/Request	
<p><i>OWR Adjustment for CB Increases. This request is for \$48,276 in incremental funding to account for two collective bargaining increases that have taken place since OWR's establishment in FY 2023. At establishment and in subsequent periods, CB increases were not provided. The request would provide for an equitable work environment in line with other salary range positions with similar credentials and qualifications.</i></p>			

Please note that of the 14 requests listed above, priority numbers 8, 9, 11, and 14 were not included in the FB 2025-2027 Executive Branch request.

HRD appreciates the Legislature's support. We are aware of the challenges ahead and remain committed to work with the Legislature to seek solutions that effectively balance short and long-term priorities. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. We are available to answer any questions or provide further information as needed.

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Finance
March 5, 2025 at 9:00 a.m., Room 308 and Via Video Conference
by
T. Samuel Shomaker, MD, Dean
and
Lee Buenconsejo-Lum, MD, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
John A. Burns School of Medicine
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

HB 300 – RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in SUPPORT of HB 300, specifically as it relates to the John A. Burns School of Medicine's (JABSOM) line item 110 and the additional state funding to ensure full coverage of JABSOM's Kaka'ako Health & Wellness revenue bond debt service payments. Full debt service coverage will mitigate potential medical school accreditation status forfeitures if future Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement (MSA) annual allocations to UH continue to decline. The funding requested in HB 300 for the debt service is \$1.1M for fiscal year 2025-2026 and \$1.5M for fiscal year 2026-2027.

From the opening of the JABSOM Kaka'ako Health and Wellness campus in 2005, the Hawai'i State Legislature has awarded a portion of Hawaii's annual MSA funding to cover the medical school's Kaka'ako Health and Wellness campus revenue bond debt service. The National Association of Attorneys General (NAAG), who oversees the U.S.'s Tobacco MSA, predicted that the annual MSA payments to the participating states would decline over time. MSA payment levels are affected by U.S. inflation, U.S. cigarette and roll-your-own tobacco consumption, and cigarette manufacturers' income. NAAG has not published a forecasted future payment schedule; however, a few participating states (e.g., Colorado) have forecasted annual MSA state payment declines between 3% and 8% in any given year.

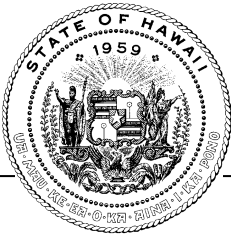
In April 2024, the MSA payment to Hawai'i of \$36,425,172.62 was 11% less than the prior year's payment of \$40,862,842.25. Due to this MSA payment reduction, for the first time, the medical school's annual MSA allocation of \$8,833,034.88 will not fully cover the medical school's FY2025 bond debt service obligation of \$9,395,723 (i.e., a shortage of \$562,688). The medical school's Kaka'ako Health and Wellness revenue bond debt service payments end on July 1, 2033.

If the April 2025 MSA payment declines by 11% or higher, the medical school will be forced to use its tuition allocation. The use of our tuition allocation for debt service will reduce faculty and staff personnel due to the lack of compensation coverage (i.e., it is equivalent to 14 teaching faculty or 27 academic support staff or a combination

of both). Loss of medical school personnel will pose a threat to the medical school's accreditation for its medical students from the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) and accreditation for its MD resident trainee programs from the Accreditation Council of Graduate Medical Education (ACGME). Continued accreditation is essential to support medical school student enrollment (e.g., all degrees and residency programs), research opportunities, community service, health systems support, and the medical school's ability to increase the physician workforce for Hawai'i.

JABSOM is training more students than ever before. Faced with a physician shortage of 750 physicians in the state when compared to other continental US jurisdictions, we expanded our class size to help meet the worsening doctor shortage. Our third-year medical students now have the option of doing part of their training in Hilo, West Hawai'i and North Hawai'i, Maui and Kaua'i. First-year and fourth-year medical students have the opportunity for elective rotations on the islands of Hawai'i, Maui, Kaua'i and Moloka'i. Nearly two thirds of our graduates will remain in Hawai'i to practice medicine, one of the nation's highest retention rates. These are bold steps taken to realize the dream of former Governor Burns to allow Hawai'i's children to become some of Hawai'i's most valuable citizens, i.e., those who commit their lives to improve the health of others.

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



STATE OF HAWAII OFFICE OF PLANNING & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

235 South Beretania Street, 6th Floor, Honolulu, Hawaii 96813
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawaii 96804

Telephone: (808) 587-2846
Fax: (808) 587-2824
Web: <https://planning.hawaii.gov/>

Statement of
MARY ALICE EVANS, Director

before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Wednesday, March 5, 2025
9:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

in consideration of
HB 300
RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

The Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) **supports** HB 300. This appropriates the funds for the OPSD in operating budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal year 2026.

Highlights of OPSD's supplemental budget request includes the following:

- Transfer Out Budget Line Items to BED103 \$-786,875; -7.00 Permanent FTE; -1.00 Temporary FTE, to promote transparency and accountability to the public and to better align two separate programs, Land Use Commission (LUC) and Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD), with their separate missions within the state program structure.
- Federal Fund Ceiling Increase of \$255,964. Increase CZM appropriation ceiling (N) due to Federal Grant continuing support and inflation.
- Add \$300,000 General Funds for 1.00 FTE temporary position and funds for Special Funds Project Coordinator and administration costs for the second year (FY 2026) of the Hawaii State Planning Act Phase 2. Additional funding is required to continue this multi-year process to update HRS 226 pursuant to Act 36, SLH 2024.
- Add 3.00 FTE Temp Pos and Funds in SPB \$282,060; 3.00 Temporary FTE for filled positions (Pos. Nos. 124200, 124251, and 124288).
 - Personnel General Funds are essential to retaining staff who support the state's Economic Development District (EDD) designation, which unlocks

additional federal funding and enhances economic development and resilience efforts statewide.

- OPSD won't be able to retain critical SPB staff without General Funds, jeopardizing the state's EDD designation and leading to the loss of associated benefits and federal funding opportunities.
- Add General Funds to Restore Full-Year Funding for Permanent Special Plans Branch Planning Program Manager, \$45,570.
- Add 1.00 FTE and Funds for Statewide Sustainability Branch \$35,508 FY26 \$71,016 FY27 to support statewide climate and sustainability coordination/implementation.
 - **Background:** - Established by HRS §225M-8 (Act 45, SLH 2020) and HRS §225M-2 (b) (9), the Sustainability Branch coordinates and implements climate and sustainability policies statewide, evaluates legislation, and advises the Governor, Legislature, and agencies on sustainability and climate resilience. Currently, the Branch has only 1.00 FTE (State Sustainability Coordinator).
 - **Outcome:** This request would expand capacity to meet climate resilience demands. While original Form A requested 3 positions to adequately staff a Statewide Climate and Sustainability Branch, the Executive Budget reduced this request to 1.00 FTE. Considering the urgent climate adaptation demands facing the state, the Branch supports staffing provided by 1.00 FTE, but strongly supports the 3.00 FTE request being restored.
- Convert Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Program salaries of 5.00 Permanent FTE from MOF N to A Funds:
 - Reduce MOF N by 5.00 FTE and \$663,329
 - Increase MOF A by 5.00 FTE and \$411,408
 - **Background:** From 1975 to 2009, the positions were general funded. In 2009, the positions were converted to federal funding following a decline in State revenues. The provision of federal funds from NOAA were conditioned on the State taking active steps to restore State funding.
 - **Outcome:** Restores general funds for five staff positions, ensuring that 50% of CZM's staff positions are funded with State funding to help satisfy the condition(s) of the federal cooperative agreement, including one-to-one match requirements, which maintains the CZM Program's eligibility to receive its annual federal award of approx. \$2.5 million.

- BED144 - \$500,000 (C) East Kapolei TOD Infrastructure. An EIS is the next step in this effort and will cost \$500,000. The EIS will expedite community development, including housing production.
- BED144 - \$2,000,000 (C) State Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Planning, Statewide. Plans, feasibility and cost studies, and coordination of TOD projects, TOD public infrastructure requirements, and related environmental review documents for TOD projects in State TOD strategic plan, statewide.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



**STATE OF HAWAII
BOARD OF EDUCATION**
P.O. BOX 2360
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96804

House Committee on Finance
Wednesday, March 5, 2025
9:00 a.m.
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 308

Measure: House Bill 300, Relating to the State Budget

Purpose of Measure:

Appropriates funds for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027.

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

The Board of Education (Board) **strongly supports** this measure.

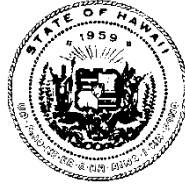
The proposed executive biennium budget includes requests that support all the keiki of Hawaii, including those that sustain and further the work of the public education system that nurtures their learning and well-being.

The Board supports legislation that addresses the needs identified in the Department of Education's and Hawaii State Public Library System's Board-approved operating and capital improvement program budget requests for fiscal biennium 2025-2027.

The Board also thanks the Committee for its consideration of our request for positions and funding to support the Board's work to address the critical educational issues facing the state at a policy level, and to be the more effective partner it can be for our fellow state policymakers.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify on behalf of the Board.

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 FINANCE

Wednesday, March 5, 2025
9:00 AM – Room 308, Hawaii State Capitol

In consideration of
HB 300
RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET

Honorable Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the House Committee on Finance, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 300, relating to the State Budget.

The Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) is in **strong support** of HB 300, which appropriates funds for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027.

The HPHA's mission is to provide Hawaii's residents with adequate and affordable housing, economic opportunity, and suitable living environments that are free from discrimination through both its public housing and rental assistance programs. The HPHA serves our state's most disadvantaged populations, including families earning less than thirty percent of the Area Median Income, the disabled, and the elderly.

HMS 220 – Rental Housing Services (Public Housing)

Request ID	220RH-01
Description of Request	Request FTE 1.00 for permanent Electrician I position, with equipment (FTE Perm 1.00/W; \$62,790/W for FY 26; \$115,581/W for FY 27).



Reasons for Request	The position will assist with providing maintenance and making repairs to electrical wiring, fixtures, switches, and conducting electrical checks during annual recertification inspections for 347 units in 10 federal and 1 state public housing properties on the island of Kauai. Given the ongoing and frequent need for electrical repairs and maintenance, an Electrician I position is essential for ensuring timely maintenance, reducing dependency on private vendors and improving response times for tenant concerns.
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Request ID	220RH-H26001
Description of Request	Ka Lei Momi Predevelopment Request Statewide \$12,000,000
Reasons for Request	Funding requested for Predevelopment planning for Kapaa, Lanakila Homes, Kaahumanu Homes, and Nanakuli Homes will enable HPHA to continue to move forward with redevelopment plans to demolish functionally obsolete projects that have been marked for major redevelopment and expansion in an effort to develop and deliver urgently needed low-income and new affordable housing units to assist in meeting the goal of the Administration and Legislature for the creation of more affordable housing units.

Request ID	220RH-H26002
Description of Request	Ka Lei Momi Development Request Statewide \$56,000,000
Reasons for Request	The requested funding will support the demolition of the existing, outdated public housing structures at Mayor Wright Homes and facilitate the construction of 309 new, modern, and energy-efficient affordable housing units. This investment directly aligns with the Administration’s and Legislature’s strategic priorities to address the state’s housing crisis by increasing the supply of high-quality, affordable housing. By replacing obsolete infrastructure with a sustainable, community-oriented development, this project will enhance livability, improve resident outcomes, and contribute to the broader goal of expanding affordable housing opportunities for Hawaii’s families.

Request ID	220RH-FF
Description of Request	Request to increase federal fund ceiling (\$10,342,944/N for FY 26; \$15,592,944/N for FY 27).
Reasons for Request	Additional federal funds are expected to be received during the next fiscal biennium.



HMS 222 – Rental Assistance Services (Section 8)

Request ID	222RA-02
Description of Request	Request additional general funds for the Landlord Incentive Program (\$250,000/A for FY 26; \$250,000/A for FY 27).
Reasons for Request	The requested funding will be used to provide monetary incentives and reimbursements to landlords who rent to voucher families. The program encourages new and existing landlords to participate in Section 8 by providing financial benefits. Because of the State’s competitive rental market, some landlords are reluctant to accept voucher holders because of perceived risks or concerns about potential financial burdens. By encouraging more landlords to participate, the program expands the pool of available rental units.
Request ID	222RA-FF
Description of Request	Request to increase federal fund ceiling (\$6,095,975/N for FY 26; \$9,766,700/N for FY 27).
Reasons for Request	Additional federal funds are expected to be received during the next fiscal biennium.

HMS 229 – HPHA Administration

Request ID	229HA-01
Description of Request	Request FTE 2.00 temporary, exempt positions for a Hearings Administrator, with equipment, and a Grievance Officer, with equipment (FTE Temp 2.00/W; \$160,478/W for FY 26; \$300,356/W for FY 27).
Reasons for Request	The HPHA is anticipating a higher number of evictions due to federal rental assistance funding being nearly exhausted. The Hearings Administrator will be tasked with overseeing the Hearings Officer and administering non-rent/complicated eviction cases which are related to drug-related or violent criminal activity. The Grievance Officer will be dedicated to administering grievance hearings for the Public Housing and Section 8 programs. Currently, staff for both programs are responsible for administering grievance hearings, taking them away from their primary responsibilities.

Request ID	229HA-02 (Companion to 229HA-03)
Description of Request	Request to convert MOF for FTE 62.00 permanent positions from Federal “N” to Revolving “W,” and restore 95687K 6-month delay in hiring (FTE Perm (62.00)/N; (\$6,197,294)/N for FY 26; (\$6,221,360)/N for FY 27).
Reasons for Request	This housekeeping change is being requested to reflect the current MOF for personnel.



Request ID	229HA-03 (Companion to 229HA-02)
Description of Request	Request to convert MOF for FTE 62.00 permanent positions from Federal "N" to Revolving "W" (FTE Perm 62.00/W; \$6,221,360/W for FY 26; \$6,221,360/W for FY 27).
Reasons for Request	This housekeeping change is being requested to reflect the current MOF for personnel.

Request ID	229HA-04 (Companion to 229HA-05)
Description of Request	Request to convert MOF for FTE 28.00 temporary positions from Federal "N" to Revolving "W" (FTE Temp (28.00)/N; (\$3,607,108)/N for FY 26; (\$3,607,108)/N for FY 27).
Reasons for Request	This housekeeping change is being requested to reflect the current MOF for personnel.

Request ID	229HA-05 (Companion to 229HA-04)
Description of Request	Request to convert MOF for FTE 28.00 temporary positions from Federal "N" to Revolving "W" (FTE Temp 28.00/W; \$3,607,108/W for FY 26; \$3,607,108/W for FY 27).
Reasons for Request	This housekeeping change is being requested to reflect the current MOF for personnel.

Request ID	229HA-06
Description of Request	Request to add \$85,864/W to increase salary for 1.00 FTE temporary position (95677K).
Reasons for Request	This change is being requested to reverse the six-month delay-in-hiring adjustment applied against 1.00 FTE temporary Housing Development Specialist (position 95677K) authorized under Act 230, SLH 2024.

Request ID	229HA-08
Description of Request	Request 1.00 FTE temporary positions for Housing Development Specialist I, with equipment, and 1.00 FTE permanent position for Public Housing Specialist, with equipment (FTE Temp 1.00/W and Perm 1.00/W; \$134,085/W for FY 26; \$253,970 for FY 27).
Reasons for Request	The Housing Development Specialist position is needed to provide support for the HPHA's Ka Lei Momi Redevelopment Project which encompasses nine targeted and seven alternate public housing properties in each county. The Public Housing Specialist I position is needed for housing development support.

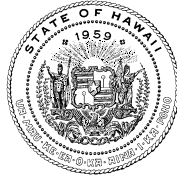


Request ID	229HA-09
Description of Request	Request to convert MOF for other current expenses from Federal “N” to Revolving “W” ((\$27,503,020)/N and \$27,503,020/W for FY 26; (\$27,503,020)/N and \$27,503,020/N for FY 27).
Reasons for Request	This housekeeping change is being requested to reflect the current MOF for other expenses.

As we navigate these challenging times, the importance of safe, affordable housing for our community’s most vulnerable cannot be overstated. The Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) stands ready to address this critical need. Your support in allocating the necessary funding and positions is essential for us to continue providing stable homes for our lowest-income families. By investing in housing, we invest in the health, safety, and future of our entire community. We humbly request prioritizing this much needed funding.



JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



KEITH A. REGAN
COMPTROLLER
KA LUNA HO'OMALU HANA LAULĀ

MEOH-LENG SILLIMAN
DEPUTY COMPTROLLER
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OMALU HANA LAULĀ

STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES | KA 'OIHANA LOIHELU A LAWELAWE LAULĀ
P.O. BOX 119, HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0119

WRITTEN TESTIMONY
OF
KEITH A. REGAN, COMPTROLLER
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES
TO THE

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

H.B. 300

MARCH 5, 2025, 9:00 AM
CONFERENCE ROOM 308 AND VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE, STATE CAPITOL

RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill (H.B.) 300, Relating to the State Budget, which appropriates funds for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027.

The Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS) **supports** the Governor's executive budget. We are seeking funding for critical needs in support of our goal to provide quality and consistency in the delivery of essential support services to other State departments and agencies. The following are highlights of our approved budget requests.

- I. Operating Budget – Highlights of our Executive Operating Budget items included in this measure:
 - Adds \$200,000,000 in revolving fund ceiling in FY 26 and FY 27 for State Risk Management & Insurance Administration for the expenditure/distribution of insurance proceeds for the Maui wildfires recovery.
 - Adds \$5,000,000 in FY 26 and FY 27 for Accounting Systems Development and Maintenance for Hawaii Information Portal (HIP) CherryRoad Enterprise expenditures.
 - Adds 6.00 permanent positions and \$2,920,548 in FY 26 and \$2,923,596 in FY 27 for Accounting Systems Development and Maintenance for supplemental resources to support the Enterprise Financial System (EFS) Project.

- Adds \$2,330,000 in FY 26 and \$3,200,000 in FY 27 for Enterprise Technology Services (ETS) for Microsoft Enterprise Agreement subscription.
- Adds 2.00 permanent positions and \$1,088,500 in FY 26 and \$1,167,000 in FY 27 to create a new Cemetery Management Office.
- Adds \$3,978,275 in FY 26 and \$125,000 in FY 27 for Office of Elections for Voting System contract, Digital Voter Information guide, and Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC).

II. CIP Budget - DAGS appreciates the support included for CIP in the Executive Budget for the following items:

- Adds \$35,000,000 in FY 26 for Enterprise Financial System, Statewide.
- Adds \$20,000,000 in FY 26 and FY 27 for Lump Sum Maintenance of Existing Facilities, Public Works Division, Statewide.
- Adds \$4,000,000 in FY 26 and \$2,000,000 in FY 27 for Lump Sum Health and Safety, Hawaii Wireless Interoperability Network, Statewide.
- Adds \$2,100,000 in FY 26 for Kalanimoku Building, Office Space Optimization, Oahu.
- Adds \$2,000,000 in FY 26 for Planning for State Capitol Building Rehabilitation and Related Improvements, Oahu.
- Adds \$2,000,000 in FY 26 for Lump Sum State Office Building Remodeling, Statewide.
- Adds \$1,000,000 in FY 26 for No. 1 Capitol District Building, Site & Accessibility Improvements, Oahu.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR



WENDY GADY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
HUI HO'OU LU AINA MAHIAI

TESTIMONY OF WENDY L. GADY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
AGRIBUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
March 5, 2025
9:00 a.m.
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

HOUSE BILL NO. 300
RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support** of House Bill No. 300, which appropriates funds for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027. ADC kindly requests consideration of the following operating and CIP line items.

Operating Requests

- BED 170 add \$120,000 in non-recurring general funds for FY26. With the acquisition of the Mililani Tech Park, there is extensive legal work required to create a clear path for the use of agricultural technology in the park. There will be work in unwinding some of the encumbrances and creating a legal path forward. In addition, ADC needs research done to verify ADC properties that are ceded lands and appropriate fees to be paid for OHA & DHHL. The ADC will need to define what percentage if any is paid for Common Area Maintenance, Conservation Easements, Mining/dirt or rock, & Grant money. Current attorney has a workload that includes two lawsuits with ongoing compliance, in addition to a review of the Kekaha Agriculture Association MOA for ADC compliance with the terms. Going forward there are best management and additional federal rules that will affect Hawaii agricultural business. There is no alternative for this request.

CIP Requests

- BED 170 - \$4,000,000 in FY2026 in General Obligation Bonds for Small Animal Slaughterhouse, Oahu. For Plans, Design, Construction, and Equipment for establishment of a slaughter facility to meet the growing demand local grown meat. The facility will help to fulfill the needs of agriculture operations that produce small animals for meat, such as lamb, goat, hog,... which currently have limited access to slaughter facilities.

- BED 170 - \$350,000 in FY2026 in General Obligation Bonds for Plans, and Design for a statewide Food and Product Innovation Network. These funds support the development of Hawaii made products to maximize agricultural production. The objective of this project is to create infrastructure where research, development, and innovation can occur and be shared to accelerate the development of Hawaii made agricultural products. The project will create a network of facilities and expertise in each county to enable acceleration of innovative value-added products for local and export markets.
- BED 170 - \$6,500,000 in FY2026 in General Obligation Bonds for construction of a postharvest facility on Oahu. The funds will be used to support active area farm operations. The project will develop significant opportunities for small farmers and farm related businesses to expand. The expansion will trigger demand for food safety and certified washing, packing, and dry/cold storage facilities.
- BED 170 - \$3,000,000 in FY2026 in General Obligation Bonds for the acquisition of land. TMK (4)3-8-018-001 portion. The funds will be used for the acquisition of actively farmed lands on Kauai, preserving the productive lands for agriculture into the future. The lands contain significant irrigation infrastructure owned and operated by the ADC as part of the East Kauai Irrigation System.
- BED 170 - \$6,470,000 in FY2026 in General Obligation Bonds for the Plans, Design, Construction, and Equipment to improve the Kekaha irrigation system on Kauai. The funds will be used for development of an irrigation system that will support active farming on over 1,000 acres of highly productive land. The system will also provide infrastructure to support fire mitigation resources in the area.
- BED 170 - \$1,300,000 in FY2026 in General Obligation Bonds for the acquisition of land and plans for the development of a value-added product center in Kohala, Hawaii. TMK (2)5-4-009-016. The land is located near existing area farmers and is suitable for agriculture production. The acquisition will preserve the property for agriculture use.
- BED 170 - \$9,200,000 in FY2026 in General Obligation Bonds for the development of plans, design, construction, and equipment for the improvements to agricultural infrastructure in Wahiawa and Waialua, Oahu. The state has expanded its agricultural footprint around the Galbraith agricultural lands to increase local food production. The funds for this project will be used to improve connections to well water to provide water for irrigation and food safety water infrastructure to support the utilization of over 500 acres of land.

We support this bill provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in our Executive Budget.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



MARK PATTERSON
CHAIR

CHRISTIN M. JOHNSON
OVERSIGHT COORDINATOR

COMMISSIONERS
HON. R. MARK BROWNING (ret.)

HON. RONALD IBARRA (ret.)

MARTHA TORNEY

HON. MICHAEL A. TOWN (ret.)

STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII CORRECTIONAL SYSTEM OVERSIGHT COMMISSION
E HUIKALA A MA'EMA'E NŌ
235 S. Beretania Street, 16th Floor
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
(808) 587-4160

TO: The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
The Honorable Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Mark Patterson, Chair
Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission

SUBJECT: House Bill 300, Relating to the State Budget
Hearing: Wednesday, March 5, 2025; 9:00am
State Capitol, Room 308

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission (HCSOC, the Commission) **supports** House Bill 300, Relating to the State Budget, as the modest funding increase is essential for sustaining and expanding the Commission's vital oversight work. Through the Attorney General's Office, this bill allocates an increase of \$196,863 for FY26 and \$271,445 for FY27, allowing the Commission to continue fulfilling its statutory mandate and enhance its critical oversight efforts.

In 2019, the Hawaii legislature found that, "independent oversight of the State's correctional system ensures transparency, supports safe conditions for employees, inmates, and detainees, and provides positive reform towards a rehabilitative and therapeutic correctional system." This led to the passage of Act 179 of 2019 and the establishment of Chapter 353L in the Hawaii Revised Statutes, which tasks the Commission with monitoring the correctional system, investigating complaints, setting inmate population limits, and ensuring the effectiveness of offender reentry programs. Since its inception in 2020, the Commission has made significant strides, particularly with the hiring of dedicated staff and the initiation of vital oversight activities in 2022.

To date, the Commission has conducted over 65 investigative visits to correctional facilities, issued more than 55 public reports, and held over 70 public meetings. These efforts have resulted in over 100 recommendations to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR), a crucial partner in advancing a more rehabilitative and therapeutic corrections system. The implementation of these recommendations has already led to tangible improvements, including:

- Ensuring compliance with federal standards, such as proper access to courts, adequate bedframes and bunkbeds, appropriate clothing and bedding, access to outdoor recreation, and provision of menstrual pads.

- Creating a more therapeutic environment for individuals on suicide watch by painting and reconfiguring cells.
- Restoring contact visits to strengthen family ties, which is critical for successful reentry.
- Removing the monetary eligibility requirement for furlough participation at all furlough sites, expanding access to rehabilitation opportunities.

To build upon these successes and fully meet its statutory obligations, the Commission is respectfully requesting funding for two full-time positions including a Prison Oversight Specialist to expand investigative capacity and to fulfill §353L-4(b)(1), and a Research and Policy Associate to support data-driven reforms and fulfill §353L-4. Additionally, the Commission is requesting funding for a case management system to organize, track, and monitor all complaints and recommendations. Lastly, the Commission is requesting additional funding for inter-island and mainland correctional facility travel to fulfill §353L-4(b)(1), memberships and conferences to fulfill §353L-7, and general operational expenses.

Oversight is imperative to safeguarding the rights and well-being of incarcerated individuals, staff members who work in the correctional facilities, and the broader community. Furthermore, by ensuring compliance with state and federal regulations, robust oversight reduces the risk of costly litigation, ultimately saving taxpayer dollars while fostering a safer and more rehabilitative correctional system. Therefore, when evaluating the state of corrections and the allocation of funds towards correctional, reentry, and rehabilitative initiatives in Hawaii, the Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission stands as a pivotal investment for driving systemic transformation.

For all the reasons stated above, the Oversight Commission supports HB300 as it will increase funding for the Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission, enabling the Commission to sustain its crucial efforts. Should you have additional questions, the Oversight Coordinator, Christin Johnson, can be reached at 808-900-2200 or at christin.m.johnson@hawaii.gov.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



LAND USE COMMISSION

Komikina Ho'ohana 'Āina

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM
Ka 'Oihana Ho'omōhala Pā'oihana, 'Imi Wai wai a Ho'omāka'ika'i

JOSH GREEN, MD
GOVERNOR

DANIEL E. ORODENKER
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

235 S. Beretania Street, RM 406, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 2359, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96804
Email Address: dbedt.luc.web@hawaii.gov

Telephone: (808) 587-3822
Fax: (808) 587-3827
Website: luc.hawaii.gov

Statement of
Daniel E. Orodener
Executive Officer
State Land Use Commission

Before the
House Committee on Finance

Wednesday March 5, 2025
9:00 AM
State Capitol, Room 308 and Video Conference

In consideration of
HB300

RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET

Chair Yamashita; Vice Chair Takenouchi; and members of the House Committee on Finance:

The proposed measure appropriates funding for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027, including the operating budget for the State Land Use Commission ("LUC"). The LUC supports this measure and provides the following comments.

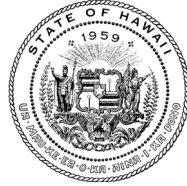
The LUC strongly supports efforts to provide affordable workforce housing. The proposed budget for BED103 (Page 55) provides for a continuing position for our Land Use Development Coordinator (Position No. 125210) but no funding for the coming two fiscal years. This position has been extremely successful in stimulating housing on projects that have been stalled. It has assisted in clearing the way for 1000 homes to break ground in this calendar year and over 13,000 homes in the next 5 years

We ask that the funding for this position be reinstated. The annual cost of this position is \$93,226.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

JOSH GREEN M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR



GARY S. SUGANUMA
DIRECTOR

KRISTEN M.R. SAKAMOTO
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF TAXATION

Ka 'Oihana 'Auhau

P.O. BOX 259

HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

PHONE NO: (808) 587-1540

FAX NO: (808) 587-1560

**TESTIMONY OF
GARY S. SUGANUMA, DIRECTOR OF TAXATION**

TESTIMONY ON THE FOLLOWING MEASURE:

H.B. No. 300, Relating to the State Budget

BEFORE THE:

House Committee on Finance

DATE: Wednesday, March 5, 2025

TIME: 9:00 a.m.

LOCATION: State Capitol, Room 308

Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Taxation (DOTAX) **supports** H.B. 300, which appropriates funds for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal years (FYs) 2025-2026 and 2026-2027.

DOTAX notes the following highlights from the budget to support its operations:

1. Add \$338,150 for FY 26 and \$1,343,400 for FY 27 for monitoring and maintenance of the Tax System Modernization (TSM) project. This request covers annual vendor price increases and the replacement of DOTAX's scanners, which process paper forms and payments.
2. Establish two permanent positions and add funds (\$65,000 for FY 26 and \$205,000 for FY 27) for a Senior Software Developer and Software Developer Supervisor. These positions are part of DOTAX's long-term goal to retain its developers and reduce reliance on vendor professional services.
3. Establish one permanent position and add funds (\$52,500 for FY 26 and \$105,000 for FY 27) for a Data Privacy Officer to fulfill the IRS requirement that DOTAX appoint a senior agency official responsible for coordinating,

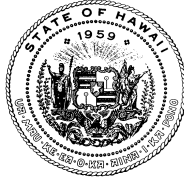
developing, and implementing privacy requirements and managing privacy risks.

4. Establish five permanent positions and add funds (\$229,796 for FY 26 and \$459,592 for FY 27) for a Departmental Program Officer, Program Specialist VI, Program Specialist V, Project Manager II, and Tax Business Analyst. These positions will be part of DOTAX's TSM Program Team within the Office of the Director and will be responsible for overseeing large updates to TSM, ensuring updates comply with applicable laws and user needs, interfacing with the IRS and other stakeholders, and training DOTAX users and taxpayers on TSM changes. The TSM Program Team will be vital in DOTAX's efforts to join the IRS Direct File program in 2026.

DOTAX notes that, due to an inadvertent error, the budget includes these five positions as part of the Information Technology Services Office (TAX107/AC). DOTAX requests that these positions instead be included in the Office of the Director (TAX107/AA).

5. Add \$100,000 for FY 26 to support the Tax Review Commission for necessary activities, including contracts for consultants. (GM 1)

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



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO
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Testimony in SUPPORT of HB300
RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET

REPRESENTATIVE KYLE T. YAMASHITA, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Hearing Date: March 5, 2025; 9:00 am

Room Number: 308

1 **Fiscal Implications:** Sufficient appropriations are required for the Department of Health (DOH)
2 to implement statutory obligations. Insufficient funding will jeopardize public health at large
3 and for vulnerable populations.

4 **Department Testimony:** The DOH supports HB300, in particular where priorities identified in
5 the Governor's Executive Budget request have been funded at requested levels.

6

7 The DOH's guiding principles include:

- 8 • Implementing and maintaining core public health functions, including assessment,
9 policy, and assurance,
- 10 • Satisfying federal mandates, including court-ordered settlements,
- 11 • Directing resources as problems that pose the greatest risk to the public's health and
12 the environment,
- 13 • Dispersing appropriate and cost-effective resources geographically, and
- 14 • Providing services of last resort for uninsurable populations and where there is no other
15 satisfactory alternative.

1 The DOH supports the Governor's Executive Budget Request and wishes to highlight several
2 priorities by Administration:

3 General Administration:

- 4 • AP-12 (HTH 907/AB) Add funds for moving and lease funds for the Department of
5 Health. This request is for funding for the move of staff in Kinau Hale to lease space.
6 The Kinau Hale, the central office for DOH, can no longer be repaired or maintained and
7 is creating health and safety issues for staff. Funding is requested for relocation of staff
8 to leased space. (\$3,750,000 A, FY 26)
- 9 • AP-13 (HTH 760/MS) Add funds for the Office of Health Status Monitoring (OHSM)
10 Moving and Office Lease. OSHM is currently located in the Kinau Hale Building and
11 needs to be relocated due to the deterioration of the building, jeopardizing records and
12 equipment needed for the issuance of birth, death, and marriage certificates, as well as
13 ongoing data collection related to health information. (\$821,000 A, FY26)
- 14 • B&F Adjustment (HTH 907/AP) Adds funds for continuation of the Healthcare Education
15 Loan Repayment Program. (\$15,000,000 A, FY 26; \$15,000,000 A, FY 27)

16 Behavioral Health Administration:

- 17 • AP-1 (HTH 430/HQ) Add recurring funds for various contracts for the Hawaii State
18 Hospital – Locums Tenens approved under HB1800 for FY 25. (\$13,000,000 A, FY 26;
19 \$13,000,000 A, FY 27)
- 20 • AP-2 (HTH 430/HQ) Add funds to Cover Overtime and Other Payroll Costs for Hawaii
21 State Hospital. (\$8,650,000 A, FY 26)
- 22 • FY-9 (HTH 420/HG) Add full year funding for 10 Clinical Psychologist Positions for Adult
23 Mental Health – Outpatient. (\$375,000 A, FY26; \$750,000 A FY27)

24

1 Environmental Health Administration:

- 2 • AP-6 (HTH 840/FJ) Adds funds and 1.0 permanent Program Specialist VI position and
3 funds for the Program Planning and Development segment of the proposed Sustainable
4 Materials Management Branch. (\$46,722 A, FY 26; \$93,444 A, FY 27)
- 5 • AP-11 (HTH 710/MB) Adds funds and 1.0 permanent clinical laboratory director to
6 ensure continued fulfilling of clinical laboratory licensing and certification requirements.
7 (\$83,000 A, FY 26; \$156,000 A, FY 27)
- 8 • AP-43 (HTH 840/FK) Adds funding and 2.0 positions and for the continuation of
9 supporting and facilitating cesspool conversions. (\$5,093,932 A, FY 26; \$187,864 A, FY
10 27)
- 11 • AP-53 (HTH840/FG) Adds funds and 5.0 positions to enhance water monitoring and
12 management of water pollution control. (\$191,970 A, FY 26; \$383,940 A, FY 27)

13 Health Resources Administration:

- 14 • AP-3 (HTH 730/MQ) Add funds to meet Collective Bargaining requirements for service
15 provider contracted for 911 emergency ground ambulance (\$3,561,867 A, FY26;
16 \$3,783,000 A, FY27) and for service provider contracted to provide 911 emergency
17 aeromedical ambulance service for the County of Maui (\$154,969 A, FY26; \$164,578 A,
18 FY27)
- 19 • AP-4 (HTH 730/MQ) Add recurring funds for second medic station and ambulance on the
20 island of Moloka'i. (\$1,600,000 A, FY26; \$1,600,000 A, FY27)
- 21 • AP-7 (HTH 560/CC) Convert 2.5 FTE positions of Hawaii Birth Defects Program, from
22 MOF Special Funds (B) to General (A) and add funds for operations. (\$340,444 A, FY26;
23 \$340,444 A, FY27)
- 24 • AP-8 (HTH 100/DG) Add funds to continue funding six Kalaupapa positions. (\$370,182 A,
25 FY26; \$439,368 A, FY27)

- 1 • AP-17 (HTH 131/DC) Change MOF N to A and Add Funds for 1.0 Public Health Program
2 Manager and 1.0 Secretary II. Current federal administration priorities put funding for
3 immunization services at risk. State funding for these positions ensures a minimum level
4 of continuity of the state Immunization Program. (\$90,144 A, FY26; \$180,288 A FY27)
- 5 • AP-19 (HTH 720/MP) Add funds for contracted services for Case Management Agencies,
6 Community Care Foster Family Homes, and Adult Day Care Centers. (\$111,127 A, FY26;
7 \$111,127 A, FY27)
- 8 • AP-25 (HTH 730/MQ) Add positions (0.405/0.405) and funds to create 0.75 permanent
9 Maui EMS Physician and 0.75 permanent Oahu EMS Physician. (\$89,329 A, FY26;
10 \$89,329 A FY27)
- 11 • AP-27 (HTH 596/KM) Add funds for OMCCR for leased office space. (\$353,150 B, FY26;
12 \$200,000 B FY27)
- 13 • B&F Adjustment (HTH 560/CK) Add funds for contract services for reproductive health
14 and family planning. (\$3,000,000 A, FY26; \$3,000,000 A FY27)

15 Capital Improvement Projects:

- 16 • CIP funding is being requested for the Kalaupapa Settlement for the following projects:
 - 17 ○ Project No 100231 – Kalaupapa Settlement, Close Landfills & Install Synthetic
18 Cover Layer at MSW Molokai (\$5,500,000 C, FY26)
 - 19 ○ Project No 100232 – Kalaupapa Settlement, Care Home Improvements, Molokai
20 (re-roof care home) (\$2,500,000 C, FY26)
 - 21 ○ Project No 100233 – Kalaupapa Settlement, Remove underground storage tanks,
22 Molokai (\$2,300,000 C, FY26)
- 23 • CIP funding is being requested for Hawaii State Hospital for the following projects:
 - 24 ○ Project 430201-Hawaii State Hospital health and safety (\$3,150,000 C, FY26;
25 \$5,750,000 C, FY 27)

- 1 ○ Project 430250-Repair chilled water line and related improvements (\$1,000,000
- 2 C, FY26)
- 3 ○ Project P23030-Water system improvements and other work (\$3,500,000 C,
- 4 FY26)
- 5 • CIP funding is being requested for matching of Safe Drinking Water Revolving Funds:
- 6 ○ Project 840227-Safe Drinking Water Revolving Fund (\$5,913,000 C, FY26;
- 7 \$5,913,000 C, FY27)
- 8 ○ Project 840227-Safe Drinking Water Revolving Fund (\$29,558,000 N, FY26;
- 9 \$29,558,000 N, FY27)
- 10 • CIP funding is being requested for matching of Wastewater Treatment Revolving Funds:
- 11 ○ Project 840228-Wastewater Treatment Revolving Fund (\$5,082,000 C, FY26;
- 12 \$5,082,000 C, FY27)
- 13 ○ Project 840228- Wastewater Treatment Revolving Fund (\$25,406,000 N, FY26;
- 14 \$25,406,000 N, FY27)

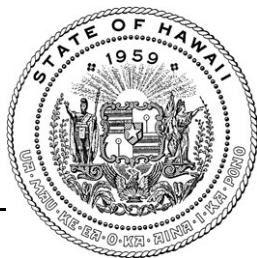
15 The Executive Biennium Budget requests also include trade-off transfers requests which consist
16 of housekeeping adjustments to reduce negative personal services adjustment budget lines and
17 other housekeeping requests and align the budget to previously acknowledged reorganizations.
18 Federal fund adjustments are also being submitted to align the federal budget ceiling with
19 updated actual and anticipated federal fund awards.

20 We have analyzed our federal funding for risk of potential loss and impact, which we have
21 provided to the Committee. While our budget includes converting a few critical positions from
22 federal to general funds, our budget does not include requests to supplant federal funds that
23 have not been lost, but yet may be.

24

1 The DOH continues to address the health of our State through a combination of population
2 health management and strategic partnerships to address the needs of our most vulnerable
3 populations. We look forward to advancing Hawaii's health agenda through leveraging of
4 resources and capitalizing on health care reform options which support accessible, affordable,
5 and quality health care.

6 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



**DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS,
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM**
KA 'OIHANA HO'OMOHALA PĀ'OIHANA, 'IMI WAIWAI
A HO'OMĀKA'IKĀ'I

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
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Statement of
JAMES KUNANE TOKIOKA
Director
Department of Business, Economic Development, and Tourism
before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Wednesday, March 5, 2025
9:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

In consideration of
HB300
RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET.

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi and members of the Committee.

The Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism strongly supports HB300, which appropriates funds for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027. DBEDT kindly requests consideration of the following Operating and CIP line items.

Operating Requests

Business Development and Support Division (BED100/SM)

- \$1,450,000 each year to be used for the Healthcare Workforce Development Program to provide funding for two programs: 1) High School Healthcare Workforce Certificate and 2) CNA to LPN Glidepath Program. Funding for the High School Certificate Program would address the entry-level healthcare workforce shortage by certifying high school students in high-demand healthcare professions. The Glidepath Program is an earn-and-learn pathway that further addresses the healthcare workforce shortage which enables employers to retain employees as they pursue education and career advancement.

Office of International Affairs (BED101/IA)

- \$2,000,000 each year to be used for the East-West Center (EWC) to provide Hawaii residents with the opportunity to participate in various activities related to the Asia-Pacific region. The East-West Center will expand its outreach activities so that an exponential number of Hawaii residents can benefit from the outcomes of its work. Funding would result in EWC's ability to convene more conferences in Honolulu, which will foster an infusion of additional funds into the Hawaii economy by individuals who will travel from out of state to participate in its conferences.

Land Use Commission (Proposed BED103/DA)

- 7.00 Permanent FTE; 1.00 Temporary FTE, and \$786,875 each year. The Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) has requested a change to the DBEDT program structure to add (restore) BED 103, State Land Use Commission, to DBEDT program IDs to promote transparency and accountability to the public and to better align two separate programs with their separate missions within the state program structure. This request would transfer all our LUC budget line items from BED144 and transfer in to BED103. This does not include the existing Land Use Development Coordinator and request the following:
 - \$186,456 (\$93,226 annually) to allow funding for the existing Land Use Development Coordinator position (Position No. 125210) which has been instrumental in assisting legacy workforce housing projects to address barriers in the development process.

Creative Industries Division (BED105/CI)

- 1.00 Program Specialist V (FY26: \$71,016 / FY27: \$71,016).
Lead position for CID and DBEDT's primary workforce development liaison, integrating industry and education partners, ensuring alignment with the state's economic diversification goals, accelerating job creation and career placement. Responsible for department specific industry cluster pipelines development and implementation. Key position to represent DBEDT on the Workforce Development Council (WDC) and will serve as workforce lead for the Business Revitalization Task Force (Permitted Interaction Group – Workforce).
- 1.00 Film Industry Development Specialist V (FY26: \$35,508 / FY27: \$71,016).
Restores film permitting statutory position, critical to intra state, inter departmental film permitting unit. Reduction of position in SLH 2024 impacts productions coming into state, local productions and the inter-departmental approval process, as the elimination of position reduced a two person team to one position only.

Foreign-Trade Zone (BED107/BA)

- \$120,000 Special Fund ceiling increase each year to allow for the procurement of one (1) additional forklift to complete fleet replacement and to cover costs of deferred maintenance projects, and other expenses due to inflationary increases.

Hawai'i Tourism Authority (BED113 – BED118)

- BED114/BM: \$2,773,676 each year. This program globally markets and brands the state of Hawai'i and its islands as a globally competitive leisure and business destination to strengthen tourism's overall contribution to Hawai'i economy. HTA will continue to be present in the major market areas of U.S., Canada, Japan, Korea, Oceania, Europe and China. In addition, HTA seeks to grow the meetings, conventions and incentives (MCI) market. Demand from domestic and international markets is expected to be soft, and there is a continued need for activities for quick return generation of demand, such as market saturation activations and co-op programs. Strong marketing is needed to stabilize the domestic market and rebuild the international markets. The current FY 25 marketing budget is only able to maintain interest and awareness levels.
- BED 114/BM: \$3,000,000 in FY26 for brand marketing, per Governor's Message 4. There is expected softness further into 2025 and 2026. Overcoming market hesitancy to visit Maui can only be accomplished through continued contact, frequent viewership, and relationship building. Activities will focus on short-term activities to increase demand, such as coop programs and in-market activations, and campaigns to show what to do and see.
- BED 114/BM: \$3,000,000 each year for Japan marketing, per Governor's Message 4. Japan market demand will continue to be down through 2027. Activities will focus on short-term activities to increase demand, such as coop programs, in-market activations, and campaigns to show what to do and see.
- BED116/DC: \$16,086,484 to combine program IDs BED115, BED117, and BED118 with BED116 to provide greater synergy for HTA's newly mandated objectives for destination management. All four programs are aimed at the same overall objective. Consolidating the programs will allow HTA to implement destination management cohesively without the additional administrative burden required for four separate programs.

Hawai'i State Energy Office (BED120/SI)

- \$97,095 each year to cover payroll shortfall that was never fully budgeted since the creation of the Chief Energy Officer position pursuant to Act 122, SLH2019.
- \$54,335 each year for salary adjustments necessitated from the additional workload to GF positions from securing 18 new federal awards totaling approximately \$102 million in federal grants since January of 2023 and adding 11 new federally funded positions.

Hawai'i Green Infrastructure Authority (BED138/GI)

- 1.00 Investment Fund Manager (FY 26: \$211,150 / FY 27: \$217,485) in special funds to include position #125606 (authorized by Act 40, SLH 2024) in HGIA's base budget.

Director's Office (BED142/AA)

- 1.00 Sports Tourism Manager and funds of \$149,000 each year. This position will play a vital role in promoting Hawai'i as a premier sports tourism destination. The position will be responsible for developing and implementing marketing strategies that attract sporting events, athletes, and spectators to the Hawaiian Islands. Further, this position is critical to promote sport events and activities within the State of Hawai'i and to establish and continue sports networking with our sister states, like Las Vegas, California, and others.

Hawai'i Technology Development Corporation (BED143/TE)

- \$1,000,000 each year for the Manufacturing Assistance Program and Hawai'i Small Business Innovation Research Program. HTDC firmly believes that these grant programs play a crucial role in leveraging resources and fostering positive economic development throughout the State of Hawai'i which will lead to job creation, sustainable development, and a more resilient and diverse economy for Hawai'i.

Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (BED144)

- BED144/DA – Transfer out 7.00 Permanent FTE; 1.00 Temporary FTE, and \$786,875 each year to BED103/DA. The Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (OPSD) has requested a change to the DBEDT program structure to add (restore) BED 103, State Land Use Commission (LUC), to DBEDT program IDs to promote transparency and accountability to the public and to better align two separate programs with their separate missions within the state program structure.
- BED144/PZ - \$255,964 each year for Coastal Zone Management Federal Fund Ceiling Increase. Increase appropriation ceiling due to Federal Grant continuing support and inflation.
- BED144/PL - 1.00 Special Funds Project Coordinator and administration costs for the second year (FY 2026) of the Hawaii State Planning Act Phase 2. Additional funding is required to continue this multi-year process to update HRS 226 pursuant to Act 36, SLH 2024.
- BED144/PL – 3.00 exempt, filled, temporary FTE and \$282,060 each year. Personnel funds are needed to retain staff to continue to support an Economic Development District (EDD) designation to unlock additional federal dollars and support for economic development and resilience projects across the state.

Failure to fund these positions will result in the loss of staffing required to maintain the EDD designation and benefits.

- BED144/PL - 1.00 Permanent FTE (FY 26: \$35,508 / FY 27: \$71,016) for the Statewide Sustainability Branch to support statewide climate and sustainability coordination/implementation. Established by HRS §225M-8 (Act 45, SLH 2020), the Branch coordinates and implements policies, evaluates legislation, and advises the Governor, Legislature, and agencies on sustainability and climate resilience. Currently, the Branch has only 1.00 FTE (State Sustainability Coordinator). This request would expand capacity to meet climate resilience demands.
- BED144/PL - \$45,570 each year to restore full-year funding for 1.00 FTE permanent Planning Program Manager #11310. The personnel costs for this permanent civil service position were reduced by five months of salary when the incumbent was appointed by Governor Green to serve as the Director of the Office of Planning and Sustainable Development for a term-limited appointment with return rights to the position. The salary needs to be restored to 12 months' salary in order for the incumbent to exercise return rights.
- BED144/PZ – Convert 5.00 Permanent FTE from federal funds to general funds. This would include an increase of General Funds of \$411,408, and a decrease of Federal funds of \$663,629 each year for the Coastal Zone Management Program (CZM). From 1975 to approx. 2009, the positions were general funded. In 2009, the positions were converted to federal funding following a decline in State revenues. The provision of federal funds from NOAA was temporary, with a condition that the State take active steps to restore State funding for the positions. The restoration of general funds for the positions ensures that the State can satisfy the condition(s) of the federal cooperative agreement to maintain eligibility for CZM to receive its annual award of \$2.5 million.

Hawai'i Community Development Authority (BED150/KA)

- 1.00 Program Specialist V and funds of \$100,000 each year. Act 97, SLH 2023 established the ninety-nine leasehold program, which included two temporary positions through June 2025. The multi-year endeavor required HCDA to promulgate rules for the sale of the leasehold interest of residential condominium units and develop one project on non-ceded lands within an urban redevelopment site. The project is well underway, and the position is needed to administer the program.
- \$500,000 in FY26 for a Climate Change Impact Assessment. Act 221, SLH 2023 required the HCDA to consider the impacts of sea level rise in its Kaka'ako and Kalaeloa community development districts. There is a need to engage with

stakeholders and landowners to promulgate rules. The HCDA will commence rulemaking that considers the impacts of climate change, sea level rise, climate-resilient development, and duty to preserve and protect customary and traditional rights of Native Hawaiians, in the design and siting of buildings in the Kaka'ako and Kalaeloa community development districts.

Agribusiness Development Corporation (BED170/KB)

- \$120,000 revolving fund ceiling increase in FY26 for Attorney General support. With the acquisition of the Mililani Tech Park, there is extensive legal work required to create a clear path for the use of agricultural technology in the park. There will be work in unwinding some of the encumbrances and creating a legal path forward. In addition, ADC needs research done to verify ADC properties that are ceded lands and appropriate fees to be paid for OHA & DHHL. The ADC will need to define what percentage, if any, is paid for Common Area Maintenance, Conservation Easements, Mining/dirt or rock, & Grant money. Current attorney has a workload that includes two lawsuits with ongoing compliance, in addition to a review of the Kekaha Agriculture Association MOA for ADC compliance with the terms. Going forward there are best management and additional federal rules that will affect Hawai'i agricultural business. There is no alternative for this request.

Stadium Authority (BED180/SA)

- \$49,500,000 in FY26 to increase the Stadium Development Special Fund (SDSF) ceiling to allow Stadium Authority to allot and expend the funds appropriated in Act 248, Session Laws of Hawaii 2022 and by proviso 17.3 authorized to deposit the appropriation into the SDSF. The ceiling increase will provide SA with a great amount of flexibility to utilize these funds to support the New Aloha Stadium Entertainment District (NASSED) project.

CIP Requests

Office of International Affairs (BED101)

- \$5,000,000 in General Obligation (GO) Bonds in FY26 for the East-West Center. Essential/Critical upgrades to address emergencies to remedy dangerous health or safety conditions of facilities that pose significant risk or liability issues, support EWC operations related to asset condition and longevity, and enhance the EWC residential or convening experience.

Foreign-Trade Zone (BED107)

- \$6,070,000 Reimbursable GO Bonds in FY26 as working capital to construct the Hilo Tropical AgTech facility. The goal of this multiuse innovation center will be to

improve small farm competitiveness and profitability, increase food security and resiliency, develop ag related products and intellectual property for export, create higher paying STEM related jobs, and keep local talent in Hawaii. The FTZ has a \$6.1M federal earmark for this project but needs working capital to move the project forward.

Hawai'i Tourism Authority (BED113)

- For the fiscal biennium, HTA initially submitted a \$20,000,000 CIP request to the Governor through DBEDT. However, following the lapsing of \$13.7 million in CIP funds appropriated under Act 248, SLH 2022, and revised project estimates, HTA now requests \$52,000,000 in CIP funds for FY 2026 to fully fund all R&M projects. This increase will support planned Hawai'i Convention Center (HCC) renovations scheduled for completion in calendar year 2026, during the center's modified operating schedule for its roof repair project.

Office of Planning and Sustainable Development (BED144)

- \$500,000 in GO Bonds in FY26 for East Kapolei Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Infrastructure. An EIS is the next step in this effort and will cost \$500,000. The EIS will expedite development, including housing production.
- \$2,000,000 in GO Bonds in FY26 for State TOD Planning, Statewide. Plans, feasibility and cost studies, and coordination of TOD projects, TOD public infrastructure requirements, and related environmental review documents for TOD projects in State TOD strategic plan.

Hawai'i Community Development Authority (BED150)

- \$30,000,000 (FY2026: \$12,102,000; FY2027: \$17,898,000) in GO Bonds for 99-Year Leasehold Program Phase 2 to design and construct the condominium building to facilitate the creation of low-cost residential condominium units for sale to Hawai'i residents on non-ceded state-owned lands withing an urban development site (Act 97, SLH 2023).
- \$50,000,000 (\$5,000,000 FY2026, \$45,000,000 FY2027) in General Obligation Bonds for UH West O'ahu Infrastructure Phase 2 to construct roadways and related improvements to support the University of Hawai'i West O'ahu developments.
- \$62,000,000 (\$12,000,000 FY 2026; 50,000,000 FY 2027) in General Obligation Bonds for Iwilei-Kapālama Community Development District to design and construct infrastructure improvements (sewer, water, drainage, transportation, and electric) to support future development at Liliha Civic Center and Mayor Wright Housing.
- \$500,000 in GO Bonds in FY26 for Land Acquisition for Film Studio and Workforce Development.

- \$1,000,000 in GO Bonds in FY26 for Kaka'ako Makai Planning to facilitate community engagement and help to promote more coordinated development and appropriate urban design among the major landowners and tenants.
- \$1,500,000 in GO Bonds in FY26 for Climate Change Impact Assessment to consider the impacts of sea level rise in the Kaka'ako and Kalaeloa community development districts (Act 221, SLH 2023). The HCDA will commence rulemaking that considers the impacts of climate change, sea level rise, climate-resilient development, and duty to preserve and protect customary and traditional rights of Native Hawaiians, in the design and siting of buildings in the Kaka'ako and Kalaeloa community development districts.
- \$1,000,000 in GO Bonds in FY26 for Kalaeloa Infrastructure EIS District Wide to prepare a programmatic environmental impact statement and archaeological/historical/cultural analyses (ka pa'akai) to cover infrastructure projects, development, and master plan implementation in Kalaeloa.

Hawai'i Housing Finance and Development Corporation (BED160)

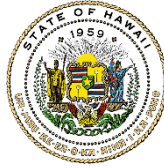
- \$20,000,000 in GO Bonds each year for Dwelling Unit Revolving Fund (DURF) infusion, statewide. DURF funds are used for the acquisition of real property, development, and construction of residential, commercial, and industrial properties, providing loans to the county and private developers as well as loans or grants to other state agencies for infrastructure improvements that are needed to facilitate housing development.
- \$50,000,000 in GO Bonds each year for Rental Housing Revolving Fund (RHRF) infusion for affordable rental housing, statewide. RHRF provides loans or grants for development, pre-development, construction, acquisition, preservation, and substantial rehabilitation of rental housing units, primarily for households earning up to 60% of area median income (AMI).
- \$75,000,000 in GO Bonds each year for RHRF Tier II affordable rental housing, statewide. The RHRF Tier II funding will support the development of affordable rental units for households earning over 60% AMI as well as the preservation of naturally occurring affordable housing units.

Agribusiness Development Corporation (BED170)

- \$4,000,000 in GO Bonds in FY26 for Small Animal Slaughterhouse, O'ahu. For Plans, Design, Construction, and Equipment for establishment of a slaughter facility to meet the growing demand of local grown meat. The facility will help to fulfill the needs of agriculture operations that produce small animals for meat, such as lamb, goat, hog, which currently have limited access to slaughter facilities.

- \$350,000 in GO Bonds in FY26 for Plans, and Design for a statewide Food and Product Innovation Network. These funds support the development of Hawai'i made products to maximize agricultural production. The objective of this project is to create infrastructure where research, development, and innovation can occur and be shared to accelerate the development of Hawai'i made agricultural products. The project will create a network of facilities and expertise in each county to enable acceleration of innovative value-added products for local and export markets.
- \$6,500,000 in GO Bonds in FY26 for construction of a postharvest facility on O'ahu. The funds will be used to support active area farm operations. The project will develop significant opportunities for small farmers and farm related businesses to expand. The expansion will trigger demand for food safety and certified washing, packing, and dry/cold storage facilities.
- \$3,000,000 in GO Bonds in FY26 for the acquisition of land. TMK (4)3-8-018-001 portion. The funds will be used for the acquisition of actively farmed lands on Kaua'i, preserving the productive lands for agriculture into the future. The lands contain significant irrigation infrastructure owned and operated by the ADC as part of the East Kaua'i Irrigation System.
- \$6,470,000 in GO Bonds in FY26 for the Plans, Design, Construction, and Equipment to improve the Kekaha irrigation system on Kaua'i. The funds will be used for development of an irrigation system that will support active farming on over 1,000 acres of highly productive land. The system will also provide infrastructure to support fire mitigation resources in the area.
- \$1,300,000 in GO Bonds in FY26 for the acquisition of land and plans for the development of a value-added product center in Kohala, Hawai'i. TMK (2)5-4-009-016. The land is located near existing area farmers and is suitable for agriculture production. The acquisition will preserve the property for agriculture use.
- \$9,200,000 in GO Bonds in FY26 for the development of plans, design, construction, and equipment for the improvements to agricultural infrastructure in Wahiawa and Waialua, Oahu. The state has expanded its agricultural footprint around the Galbraith agricultural lands to increase local food production. The funds for this project will be used to improve connections to well water to provide water for irrigation and food safety water infrastructure to support the utilization of over 500 acres of land.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



STATE OF HAWAII

Executive Office on Early Learning

Ke'ena Ho'okele Ho'ona'auao Pae Kamali'i o Hawai'i Moku'aina
2759 South King Street, Room C6
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96826

TO: Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Yuuko Arikawa-Cross, Director
Executive Office on Early Learning

SUBJECT: Testimony on H.B. No. 300 - RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET

Committee: FIN
Date: Wednesday, March 5, 2025
Time: 9:00 a.m.
Location: Conference room 308

Executive Office on Early Learning's Position: **SUPPORT**

The Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) offers the following comments in support of H.B. No. 300 and requests your consideration of the following budget requests.

Expansion of EOEL Prekindergarten (Pre-K) classrooms

The EOEL's highest priority request is for funds and positions to support the expansion of EOEL Prekindergarten (Pre-K) classrooms over the next biennium. We are requesting \$5,027,927 and 58 positions in FY26, and \$8,236,302 and 108 positions in FY27. This funding will allow the EOEL to add an additional 50 classrooms over the next two years.

In 2020, the Hawai'i State Legislature passed Act 46 which established a framework and benchmarks for achieving universal access to early learning for 3- and 4-year-olds. The requested expansion of EOEL Pre-K classrooms helps advance our progress toward these goals and supports educational equity through priority enrollment for at-risk children.

Since the passage of Act 46, the number of EOEL prekindergarten classrooms has grown. The EOEL currently partners with the Hawai'i State Department of Education (HIDOE) to administer 92 Public Pre-K classrooms in 74 HIDOE campuses across the State. However, demand remains high, with the number of applications far exceeding the number of available classroom seats for the 2024-25 school year.

As the program continues to grow, EOEL also works closely with HIDOE to ensure children enrolled in our classrooms receive high-quality early childhood development and early learning experiences that promote Kindergarten readiness. We are happy to report that the program is consistently recognized by the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) for meeting benchmarks for quality standards, and as of their 2023 report, Hawai'i is one of only five states that met all 10 benchmarks for state preschool programs.

Family Child Interaction Learning Programs

The EOEL also respectfully requests your consideration of funding to support Family Child Interaction Learning Programs (FCILs), which was approved by the Early Learning Board but not included in the Governor's budget request. We are requesting \$800,000 in FY26 and FY27 for contracts with third-party providers of FCIL programs.

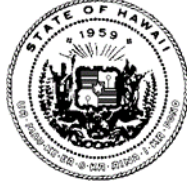
FCILs are an important component of a strong, mixed-delivery early learning system, offering families flexibility in choosing the type of early childhood development and learning experiences that best meet their needs.

They promote children's well-being by supporting families in their growth as their children's first and most important teachers. The programs provide activities and opportunities for families who may not be interested in or able to participate in more traditional child care or preschool programs.

These programs are characterized by a multi-generational, culturally responsive approach that values and incorporates the diverse backgrounds of participating families. With a dual focus on parent education and early learning, they provide opportunities for children and caregivers to grow together. The setting often resembles a child care classroom, but with the key distinction that families are responsible for their own children while attending the program. Activities often include group circle time, outdoor play, and a variety of learning stations designed to foster engagement and development. In addition to these interactive experiences, family members receive instruction on child development, workforce readiness, financial literacy, and other essential life skills, equipping them with the tools to support both their children's and their own success.

EOEL strongly supports these budget requests which will expand access to high-quality early learning, advance educational equity, and help fulfill the state's commitment to universal access to early learning for 3 and 4-year-olds. We appreciate the Legislature's continued investment in our youngest keiki and their families and respectfully request your support of this funding.

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 4, 2025 March 4, 2025

TO: The Honorable Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Ryan I. Yamane, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 300 – RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET.**

Hearing: March 5, 2025, 9:00 a.m.
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports this measure.

PURPOSE: This bill appropriates funds for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027.

On behalf of the staff of the Department of Human Services (DHS), we appreciate the opportunity to present the department's biennium budget requests. We thank the Legislature for its continuing support of the department's staff and operational needs. DHS continues to provide vital benefits and services to Hawaii residents as we modernize our information systems and business processes.

We acknowledge that many Hawaii residents are struggling to make ends meet and continue to apply for and require government assistance at near-record levels. We recognize the immense value of the hardworking human services workforce and community providers who strive to provide services with Aloha in timely and responsive ways. We know residents' and workers' success and well-being depend on safe and stable living and working environments, and having resources.

DHS 'Ohana Nui multigenerational approach supports the well-being of the whole person, individual, family, and community. It is our highest priority to support the child welfare workforce as we work with the Office of Wellness & Resilience and the Malama Ohana Work Group and stakeholders to improve the child protective system and respond to community concerns. These budget requests reflect the need for continued investment in the human services workforce and the work environment to improve the technology available to the public and staff and to ensure workplace safety. The budget includes investment in Hawaii's health care programs, providers, and institutions that serve residents with Medicaid health coverage.

Highlights of our priorities in this fiscal biennium (FB) budget for 2025-2027 include requests for:

- Shortage differential for the recruitment and retention of child protective services workers;
- Funds for the Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS);
- Funds to support victims of sex trafficking;
- Funds to continue the Family Resource Centers pilot program aimed to increase services for families in communities, schools, and a correctional facility as a prevention strategy to reduce child abuse and neglect and improve children's and parents' engagement in school;
- Increased funding for In-home Home and Community-Based services that keep kupuna and people with disabilities in the community and avoid having to move them to significantly more expensive nursing facilities;
- Sustained funding for increased reimbursement rates for most medical professional services to 100% of Medicare as funding is non-recurring;
- Sustained funding for Applied Behavioral Analysis services, Child Wellness Pilot program, as funding is non-recurring;
- Funds for increased payments for death benefits as funding was only appropriated in Act 108, SLH 2024 for FY 2025;
- The Hospital Sustainability and Nursing Facilities Sustainability Special Funds that support increased payments to hospitals and nursing facilities that serve residents on Medicaid;
- Increased funds to address and reduce homelessness with continued development, maintenance, and operations of Kauhale;
- Sustained funding for homeless services: Family Assessment Centers, Housing First, Homeless Outreach including legal services, and Rapid Rehousing – these items are currently non-recurring;
- An additional year of funding to continue temporary housing and other recovery efforts for Maui Wildfire survivors;
- Funds to continue the Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer Program (S-EBT) for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits for public school children during the summer break;

- Funds to support youth mental health services provided through the Office of Youth Services;
- A CIP request to continue modernizing the Benefits Eligibility System to improve the application for and delivery of financial Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Benefits (SNAP) and benefits; and
- A ceiling increase of the Randolph Sheppard Revolving Account that supports the blind vendors program.

The Hawaii Public Housing Authority also has significant requests to support public and low-income housing and will submit its budget narrative.

Notably, the general fund additions that serve as state matching funds required for federally funded programs will allow DHS to access approximately \$58.89M in additional federal matching funds or federal reimbursement for FY2026 and an additional \$54.66M in FY2027 in federal funds.¹

The Department continues to process a high number of monthly applications, and Medicaid and child care caseloads remain above pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels as individuals and families continue to need assistance to meet Hawaii's high cost of living. DHS leadership is mindful of the impacts of a slowing economy or higher consumer costs that have a direct relationship with more residents seeking public assistance. Housing instability and evictions are major long-lasting disruptions to the well-being of children, families, and individuals, and increased funding to address housing instability and increasing housing inventory is necessary.

From a workforce perspective, DHS continues to have high vacancy rates influenced by another year of long-term employees retiring in 2024, as well as a general shortage of human services workers due to wage gaps and the toll of providing services to residents with complex needs. We must continue to have the resources and flexibility to innovate, train, and support career pathways and the professional development of the current and future human services workforce.

¹ DHS strategizes to maximize available federal funds. The various federally funded or split-funded benefit programs often provide federal matching funds for operations, including personnel costs, or use a reimbursement model where the State upfronts 100% of the expenditures and then seeks federal reimbursement for a percentage of the expenditures. Notably, these budget requests do not consider potential policy and fiscal changes that may be forthcoming by the federal.

**A. Overview – Mission Statement, Strategic Objectives, Goals, and Performance Metrics.
How will the agency measure progress? What milestones will be tracked?**

The Department of Human Services (DHS) provides programs and services aligned to the following guiding principles, vision statement, mission statement, and core values, which are:

Guiding Principles

- Article IX, Section Three of the Hawai'i State Constitution regarding public assistance,
- Section 5-7.5, Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS), the "Aloha Spirit" statute, and
- Section 26-14, HRS, codifying 'Ohana Nui, DHS' multigenerational approach to delivering human services to reduce the incidences of poverty and to end poverty.

Vision Statement

The people of Hawai'i are thriving.

Mission Statement

To encourage self-sufficiency and support the well-being of individuals, families, and communities in Hawai'i.

Core Values

At DHS, our vision is that all Hawai'i residents can and will thrive. We strive to reach this vision by fulfilling our mission to encourage self-sufficiency and support the well-being of individuals, families, and communities in Hawai'i. We are guided in all of our work by our core values:

- (T) **Team-oriented** – We acknowledge that internal and external partnerships are critical to the success of DHS.
- (H) **Human-centered** – We develop strategies and make improvements as necessary from the client's perspective.
- (R) **Respectful** – We recognize the inherent value of each person as well as the diverse cultures of Hawai'i.
- (I) **Intentional** – We are mindful of our decisions and actions in our collective work.
- (V) **Visionary** – We strive to support our clients by co-creating generative, forward-looking strategies.
- (E) **Evidence-based** – We make decisions based on data and take actions that we know will have sustainable outcomes.

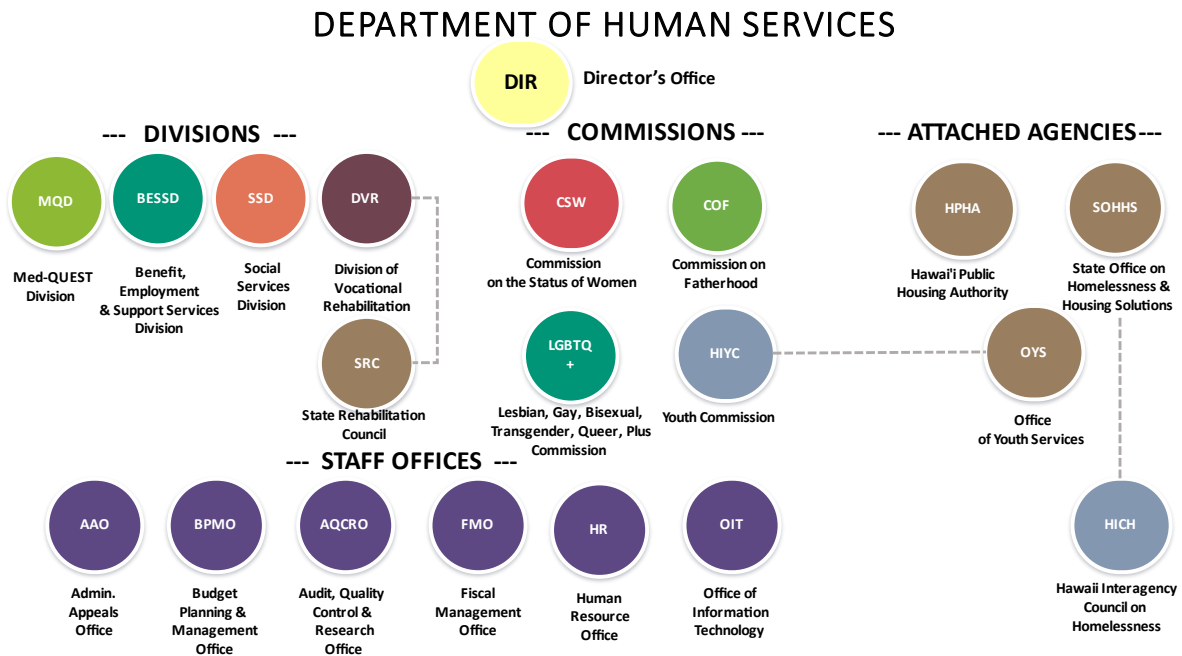


Figure 1. DHS Organizational Chart, ver.2023

DHS provides benefits and services with the following organizational structure (as illustrated above):

- Four Divisions: Benefit, Employment & Support Services (BESSD), Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), Med-QUEST Division (MQD), Social Services Division (SSD);
- Three attached agencies: the Office of Youth Services (OYS), which includes the Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility (HYCF), the Hawai'i Public Housing Agency (HPHA), and the Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions (SOHHS);²
- Four attached commissions and two councils: the Hawai'i State Commission on the Status of Women (HSCSW), the Commission on Fatherhood (COF), the Hawaii Youth Commission, the Hawai'i State Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender, Queer, Plus Commission (HSLGBTQ+), the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), and the Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH);
- Six staff offices that provide services to all divisions, attached agencies, and commissions: Administrative Appeals Office (AAO), Audit, Quality Control & Research Office (AQCRO), Budget, Planning, & Management Office (BPMO), Fiscal Management Office (FMO), Human Resources (HR), and Office of Information Technology (OIT); and
- The Director's Office provides overall management of the department. It is the lead for emergency management responsibilities, including Maui Wildfire recovery efforts and

²Per Act 87, Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH) 2023, the Office of Wellness & Resilience (OWR) will become an attached agency of DHS on July 1, 2025. However, this session per Governor's request, the OWR will be attached to the Department of Human Resources Development (DHRS).

piloting cross-department projects such as Family Resource Centers, including the Family Resource & Visitation Center at Waiawa Correctional Facility, the SNAP Longitudinal Data Project, and the National Governors Association Youth Mental Health Technical Assistance.

Four Divisions: Benefits & Services

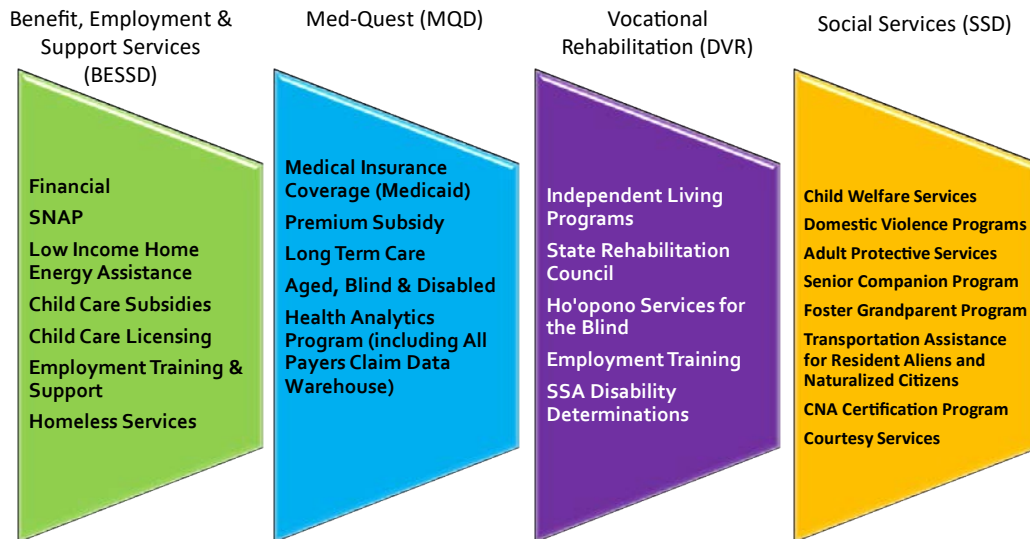


Figure 2. Major DHS programs by division, ver.2023

With 2,400 positions in more than 80 offices statewide, DHS continues to serve nearly 1/3 of Hawaii's population with one or more benefits or services. In SFY25, DHS manages an annual budget of over \$4.46 billion, of which more than 65% are federal funds. Notably, DHS distributes a vast majority of federal funds as benefits or services and can also access federal matching funds or seek federal reimbursement to pay for salaries and operations. To continue to serve Hawaii's residents efficiently and effectively, we have the following strategic goals:

- Goal 1: Improve the self-sufficiency and well-being of Hawai'i's individuals and families.**
DHS provides benefits and services to vulnerable individuals and families by assisting them with financial assistance and nutrition assistance, securing gainful employment toward economic self-sufficiency, supporting early childhood development and school readiness, providing access to health care, intervention, and prevention services that address abuse and neglect, and increasing housing stability.
- Goal 2: Improve service integration and delivery to develop solutions for sustainable outcomes.**

DHS programs and benefits support Hawaii's individuals, families, and communities, contribute to our local economy, and establish Hawai'i DHS as a national human service delivery leader. We are transforming our policies, processes, and systems to improve the self-sufficiency and well-being of Hawai'i's individuals and families. We aim to serve residents across programs and divisions with integrated eligibility and case management applications and a vision for the future that connects residents quickly to available resources.

- (1) Modernizing the DHS IT infrastructure,
- (2) Implementing our multigenerational 'Ohana Nui framework to end intergenerational poverty, and
- (3) Developing and implementing the department's strategic plan and performance measures. See the attached DHS Key Performance Indicators (KPI).

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, DHS maintains a hybrid work environment while maintaining and increasing safe access to benefits and services. Experienced and innovative leadership and dedicated staff executed the many pandemic programs and programmatic changes built on skills gained through our ongoing business processes and IT modernization efforts. IT investments during the pandemic continued to build on organizational changes DHS began when implementing the Affordable Care Act. With improved technology, staff are more able to provide services statewide and are not geographically limited to process work on their home island. Supervisors and administrators are better able to redirect human resources when necessary. However, we need to continue to recruit, hire, train, and support the human services workforce as the magnitude of demand for services has increased.

DHS continues to support recovery efforts resulting from the 2023 Maui Wildfires. The Rental Assistance Program, the housing development at Ka La'i Ola, and the Pu'u honua o Nene continue to support Maui residents with interim housing needs, especially for those who do not qualify for federal assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The Maui Relief Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Program continues to provide financial assistance to families with children who do not qualify for FEMA benefits. DHS is also the lead agency for the State's FEMA Disaster Case Management Program which provides case management services for all Maui residents impacted by the fires.

Goal 3: Improve staff health and development.

Like many human services agencies across the country, DHS continues to face high vacancy rates as higher-paying private and public sector jobs attract the available workforce. Findings from a recent wage equity study from the University of Washington School of Social Work found that:

- (1) "human services workers are systematically paid less than workers in non-care industries, with estimated pay gaps of 30% or more across different econometric models[,]" and
- (2) "human services workers are paid less than workers in other industries or sectors whose tasks are rated as comparable through a systematic job evaluation process."³

As such, we need to address compensation and engage in broad cross-sector opportunities to encourage and support the State's health and human services workforce with career pathways and professional development that promote skills-building and leadership development.

B. Overview - Discuss how current state-wide conditions have affected agency operations and the ability to meet goals. Identify and discuss notable performance measures, expected outcomes, and recent results.

The significant conditions impacting DHS operations and ability to meet all program goals are:

- High vacancy rates across the department;
- Continued high application rates and caseloads above pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels;
- A return to pre-COVID-19 pandemic program rules while implementing other new program rules or processes;
- Resources need to conduct 2023 Maui Wildfire response and recovery lines of effort,
- The consequences of Hawaii's high cost of living and doing business, and
- Uncertainties of new federal policies and impact on programming and funding with the current administration.

With low unemployment and better-paying opportunities in the private sector, DHS will continue to face difficulty filling positions that will impact the department's ability to deliver timely benefits and services. We continue to see high application and enrollment rates for SNAP and Medicaid programs as Hawaii residents continue to struggle to meet high housing and consumer prices, even as Hawaii's unemployment rate remains low. If the national and state economies slow or face disruptions that increase consumer prices, we anticipate additional increases in applications and program enrollment as residents seek assistance.

The SNAP program is hampered by the inability to fill eligibility worker positions necessary to authorize SNAP applications and benefits. The November 2024 SNAP caseload serving 83,364 households is above the caseload of pre-COVID January 2020 (=79,672 households). COVID-19

³ See <https://socialwork.uw.edu/wageequitystudy>.

pandemic program waivers that allowed a high of 111,900 households in July 2021 ended in 2024.

During the height of the pandemic, as previously reported, DHS experienced a high error rate, resulting in the U.S. Food & Nutrition Service issuing a fiscal penalty to the State. DHS has an administration measure for an emergency appropriation that will provide funds to improve the IT system to reduce errors as part of the penalty.

Additionally, the return to regular program rules includes reinstatement of additional steps that have caused applicants and recipients to experience long wait times to have eligibility determined or maintained. Congress also made additional adjustments to the SNAP program that DHS is addressing, along with amending program rules and modifying its system to address the changes that will increase program eligibility.

However, in the summer of 2024, the SNAP program successfully implemented the first Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (Summer-EBT) program to 90,000 public school students with \$177 each during the summer break. DHS is working on the 2nd year of the S-EBT program, which will require additional program requirements.

The Medicaid program is also experiencing high application rates and enrollment levels. In 2024, the Med-QUEST Division (MQD) successfully redetermined eligibility for all Medicaid enrollees as a part of the "unwinding" from COVID-19 pandemic programming. In December 2024, the "new normal" for Medicaid program enrollment is hovering at 406,337; this is a decrease from the peak pandemic enrollment of 468,120 in 2023. However, the current enrollment level is nearly 80,000 more residents than the number enrolled in March 2020. Of note, the "unwinding" included a reduction of the percentage of the base federal match for Medicaid, which may require a higher general fund appropriation to support the enrollment at the 400k "new normal."

We anticipate continued housing instability and low inventory amongst Hawaii's low-income residents. The State Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions requests funding to increase the number of Kauhale ("tiny homes") projects statewide and to maintain the current Kauhale inventory. Restoration of homeless services funding that supports Housing First (the State's permanent supportive housing program), homeless outreach including legal services, family assessment centers, and rapid rehousing services.

Child care is also experiencing high participation rates as DHS distributed COVID-19 pandemic funds and implemented the state-funded expanded Preschool Open Doors (POD) program for Hawaii's 3- and 4-year-old children. Parents benefit from child care subsidies to access affordable quality child care. Parents and caretakers can go to work or school with confidence that their children are being well cared for.

DHS dispersed \$114,000,000 from the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (Public Law No. 117-2) (ARPA). These ARPA funds sustained and buffered child care providers through the most tumultuous parts of the pandemic and recovery period. Between December 2021 and September 2023, DHS distributed \$72,000,000 of ARPA child care stabilization funds directly to 616 licensed and registered family child care homes, group child care centers, group child care homes, infant and toddler centers, before and after school facilities, and exempt center-based providers of afterschool A+ services. In November 2024, DHS concluded its supplemental grant program, providing an additional \$42,000,000 directly to 617 child care providers between May and November 2024.

The supplemental grants were intended to prevent permanent closures and support child care businesses by offsetting providers' operating expenses, improving quality, and increasing workforce compensation so that child care providers could recruit and retain a skilled workforce. Providers received two (2) rounds each of operating expense and staff retention awards which directors, teachers, assistant teachers, lead caregivers, and caregivers received a disbursement of \$4,500, and all other caregiving staff received a disbursement of \$3,000. DHS is currently working on data collection and analysis of the supplemental grant program.

The end of ARPA funding is a significant concern for the child care sector, and the Legislature may need to consider additional funds to support child care providers.

DHS Child Care Programs Office successfully implemented the POD program's First Come First Served open application period, which runs from July 1, 2024 – January 31, 2025. The change in application processing per Act 153, Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH) 2024, allows DHS to process applications on a first-come, first-served basis after the priority period closes to allow a continuous enrollment process throughout the program year. The change facilitates more access to subsidies and a school readiness program without delay. Nearly 2,000 applications have been received, with July 2024 bringing in the highest total of 938 applications. As of November 2024, 1,963 3- and 4-year-old children are enrolled in POD. By the end of November, POD will achieve an enrollment count of more than 2,000 children. This is a significant increase from the previous school year by more than 600 children. The department is also considering rule amendments to further support the expansion of POD through increased eligibility limits and lowered co-payments for families.

DHS leadership continues to lead the department's emergency management efforts. The Director's Office continues to lead the Rent Assistance Program, the development of interim housing at Ka Lai Ola, and the FEMA Disaster Case Management grant program. The SOHHS also maintains the Pu'u Honua o Nene field shelter for individuals who were experiencing homelessness prior to the August 2023 wildfires. The TANF program also maintains the Maui TANF Recovery Program providing cash assistance to families with children. The Director's office also established a temporary auditor position to ensure that all Maui-related expenses

are adequately documented and the recent hiring of the administrative assistant position in the Director's office should assist with updating the department's emergency management and continuity plans.

Summaries by Division and the Office of Youth Services

Benefit, Employment & Support Services (BESSD)

Table 1. BESSD Position Counts.

BESSD Statewide Branch - Processing Centers				
<u>POSITION</u>	<u>POSITION COUNT</u>	<u>FILLED</u>	<u>VACANT</u>	<u>% VACANT</u>
Eligibility Worker	301	231	70	23.3%
Office Assistants	84	35	49	58.3%

BESSD continues to experience high vacancies in its Statewide Branch Processing Centers due to retirements, a lack of interested applicants, and opportunities for higher-wage jobs, making positions difficult to fill. The challenge of filling Eligibility Worker (EW) and Office Assistant (OA) positions is a national issue. We continue to process the work despite having only three-fourths (76%) of the optimal workforce of Eligibility Workers and less than half (49%) of the clerical support needed to manage the ongoing demand. BESSD continues to recruit for both EW and OA positions actively, utilizes Wiki Wiki Hire, and conducts weekly interviews on Oahu. However, despite recruitment efforts, vacancies for OA positions have increased. In an entry-level position, as OAs gain more experience, they often move to positions within the state that have more responsibilities and higher pay.

The continued high rate of vacancies highlights the critical need to fill and retain Eligibility Workers and clerical positions as the number of phone calls and applications for SNAP continue to increase. Over the past year, the number of calls for interviews required for SNAP and other benefits has increased due to a combination of changes in federal policy and the ending of pandemic-era waivers. In calendar year 2023, the number of interview calls was 8,050 per month. The number of interview calls increased to over 17,000 by September 2024 and to 40,233 calls in November 2024.

Table 2. BESSD Applications, Renewals, and Calls

BESSD Statewide Branch – Processing Centers	
Applications Received Daily	260
Applications Received Monthly	7,797
Eligibility Renewals Processed Monthly	7,397
Number of Calls Received Daily	2,235
Number of Call Received Monthly	40,233

The SNAP caseload as of November 2024 (=158,425 individuals) is higher than the pre-pandemic levels of February 2020 (=153,047 individuals). However, the number of monthly applications in November 2024 (=7,129) is higher than the number of monthly applications received pre-pandemic in February 2020 (=4,412). In October 2024, the number of applications (=9,083 applications) was more than double the average number of 4,500 applications received prior to the pandemic.

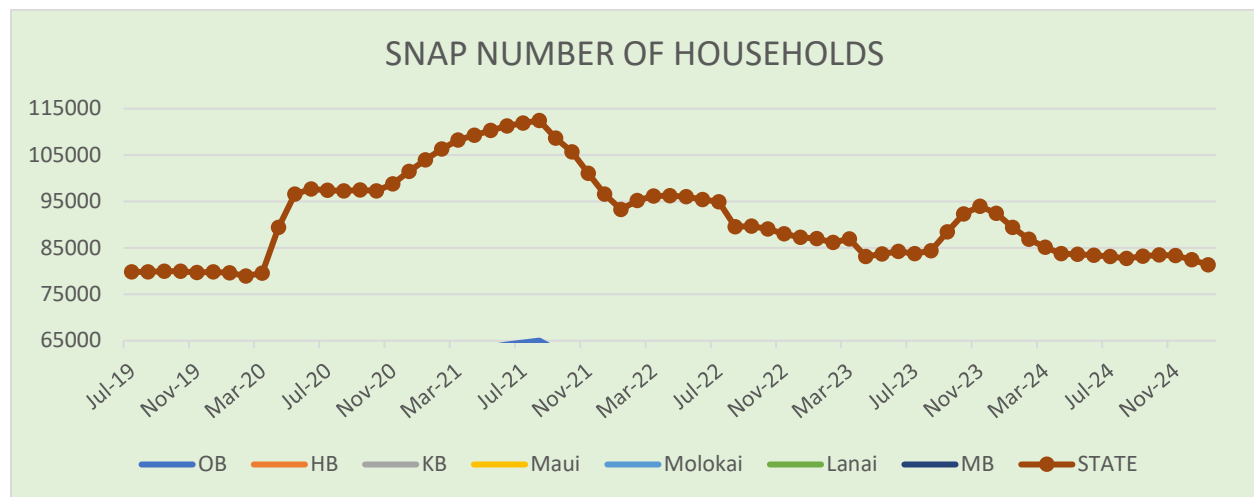


Figure 3. Graph of SNAP Households July 2019 – November 2024

Despite the high rate of applications, caseloads have remained relatively stable, though trending upward, due to a high rate of application denials for various reasons, such as being over-income or failing to submit all required documents for verification. In November 2024, over half (=58%, or 4731/8186 applications) were denied.

In addition, in 2024, the federal law changed, authorizing SNAP eligibility for Compact of Free Association (COFA) citizens living in the United States. The Consolidated Appropriation Act (CAA) of 2024 changed the federal law for Compact residents authorizing eligibility for SNAP, TANF, Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and FEMA assistance. The CAA had a

positive impact on residents from Compact nations and on states allowing federal assistance for its residents from COFA nations.

In early 2025, DHS anticipates that the number of applications for SNAP will further increase due to a planned rule change to implement Broad Based Categorical Eligibility (BBCE) provisions and remove the net income limit for eligible households. DHS has drafted amendments to the Hawaii Administrative Rules (HAR) to implement this change, and a public hearing was held on December 12, 2024. A report by the University of Hawaii Economic Research Organization (UHERO) estimated that this policy change would add 14,000-15,000 additional households to the SNAP caseload.

The unwinding of pandemic-era waivers has contributed to the increase in the workload for BESSD Processing Centers. Prior to October 2024, the United States Department of Agriculture Food & Nutrition Services (FNS) authorized a waiver enabling DHS to conduct a desk review for eligibility renewals for SNAP and other benefits instead of requiring an interview. During the COVID-19 pandemic, this waiver allowed DHS to process the highest volume of applications as residents struggled during the economic shutdown. However, with the waiver's end, the interviews for eligibility renewals restarted in October 2024. In November 2024, over 10,000 clients required eligibility renewals, which contributed to the increased number of individuals calling for interviews.

BESSD is working to prioritize staffing on its call center to better respond to the increased number of calls. The Processing Centers also continue to work overtime four Saturdays per month to address the application and renewal backlog.

A continued priority for the Division is the ongoing development of a new Benefits Eligibility Solution (BES) eligibility system to replace the 40-year-old Hawaii Automated Welfare Information (HAWI) legacy system. The BES is scheduled to be implemented in mid-2026 and it will include an automated rules engine and online Self-Service Portal that will streamline and increase efficiency for processing of SNAP and other related benefits.

In addition, BESSD continues to work on its oversight of other programs, such as Child Care Subsidy, Child Care Licensing, Employment & Training, the Homeless Programs Office (HPO), and the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). In 2024, BESSD launched a new online system for providers and residents and the Preschool Open Doors program to increase access to child care for eligible households with 3- and 4-year-old children.

As we enter the 2025 legislative session, BESSD requests the Legislature's continued support to meet our resource needs so we can improve our delivery of needed benefits and services to Hawaii's residents and improve our working environment and conditions.

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation Services (DVR)

DVR administers statewide vocational rehabilitation services programs for persons with physical, cognitive, and mental health disabilities. These programs include independent living rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities, general services for persons who are blind and visually impaired, and the disability determination of claims for Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income benefits issued by the Social Security Administration.

DVR provides vocational rehabilitation programs as required by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, the Randolph-Sheppard Vending Stands Act, the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and other applicable federal and state laws, regulations, policies, and agreements with other state agencies and the federal government.

DVR MISSION – DVR serves participants who require assistance to prepare for, secure, retain, or advance in competitive, integrated employment. DVR staff works as a team so that participants can achieve their hopes and aspirations for meaningful employment through timely and individualized vocational rehabilitation services.

DVR estimates that federal vocational rehabilitation funding will be \$16,380,877 in FFY 2025 (October 1, 2024-September 30, 2025) with a required State match of \$4,433,452 starting in FFY25.

In 2024, DVR commenced work on the Neighbor Island Blind and Visually Impaired pilot program authorized by Act 253, Session Laws of Hawaii 2023. The 2023 Maui Wildfire response delayed DVR's work on the pilot. However, DVR procured a contractor, met with stakeholders, and developed a plan. DHS is proposing an administrative measure (SB 1419 SD1 RELATING TO ACT 253, SESSION LAWS OF HAWAII 2023) to revise the pilot. Additional appropriations will be required and are pending a Governor's Message. The pilot program will assist neighbor island residents who are blind or have low vision to gain skills that will improve their communication and independence. The pilot will serve individuals who may not be interested in employment and who do not qualify for services available through the Department of Education or to individuals 55 years or older.

DVR is seeing an increase in applications for services from Hawaii residents with disabilities who are eager to prepare for, obtain, retain, or advance in competitive integrated employment in the workforce. Additionally, DVR continues to work with employers in all sectors to encourage them to hire qualified individuals with disabilities.

The Randolph-Sheppard Revolving Account ceiling increase request of \$669,800 for HMS 802 will ensure that DVR has access to the special funds supporting necessary services to our blind vending program. This ceiling increase does not affect or increase DVR's current State funding.

In Program Year 2023 (July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024), the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) was tasked with achieving five performance indicators set by our federal funder, the Rehabilitation Services Administration of the U.S. Department of Education. These measures include:

1. **Credential Attainment Rate** – The percentage of participants enrolled in an education or training program (excluding those in On-the-Job Training and customized training) who obtain a recognized postsecondary credential or a secondary school diploma or its equivalent during participation or within one year after exiting DVR’s program services;
2. **Employment Rate for the 2nd Quarter After Exit** – The percentage of participants who are still employed six months after exiting DVR;
3. **Employment Rate for the 4th Quarter After Exit** – The percentage of participants who are still employed twelve months after exiting DVR;
4. **Median Earnings** – The median earnings of consumers who are employed six months after exiting DVR; and
5. **Measurable Skills Gains (MSG) Rate** – The percentage of consumers enrolled in training programs who achieve documented skills gains. *Note: Although MSG was initially set as a negotiated performance level, national data has proven unreliable for measuring performance and, therefore, was not utilized in Program Year 2023.

DVR achieved two out of four performance indicators (Credential Attainment Rate and Median Earnings) for Program Year 2023 (July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024). While DVR did not meet two of the four indicators, no sanctions were imposed since the actual employment rates for the 2nd and 4th quarters after exit were above the Indicator Score of 50%, with scores of 80.8% and 75.8%, respectively.

Table 3. DVR Performance Indicators, Program year (PY) 2023

Indicator	PY 2023 (Required Level vs. Achieved)	Indicator Score (Actual Level/Adjusted Level)
Credential Attainment Rate (CA)	20%/Achieved 43.3%	115.6%
Employment (Second Quarter After Exit)	37%/Achieved 33.9%	80.8%
Employment (Fourth Quarter After Exit)	39.5%/Achieved 34.1%	75.8%
Median Earnings (Second Quarter After Exit)	\$4,500/Achieved \$5,669	124.6%

Indicator	PY 2023 (Required Level vs. Achieved)	Indicator Score (Actual Level/Adjusted Level)
*Measurable Skill Gains (MSG)	n/a	n/a

The achievement of two out of four performance indicators is significant, especially considering DVR’s high vacancy rate, which is currently around 40% due to retirements and resignations. Initiatives are in progress to retain our excellent staff and fill vacancies. These initiatives include revision of minimum qualifications, streamlining processes, reviewing pay rates, planning for additional needed positions, and enhancing clear, positive communication.

Med-QUEST Division (MQD)

The Med-QUEST Division (MQD) administers Medicaid that provides health coverage, and state-funded medical assistance programs, primarily through managed care plans, to eligible Hawai’i residents. Medicaid started in 1965 under Title XIX of the Social Security Act and is administered as a joint federal-state program that provides health coverage and long-term care for children, pregnant women, parents of eligible children, low-income adults, former foster care children, aged, blind, and disabled individuals. MQD’s mission is to empower Hawai’i’s residents to improve and sustain well-being by developing, promoting, and administering innovative and high-quality healthcare programs with aloha.

As of December 16, 2024, the Med-QUEST Division (MQD) provides Medicaid coverage for over 406,000 residents, representing about 28 percent of Hawaii's population. While this percent is higher than before the start of the pandemic, it is a decrease from the 468,120 enrollees at the peak of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency in April of 2023. The "new normal" is nearly 80,000 higher than the 327,000 caseloads that preceded the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2024, MQD completed one of its largest undertakings to date to redetermine the eligibility of all Medicaid enrollees as required by the end of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency, which is known as the "unwinding."

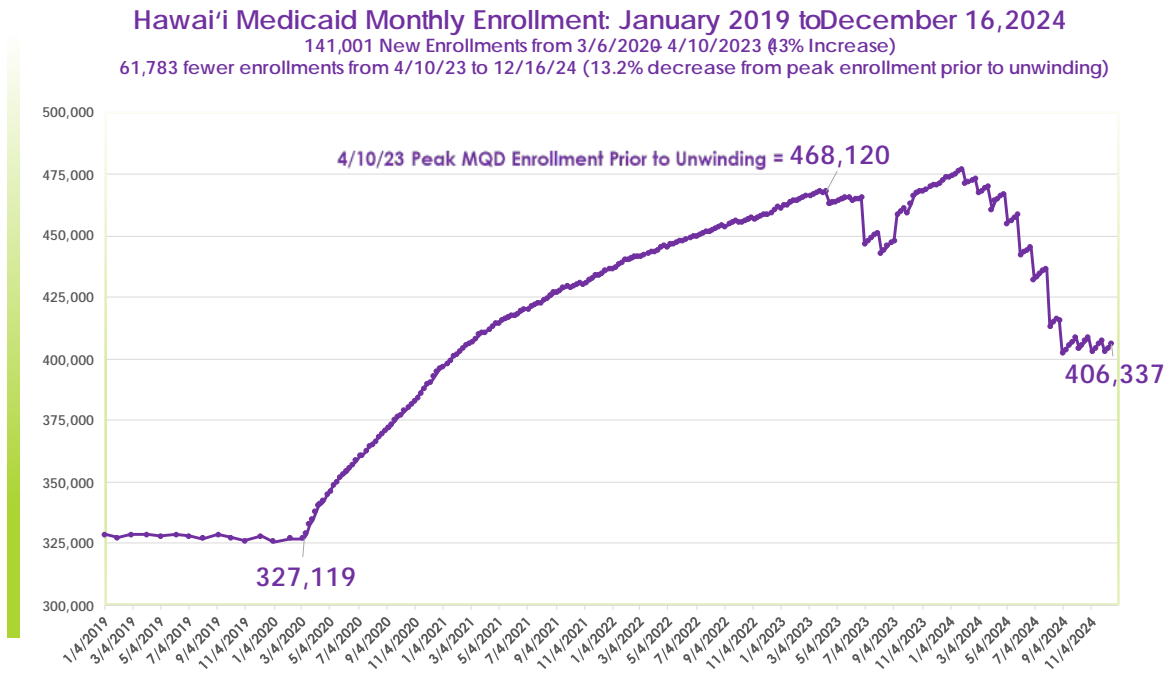


Figure 4. Medicaid Enrollment, January 2019 – December 16, 2024

The following figure reflects the changes in Medicaid enrollment by County:

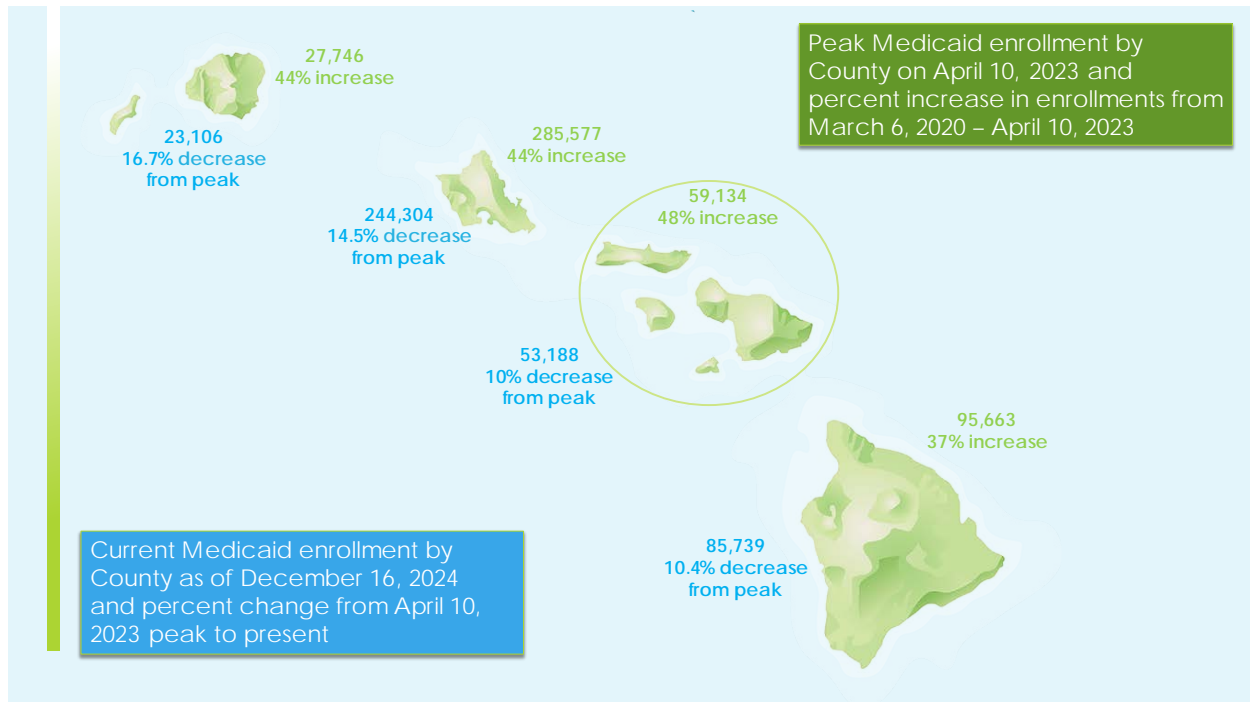


Figure 5. Medicaid enrollment by County.

Social Services Division - Child Welfare Services and Adult Protective & Community Services

The Social Services Division (SSD) provides services to eligible families and individuals. The Child Welfare Services Branch (CWS) provides prevention and intervention services to reduce the incidence and impact of child abuse and neglect. The Adult Protective & Community Services Branch (APCS) responds to reports of adult neglect or abuse and oversees the Adult Foster Care Program, Senior Companion Program, Foster Grandparent Program, Nurse Aid Training, and Re-Certification curriculum.

The Division's priorities are to work with the Office of Wellness & Resilience and the Malama Ohana Working Group to address community concerns, implement pay differentials for child welfare services workers as a retention strategy, and add additional security in child welfare offices. Notably, SSD continues to modernize its case management systems so case workers and administrators can access case information to better serve children and families. Social workers need better tools that improve processes and give workers more time to spend with children and families, and connect with providers and resource caregivers.

CWS is moving forward with its Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS), named HI-THRIVE. CCWIS financing is eligible for 50% federal reimbursement. Currently, DHS estimates the overall planning and implementation cost of CCWIS in the range of \$35 million to \$40 million, with a 50/50 federal reimbursement. However, costs to other states that have already developed their CCWIS project range from \$60 million to \$80 million.

Once in place, CCWIS will improve the workers' and supervisors' case management, enable easier extraction for reporting requirements, and give CWS more opportunities to draw down available Title IV-E funds.

APCS is moving forward with modernizing its data system, Living Aloha for Vulnerable Adults (LAVA), with the assistance of Federal grant money and requests general funds to build upon the completed work.

Once implemented, CCWIS and LAVA will make data entry easier, support higher quality data, allow for more accurate and timely reporting, offer decision-making guidance, and provide more access and data sharing with clients and our external partners.

Office of Youth Services

With a solid commitment to meeting the needs of children and families, the Office of Youth Services (OYS) is responsible for the planning, case management, and delivery of services to youth at risk (section 352D-1, HRS). In addition, OYS oversees the Hawaii Youth Correctional Facilities (HYCF), the Kawaihoa Youth and Family Wellness Center (section 352D-7.5, HRS), and the support staff for the Hawaii State Youth Commission (section 352D-11, HRS).

Community-wide juvenile justice reform, including an investment in OYS contracted programs, has had a positive impact on reducing juvenile arrests and successfully diverting youth from the justice system. Figure 1 shows the number of individual juveniles arrested for both status and law offenses. Arrests in both categories for FY23 are lower than in pre-pandemic fiscal years 2017 through 2019.

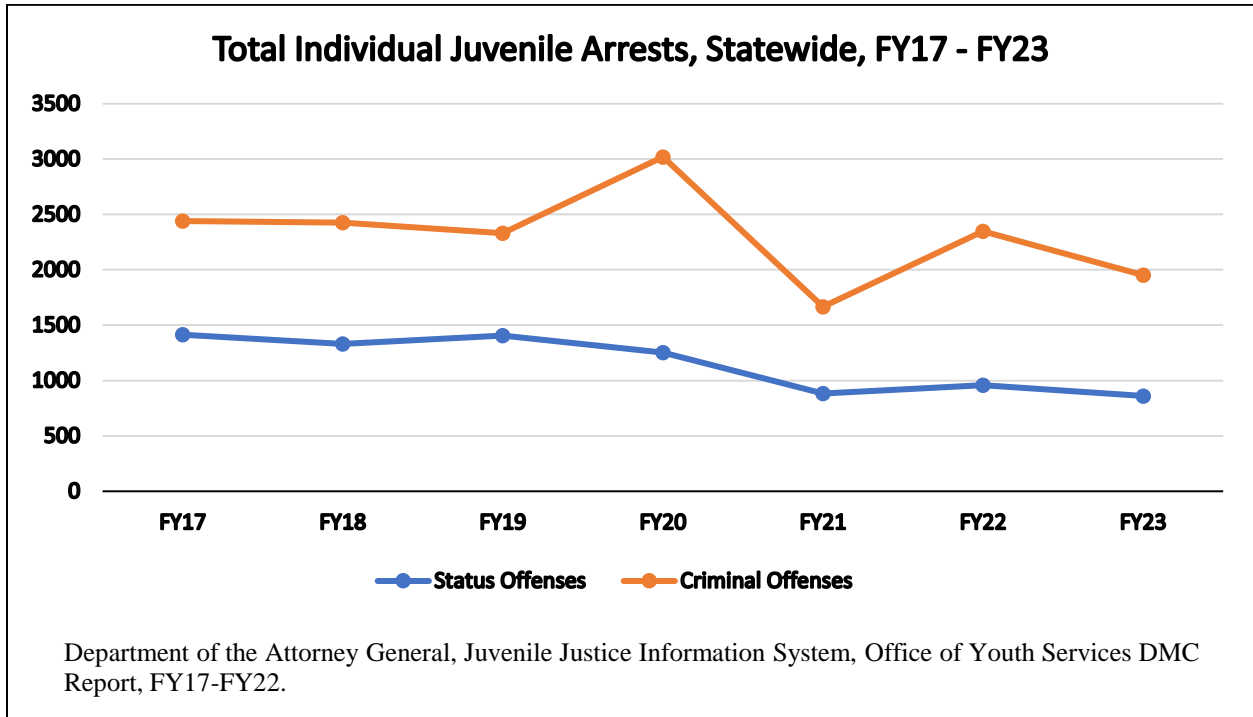


Figure 6. Individual Juvenile Arrests, Statewide FY2017- FY2023

These positive results are due to upfront system prevention programs and services for at-risk youth, including positive youth development, cultural programs, outreach and advocacy, housing, and diversion programs. Reductions of these programs or failure to address the increased needs of children will counteract these positive trends, decrease public safety, and increase youth entering into and moving deeper through the juvenile justice system.

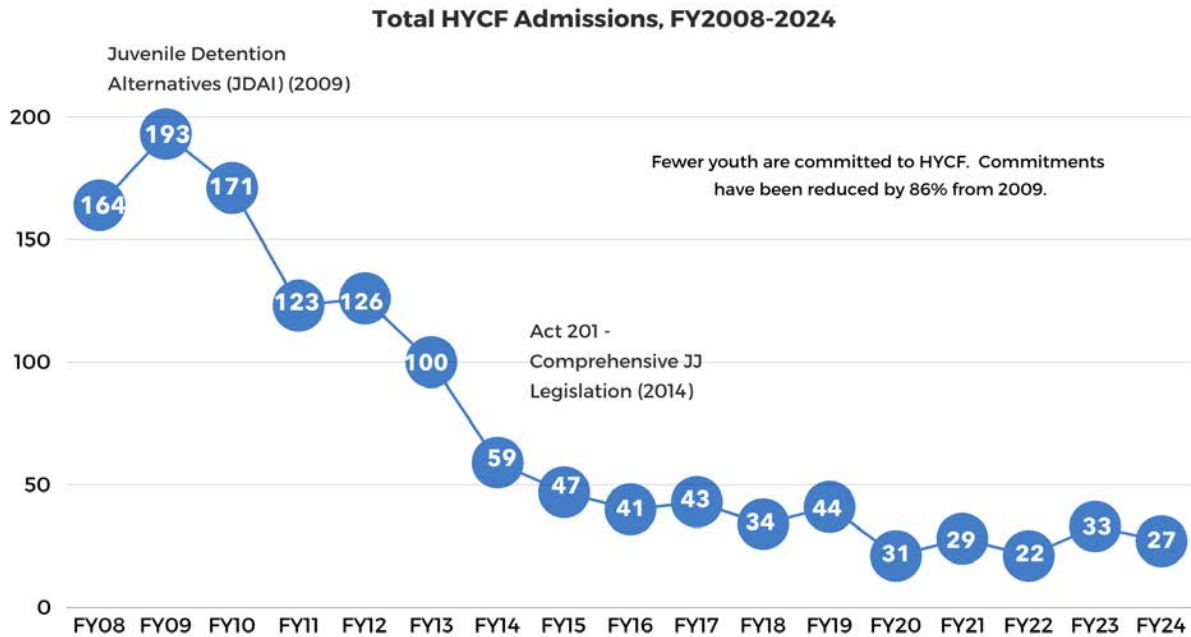


Figure 7. Total HYCF Admissions FY2008 – FY2024

Figure 7 above shows juvenile admissions to HYCF from fiscal years 2008 through 2023. From 2009, when Hawaii invested in the national Juvenile Detention Alternatives (JDAI) program, to 2023, admissions to HYCF were reduced by 83%. Alarming, admissions to HYCF in FY23 increased by 64% from the preceding year, with a slight decrease in FY24. With concerns that youth behavioral and mental health issues are rising, it is expected that more youth will enter the juvenile justice system and HYCF.

Any increase in the population at HYCF demonstrates a system that is not meeting the community’s need for increased support post-pandemic. With the additional displacement and trauma experienced by victims of the 2023 Maui wildfires, community needs will continue to increase in the upcoming years. Investment in front-end programs and services is needed to maintain progress and to reduce justice system involvement for at-risk youth. OYS includes a request for funds for youth mental health programs.

Hawaii State Commission on the Status of Women

In 1964, Governor John A. Burns created the Hawai’i State Commission on the Status of Women (CSW or Commission) by Executive Order. The work of the CSW is codified in sections 367-1, HRS, and sections 367-3 (1) through (8), HRS.

In November 2024, the CSW filled the Executive Director position and anticipates that the Commission will restart its important advocacy.

Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) will report separately.

- **Federal Funds**

The DHS Fiscal Biennium (FB) 25-27 budget includes federal fund adjustments of \$58,897,960 N and 19,550,000 P funds, for projected totals of \$2,962,272,804 N and \$38,310,191 P funds for FY 26, and \$54,622,441 N and \$19,550,000 P funds, for projected totals of \$2,957,997,285 N and \$38,310,191 for FY 27. Note that these amounts are projected amounts that DHS may access. However, to access federal funds, programs may require general fund contributions, or the federal funds are available for reimbursement to the State. A majority of the federal funds are for health care premiums or pass directly to recipients as benefits.

Hawai'i Public Housing Authority (HPHA) will report separately.

- **Non-General Funds**

The report on non-general funds for DHS, pursuant to section 37-47, HRS, may be accessed at:

<https://humanservices.hawaii.gov/reports/legislative-reports/>.

- **Budget Request Process**

The administration, divisions, attached agencies, and commissions submit budget requests with justification and prioritization in line with budget instructions issued by the Department of Budget & Finance (B&F). The Director and the Budget, Planning, and Management Office (BPMO) review the budget requests. After discussion with BPMO and each division administrator, the Director prioritizes the department's budget requests by applying the budget guidelines identified above and a second layer of prioritization by benefits to clients, support to staff, and infrastructure improvements. The proposed budget requests are then submitted to B&F for review and preliminary decisions. Programs have a chance to submit additional information to appeal B&F's initial denial. After consideration of any appeals, B&F makes the final recommendations that become the Governor's biennium budget.

- **Budget Requests**

The Hawai'i Public Housing Authority will provide testimony separately.

Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) Budget Requests

HMS 904 – General Administration for DHS

Req Cat	Dept Pri	Prog ID	Proj No.	Project Title	MOF	FY 26	FY 27
		HMS 904		IT MODERNIZATION FOR THE BES SYSTEM, STATEWIDE	C	10,000,000	

IT Modernization for the BES System

This additional \$10M request for FY26 is for additional work needed for the Design, Development, and Implementation (DDI) associated with BES in the upcoming year. The additional \$10M is needed to make refinements to system functionality, including refinements to correspondence, the automated rules engine, and the development of the BES Self-Service Portal (SSP) and to support testing for this functionality as it is developed.

The current functionality of the BES development incorporates a manual workaround because the functions were not fully developed due to the limited funding and compressed timeline that the system build was working within prior to receiving the US Food & Nutrition Services (FNS) penalty letter (see below discussion). Considering that FNS is allowing DHS to reinvest 50% of the penalty towards implementing more fully developed functionality, DHS knows that 50% of the penalty is not enough to ensure all root cause areas impacting the payment error rate that can be automated will be automated to reduce the chances of user error being introduced into the workflow.

This budget request is to supplement the reinvestment of the 50% penalty amount that will support BES system development and testing of functionality. Specific functionality in BES that will improve worker accuracy and reduce payment errors include the elimination of manual forms for interview documentation, the development of an interview workflow builder to guide an Eligibility Worker through the interview process, and an automated rules engine that will apply Hawaii Administrative Rules and federal policies based on inputs to the system.

The anticipated completion of BES, including functionality to reduce payment errors, will be in the Fall of 2025. Additional funds for the coming biennium will allow BESSD to complete the system development work, including testing of new functionality, roll out BES into production, and be available to both the public and the BESSD line staff. The development will be done through a contract and BESSD's current system developer. The entire \$10M for FY26 is needed

in addition to the \$5,467,164 requested through an Emergency Appropriation for FY25 (HB1099 HD1/SB1418 SD1 MAKING AN EMERGENCY APPROPRIATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES) to ensure that BES is implemented with full functionality and that Hawaii has a functioning eligibility system that will reduce payment errors and help the State to avoid further financial. A capable and modern eligibility system should improve residents' experiences.

On June 28, 2024, FNS notified Hawaii that it had failed to achieve a SNAP payment error rate for federal fiscal year 2023 at or below the national average of 11.68%. Hawaii's payment error rate was 20.94%. This marked the second year in a row that Hawaii failed to perform below the national payment error rate. As a result, FNS assessed a penalty of \$10.9 million against Hawaii. FNS offered Hawaii the option of paying the penalty in whole or agreeing to reinvest 50% of the penalty into improvements that would result in an improvement of its payment error rate. Hawaii elected to enter into an agreement with FNS to reinvest 50% of the penalty into system improvements to automate the eligibility and payment determination process. The 50% of the \$10.9M FNS penalty will be requested through an emergency appropriation for FY25 for \$5,467,164. The emergency appropriation is needed in this fiscal year to align needed modifications with ongoing BES development.

HMS 503 – Kawaiiloa Youth and Family Wellness Center

Req Cat	Dept Pri	Prog ID	Proj No.	Project Title	MOF	FY 26	FY 27
M	1	HMS 503	FY26.1	KYFWC MASTER PLAN, OAHU	C	3,500,000	
M	2	HMS 503	FY26.2	KYFWC SECURED CUSTODY FACILITY REROOF, OAHU	C	3,720,000	

FY26.1 - KYFWC Master Plan, Oahu

DAGS002 04-02-21 The original budget is to create and develop a process for the Master Plan to upgrade and renovate the Kawaiiloa Youth and Family Wellness Center (KYFWC). This project will prioritize the CIP Implementation plan, provide budgetary estimates, and prepare an Environmental Impact Statement. These improvements will add another 25 years of longevity to the campus and create a safe space for a transitional/residential/Mental Health program for Hawaii high-risk youth and their families.

The KYFWC campus, on the Kailua grounds of the Hawaii Youth Correctional Facilities, is 96 years old, built in 1928 as the Kawaiiloa Training School for Girls by the Territorial Government of Hawaii. The Master Plan will allow for much-needed upgrades for campus infrastructure, demolish condemned buildings, and create additional needed program space for youth mental health programming. The Master Plan is needed for KYFWC to adapt to the changing needs and services the youth require.

Youths need a higher level of mental health treatment. Currently, the State sends youths with multiple mental health diagnoses to the mainland for treatment when in-state services are not

available. The community alternatives for mental health residential-type programming are limited, and there are no readily available alternatives to assist high-risk youth. Hawaii needs to increase planning for the care of the high-risk population so these youths can get proper treatment, be near their support systems and community, and not have to be relocated to another state.

KYFWC is also being designed to manage social service gaps in our state systems (Department of Health, Child Adolescent & Mental Health Division (CAMHD), Department of Education (DOE), DHS Child Welfare Services (CWS), the Judiciary, and OYS to focus on older youth and young adults from 14 - 24 years of age. The programs at KYFWC will be primarily designed to assist in the transitioning of youths out of state services while providing critical support needed for youth and young adults to leave KYFWS's programs successfully.

FY26.2 – KYFWC/HYCF Secured Custody Facility (SCF) Reroof Oahu

This request is to assess and evaluate the structural integrity of the roof and design and construct new roofing. The roof design and construction have to be within the scope of the state historical site standards and are part of the building's overall maintenance.

The HYCF Secured Custody Facility was built in 1995 to house male wards of the state. This 30-bed correctional structure currently houses both male and female juveniles who were committed to the Office of Youth Services by Family Court. SCF serves as the state's only juvenile correctional facility.

Repairs to the roof are necessary to maintain the overall structural integrity after 30 years of use. The weather has taken its toll, and there is water leakage after heavy rains, which impacts electrical security systems, causing safety issues. There are no alternatives to fixing the leaking roof.

The project intends to increase the life of the correctional structure and reduce our operational and maintenance costs.

Operating Budget Requests

Office of Youth Services (OYS)

HMS 501 – In-Community Youth Programs

Prog ID/Org	Dept Pri	BUDGET REQUEST Description	MOF	FY 26			FY27		
				FTE (P)	FTE (T)	Amount (\$)	FTE (P)	FTE (T)	\$ Amount
501YA-01	38	Add 1.00 Perm FTE Positions and Funds for the Office of Youth Services	A	1.00		35,508	1.00		71,016
501YA-02	37	Youth Violence Prevention	A			115,000			115,000
501YA-03	22	Youth Mental Health Support	A			1,000,000			1,000,000
501YA-06	31	Sex Trafficking Victims Support	A			500,000			500,000

501YA-01: Add 1.00 Permanent FTE Position and Funds for the Office of Youth Service (OYS)

This request adds 1.00 permanent FTE and funds for OYS. In 2007, the OYS was staffed with 30 positions, including 12 Program Specialists and seven clerical staff. In 2024, OYS is currently staffed with 19 positions, including 8 Program Specialists and three clerical staff. Two of these Program Specialists and one clerical staff are specifically assigned to our statewide Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) Title II federal grant program, and another Program Specialist specifically oversees the Youth Commission. As a result, all other responsibilities of the program development office and OYS administration are performed by the remaining 14 staff members.

Since 2007, OYS' responsibilities and workload have increased significantly to include 13 additional contracts for a full continuum of care for at-risk youth and Grant-In-Aid (GIA) assignments, implementation of diversion programs (Act 201, SLH 2014), the Kawaihoa Youth and Family Wellness Center (SLH 2018), Youth Commission (SLH 2020), Safe Spaces for Youth Pilot Program (Act 130, SLH 2022), development of a Pacific Islander Youth Program List (HCR 71, SLH 2023), collaboration with the Family Court to identify strategies for partnering with community partners (HCR 72, SLH 2023), and other initiatives to improve collaboration, partnerships, and promotion of system changes for positive outcomes for youth. OYS HMS 501 respectfully requests 1.0 FTE permanent civil service Program Specialist V grant writer position to leverage federal grant dollars for youth programs that will enhance our continuum of care to increase positive outcomes for youth.

Ideally, to adequately meet our statutory goals and responsibilities, OYS would need restoration of some of its positions, including 1.0 FTE for a permanent civil service Administrative Assistant II SR14 position for the Program Development Office that oversees all contracts and GIAs, diversion programs, program planning and development, and many other initiatives. This position would assist with the current workload and be able to cross-train and cover duties when the only Administrative Assistant is on leave.

501YA-02: Youth Violence Prevention

OYS currently budgets \$385,500 annually for outreach and advocacy services, which serves approximately 90 youths who are at-risk, status offenders, or gang-involved. Of these funds, \$38,500 is dedicated to the Honolulu Police Department, District 8 (D8), which includes Nanakuli and Waianae, which serves approximately 20 youth annually. This budget request is to triple violence prevention outreach and advocacy services in D8, Ewa, Makakilo, Nanakuli, Waianae, and Makaha.

Recent data shows increases in reported violence in D8, where homicides were up 80% and weapons offenses were up 42% between 2022 and 2023. The number of recent violent incidents involving youth on the Nanakuli-Waianae Coast is alarming. A few of the high-profile cases are as follows: In April 2024, three teens were accused of attacking and robbing a man; in February 2024, a 17-year-old was arrested in connection with the murder of a rancher; in January 2024, a youth was arrested in the shooting of a man killed by a stray bullet while in the man was sitting in his driveway; in November 2023, a 16-year-old male and a 21-year-old female were stabbed at a beach park; in September 2023, a teen was arrested for murder in an incident that left two people dead; and in June 2023, a 17-year-old female was shot in the head at Maili Community Park. Many of the youth involved in these violent acts are not gang-involved.

Youth violence has significant and prolonged effects on young people's mental and physical health as well as on the community. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), youth violence impacts development, decision-making, the ability to learn and cope with stress, as well as connections to peers and adults. It is linked to adverse health outcomes that disproportionately affect communities of color. Exposure to violence increases the risk for behavioral and mental health difficulties, which include future violence perpetration and victimization, as well as depression, academic difficulties, and suicide. Hawaii's youth are in need of extra support, outreach, and advocacy to improve well-being and reduce violence.

501YA-03: Youth Mental Health Support

This request is to increase funding to four residential safe houses, including one girl safe house on Hawaii Island and boys safe houses on Maui, Hawaii Island, and Oahu (\$650,000). This request also serves to provide specialized funding to increase mental health services to LGBTQ+

youth, a population identified as being at high risk for self-harm, substance abuse, behavioral and mental health issues, and becoming victims of abuse and trafficking (\$200,000).

In 2024, the Legislature provided the following amounts that are non-recurring: This request is to restore the funds for the biennium and for the funds to be recurring as part of OYS' base budget:

- Safe House boys \$162,500 x 3
 - Safe House girls \$162,500 x1
 - LGBTQ+ \$200,000
 - Non-Eligible CAMHD Youth \$150,000
- Total = \$1,000,000

In accordance with section 352D-D, HRS, OYS is responsible for providing services to at-risk youth and facilitating optimum service delivery, preventing delinquency, and reducing recidivism through prevention, rehabilitation, and treatment. OYS creates opportunities for at-risk youth to become productive, responsible citizens through community-based and family-focused interventions. Among these interventions are housing and mental health services for youth. Since the pandemic, youth have been displaying increased criminogenic risk factors and behavioral and mental health issues.

Additionally, OYS has worked with CAMHD to provide mental health treatment to youth who are not eligible for CAMHD services. OYS' original 2017 contract was for \$300,000 annually. In 2021, due to budget cuts, this contract was reduced to \$60,000 annually. In 2022, OYS increased funding to \$150,000 annually to address the increased demand for mental health services for youth in the community. However, this amount of funding is not meeting the needs of youth. In the calendar year 2022, OYS received 49 referrals for services. In only the first six months of 2023 (January - June), OYS received 56 referrals. During this same period, costs for mental health services to these youth were \$230,606.07 annually, well beyond the capacity of OYS' current contract costs.

501YA-06: Sex Trafficking Victims Support

The current \$400,000 funded by the 2024 Legislature is non-recurring under HMS 503. This budget request is for \$500,000 to be recurring to support victims who were sex trafficked on Oahu and Maui under HMS 501.

\$400,000 - Provides short-term, 30-day, or less emergency shelter services for youth 12-17 years old who are suspected or determined to be victims of commercial sexual exploitation or labor trafficking. This program accepts referrals from DHS CWS, the Family Court, law enforcement agencies, parents/guardians, other youth-serving agencies, and youth victims. Under section 352D-7.5, HRS, access to services will be made available by OYS to all youth at risk of being sexually exploited and to youth victims of sex trafficking at the Kawaiiloa Youth and

Family Wellness Center. While the shelter has moved off campus, youth at Kawaiiloa continue to be referred to this program.

Research shows a pathway of sexual exploitation, especially for girls involved in the juvenile justice system, including those committed to the Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility (HYCF). The majority of female youth at HYCF have a history of sexual exploitation and abuse. These emergency shelter services for exploited children have contributed significantly to the reduction of girls committed to HYCF over the past decade and reached a milestone of zero girls incarcerated in 2022 for 80 days. Overall, there has been a significant reduction in youth, especially girls, being committed to HYCF, where the general population of girls is 1-5. The current funding is non-recurring. This budget request is for recurring funds as a part of OYS' base budget.

\$100,000 - Ongoing support to female children experiencing sexual exploitation and abuse on Maui. Following the Maui wildfires, OYS saw an increase in female youth victims requiring emergency shelter and support. With the temporary closure of Oahu's shelter and resulting cost savings, OYS diverted \$100,000 to Maui. However, funding to continue the emergency shelter for girls in Maui should be recurring and part of OYS' base budget.

HMS 503 – Kawaiiloa Youth and Wellness Center (also known as Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility)

BUDGET REQUEST		FY 26			FY27				
Prog ID/Org	Dept Pri	Description	MOF	FTE (P)	FTE (T)	Amount (\$)	FTE (P)	FTE (T)	\$ Amount
503YB-01	39	Additional Positions at the Kawaiiloa Youth and Wellness Center(formerly Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility)	A	2.00		69,576	2.00		139,152

503YB-01: Additional Positions at the Kawaiiloa Youth and Wellness Center (also known as Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility)

Kawaiiloa Youth and Family Wellness Center (KYFWC), on the grounds of the Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility (HYCF), has seen an 83% decrease in its incarcerated population within the past decade as a result of Juvenile Justice Reform. This decrease resulted in the closing of two of its three correctional structures. However, through staff attrition, we no longer have the staff required to maintain the level of programs and safety of the environment for KYFWC's correctional structure.

The profile of the currently incarcerated population has a significant increase in medical and mental health concerns that often require professional expertise outside of KYFWC staff and

require more detailed attention by our on-site staff Youth Correctional Officers. Common medical issues include dental issues (lack of oral care), sexually transmitted diseases, heart conditions, diabetes, autism, and other conditions. These youth represent the most vulnerable of Hawaii's high-risk youth and require additional services.

Two additional Youth Correctional Officer (YCO) positions are requested and would (in addition to normal position duties) be utilized for transportation purposes so as not to shorten the line staff needed to maintain the integrity of programs to include education, substance abuse, mental health, recreation, and daily living. Ideally, however, a total of 5 YCOs would allow HYCF to maintain full operations, including programs, transportation, and safety measures. The 5 YCO positions would represent a partial restoration of 10 youth correctional facility positions (8 Youth Correctional Officers, 1 Youth Corrections Supervisor, and 1 Social Worker III) that were abolished as part of Act 88, SLH 2021.

In order to continue the development of the KYFWC campus, our current and future needs will be a Planner VI position to assist and manage the Kawaihoa Youth and Family Wellness Center (KYFWC) programs. Act 208 (SLH 2018), Relating to Juvenile Justice Reform, created the KYFWC for services and programs that may include but are not limited to mental health services and programs, substance abuse treatment programs, crisis shelters for homeless youth, crisis shelters for victims of human sex trafficking, vocational training, group homes, day treatment programs, aftercare, independent and family counseling services, educational services, and any other services and programs. These programs require contractual management, organization, and systemic alignment to multiple state services for Hawaii's most vulnerable at-risk youth and vulnerable young adults. The multitude of programs by collaborating state agencies and community service providers is a model that Hawaii can be proud of. As KYFWC is adapting to the services youth need, the load of managing KYFWC is increasing, and we need a Planner VI position to ensure continued success on behalf of our youths.

Benefits, Employment & Support Services Division (BESSD)

HMS 224 - Homeless Services

		BUDGET REQUEST		FY 26			FY27		
Prog ID/Org	Dept Pri	Description	MOF	FTE (P)	FTE (T)	Amount (\$)	FTE (P)	FTE (T)	\$ Amount
224HS-01	17	Funds for Family Assessment Center	A			1,550,000			1,550,000
224HS-02	14	Funds for Housing First Program	A			3,750,000			3,750,000
224HS-03	15	Funds for Outreach and Civil Legal Services	A			1,750,000			1,750,000
224HS-04	16	Funds for Rapid Re-Housing Program	A			3,750,000			3,750,000

224HS-01: Funds for Family Assessment Center

Homelessness continues to persist as one of the most pressing issues facing Hawaii. Additionally, the demand for homeless services has steadily increased from 2022 to the present, reflecting the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. During this period, the number of homeless individuals per the annual statewide Point in Time Count has increased by 7% from 5,967 to 6,389. Based on a review of data following the 2009 economic recession, homelessness is projected to continue steadily increasing for the next several years and is expected to impact both single adults and families with minor children. Specifically, between 2009 and 2016, the number of people experiencing homelessness increased from 5,782 to a high of 7,921, a 37% increase over the 7 years. Accordingly, there is a need to sustain effective homeless services that emphasize placement into permanent housing to mitigate future increases in the number of individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

This request will sustain funding for the Family Assessment Centers (FACs), which are a successful and critical tool to address homelessness specifically for families with minor children. The state framework to address homelessness includes a focus on a "Housing First" approach statewide. The FAC is a model of low-barrier shelters utilizing the "Housing First" philosophy to quickly move families with minor children off the streets and into transitional shelters or permanent housing. There are currently two FACs in operation - one in Waianae and one in Puna - that would be adversely impacted if funding for FAC services is not sustained.

The first FAC in Kakaako opened in September 2016, accommodating 12-15 families (up to 50 people) at any one time. In the last eight years of operation under the management of Catholic Charities Hawaii, the center served 326 households, placed 52.67% into permanent housing, and increased the income for 59% of families served.

The original FAC in Kakaako closed in late 2022 when the city reclaimed control of the facility. To replace it, DHS relocated the FAC to a new site on O'ahu. During the interim year, the FAC operated remotely, focusing on supporting families who had previously exited the program to ensure they maintained their permanent housing. The FAC later relocated to serve the Waianae Coast. The Point in Time Count (PIT) reports indicated that Waianae had the largest percentage of unsheltered individuals on the island, with 27% or 630 individuals in 2023 and 28% or 785 individuals in 2024.

The relocated FAC in Waianae officially reopened on March 18, 2024. From July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024, the new FAC achieved a 100% housing placement rate by transitioning all eight families it served into permanent housing. On average, the FAC in Waianae transitioned families into permanent housing within 77 days, or just under three months.

In 2019, the Legislature passed Act 62, with an appropriated \$800,000 for the operation of a second FAC. DHS procured the services for a second FAC, operated by Neighborhood Place of Puna. This center can accommodate up to 9 families (up to 27 people) at any one time. This FAC was the first of its kind on a neighbor island. From July 1, 2022, to June 30, 2023, the Puna FAC transitioned 21 of 32 families into permanent housing, achieving a 66% placement rate. Families moved into permanent housing within an average of 89 days or just under three months. From July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024, the FAC of Puna successfully transitioned 20 of 33 families into permanent housing, achieving a 66% placement rate. Families were moved into permanent housing in an average of 77 days, just under three months, which represents a 12-day improvement over the previous year's average. In the last five years of operation, the Puna FAC served a total of 200 households, placed 49% into permanent housing, and increased the income for 54% of families served.

A key benefit of the FACs is the focus on placements into permanent housing. Additionally, FACs address the social determinants of health and provide case management services with an emphasis on building social capital. Social capital can be described as increased peer support and a sense of community; connections to family, friends, and neighbors; participation in community and faith-based organizations; school and workplace connections; leadership and professional development programs; engagement with case managers or career coaches; and other social networks. It produces information, emotional or financial support, and/or other resources. Research shows that individuals with higher levels of social capital are happier and healthier, find better jobs, and live longer. Communities with higher levels of social capital have higher educational achievement, faster economic growth, and less crime.

The requested level of funding will support the continued operation of both the Waianae and Puna FACs. While the FAC program targets homeless families with minor children, it is just one piece of a larger state strategy that includes other interventions (e.g., street outreach, rapid re-housing, etc.) that address the broader population of homeless persons, including homeless youth and chronically homeless adults.

224HS-02: Funds for Housing First Program

This request will sustain funding for the state Housing First program, which focuses on the most visible, chronically homeless population - the same population who frequently utilize healthcare services and cycles in and out of the criminal justice system. Supportive case management services are key to moving chronically homeless individuals off of the streets, ensuring that they remain successfully housed, and reducing the utilization of high-cost emergency room services. The Housing First program provides housing and supportive case management services with an emphasis on building the social capital of unsheltered, chronically homeless persons. DHS currently contracts for state Housing First services in each major County - on Oahu, Hawaii island, Maui, and Kauai. These services would be adversely impacted if funding for state Housing First is not sustained. In particular, the clients who are currently in the program will likely be displaced back to homelessness if these supportive services are not continued.

The state Housing First program has been active on Oahu for more than nine years and on the neighbor islands for more than seven years. Currently, the program supports 258 chronically homeless individuals, boasting a housing retention rate of 91%, well above the national average of 80%.

Between June 27, 2023, and June 26, 2024, the program successfully transitioned 36 individuals to permanent housing through its Move On strategy. The Moving On strategy is a framework designed to help individuals transition from Housing First programs while ensuring their continued success and mobility. It focuses on increasing program capacity by freeing up Housing First units for those in greater need and supporting tenant choice by acknowledging that the Housing First program may not be the final destination for everyone, thereby enabling more people to move on to other housing options.

Historically, the state Housing First program has been funded on a year-to-year basis except during Legislature Session 2023, wherein it was funded for the 2023-2025 fiscal biennium. It is critical that funding be recurring and sustained in the base budget. Without sustained funding, the individuals who are currently housed in the program will be at immediate risk and will likely return to homelessness as program participants require supportive case management to remain housed. Investment in a Housing First program keeps people housed (91% retention rate) and results in significant public cost savings over time. A preliminary analysis by the University of Hawaii Center on the Family of a subset of state Housing First clients found that estimated healthcare costs for clients dropped an average of 43% in just six months following housing placement – from an average of \$10,570 per client per month to \$5,980 per client per month.

Social capital is another component addressed through Housing First services. Social capital can be described as increased peer support and a sense of community; connections to family, friends, and neighbors; participation in community and faith-based organizations; school and

workplace connections; leadership and professional development programs; engagement with case managers; and other social networks. Individuals with positive social connections have access to information, emotional or financial support, and/or other resources. Research shows that individuals with higher levels of social capital are happier and healthier, find better jobs, and live longer. Further, communities with higher levels of social capital have higher educational achievement, faster economic growth, and less crime.

While the state Housing First program targets the chronically homeless, it is one piece of a larger state strategy, which includes other interventions (e.g., street outreach, rapid re-housing, etc.) that address the broader population of homeless persons, including homeless youth and families.

224HS-03: Funds for Outreach and Civil Legal Services

This request will sustain funding for the Homeless Outreach and Civil Legal Services program. Homeless Outreach is the primary method to identify and assist unsheltered homeless individuals and connect them to other homeless services, such as shelter, Housing First, Rapid Re-Housing, and other interventions to help them transition off the streets or other public lands.

This outreach effort is closely integrated with enforcement actions targeting visible homeless encampments on public lands. To prevent merely displacing individuals, outreach providers collaborate with state agencies to move unsheltered persons into long-term housing solutions.

Additionally, civil legal services enable outreach and other service providers to obtain identification documents for individuals experiencing homelessness who need state-issued identification to access housing and employment. Sustained, year-round funding is crucial for maintaining and expanding outreach and civil legal services, as inconsistent funding could hinder efforts to manage the increasing number of unsheltered individuals.

Outreach services include helping individuals obtain identification documents, find suitable housing, assist with job searches, and apply for public benefits. Building strong relationships with those who have previously avoided services, outreach staff play a key role in connecting people to essential resources, addressing immediate needs, and ultimately reducing the negative impacts of rough sleeping and vagrancy arrests. If homeless outreach and civil legal services are not sustained, this will dilute the state's ability to respond to unsheltered individuals and make it more challenging to maintain a focus on reducing unsheltered homelessness.

Homeless outreach services have been provided to an average of 2,976 individuals each year since FY18, with 382 individuals, on average, placed into permanent housing from the streets. On average, another 1,718 individuals were placed into appropriate settings such as homeless

shelters. Outreach performance and outcome measures target 15% or less for a return to homelessness, and Outreach services have exceeded expectations with an average rate of 10.47%.

Civil legal services assisted an average of 732 individuals each year since FY18, with an 84.5% success rate in obtaining vital documents and identification cards. From June 15, 2023, to June 14, 2024, civil legal services successfully secured 616 vital documents for 756 individuals, achieving an 81.4% success rate.

Homeless outreach and civil legal services reflect a 'Housing First' approach to ending homelessness and remain a critical and challenging component of our current care system. While the Homeless Outreach and Civil Legal Services program specifically targets unsheltered homelessness, it is one piece of a larger state strategy, which includes other interventions (e.g., Family Assessment Centers, Housing First, rapid re-housing, etc.) that address the broader population of homeless persons that include homeless youth and families.

Like the other strategies, this performance measure is aligned with the implementation of the DHS 'Ohana Nui strategy, which emphasizes building social capital as one of the pillars of the social determinants of health. Consistent with the 'Ohana Nui strategy, homeless outreach services address the social determinants of health and provide case management services with an emphasis on building social capital. Social capital can be described as increased peer support and a sense of community; connections to family, friends, and neighbors; participation in community and faith-based organizations; school and workplace connections; leadership and professional development programs; engagement with case managers; and other social networks. It produces information, emotional or financial support, and/or other resources. Research shows that individuals with higher levels of social capital are happier and healthier, obtain permanent housing, find better jobs, and live longer. Further, communities with higher levels of social capital have higher educational achievement, faster economic growth, and less crime.

As noted above, homelessness remains a persistent and pressing issue facing Hawaii. Additionally, the demand for homeless services has steadily increased from 2022 to the present, reflecting the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. During this period, the number of homeless individuals per the annual statewide Point in Time Count increased by 7% from 5,967 to 6,389. Based on a review of data following the 2009 economic recession, homelessness is projected to continue steadily increasing for the next several years and is expected to impact both single adults and families with minor children. Specifically, between 2009 and 2016, the number of people experiencing homelessness increased from 5,782 to a high of 7,921, a 37% increase over the 7 years. Accordingly, there is a need to sustain effective homeless services that emphasize placement into permanent housing to mitigate future increases in the number of individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

224HS-04: Funds for Rapid Re-Housing Program

This request will sustain funding for the Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) program. RRH is a nationally recognized best practice, and its core components are housing identification and location services, time-limited move-in and rental assistance, and short-term case management and services. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has long endorsed this practice as an effective way to end homelessness among families with minor children.

In particular, RRH plays a key role in helping to maximize space in homeless shelters by targeting individuals and families currently staying in shelters and providing them additional support to quickly transition to more permanent housing. By targeting homeless individuals and families who are currently in shelters, the RRH program accelerates the placement of families with children into more permanent housing and allows the state to maximize its existing shelter inventory.

Currently, many family shelters are at maximum capacity and are experiencing a "backlog" because families are challenged to move quickly from homelessness to being housed with stability. RRH assists in moving families much more quickly through shelter and into permanent housing. For example, if a family came into a shelter with a dedicated source of income but without enough savings to afford the first month's rent and move-in costs, the RRH program could assess the family's sustainability and provide the financial support immediately to have the family either avoid entering or at least limit the amount of time spent in a homeless shelter. This approach is especially important for rural and neighbor island communities, which have limited shelter space. In addition, this use of RRH recognizes that it is extremely cost-intensive to construct and fund additional homeless shelters and that the construction of new shelters is inconsistent with national best-practice approaches to addressing homelessness that minimize the number of interim transitions from homelessness to permanent housing.

In addition to supporting homeless individuals and families with rental assistance and placement into housing, RRH also provides supportive services to assist a family in maintaining their housing. If a family encounters difficulties with paying rent shortly after moving to permanent housing, the RRH program connects the family with appropriate resources and support to stabilize and maintain their permanent housing. In this way, Rapid Re-Housing is effective in ending and preventing homelessness.

The state's Rapid Re-Housing program has served an average of 1,468 individuals in 591 households each year since FY18. Between July 1, 2023, and June 30, 2024, 1,669 individuals in households received Rapid Re-Housing services, with a permanent housing rate of 60.7%. This rate is derived from 1,014 individuals who exited RRH programs during the year. Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data indicates that the average duration from intake to permanent housing for individuals in RRH programs was 174 days or approximately five and a half months. RRH services aim for a return-to-homeless rate of 15% or lower, and they have consistently exceeded this target with a rate of 12% each year.

Aligned with the DHS 'Ohana Nui Strategy, the RRH program addresses the social determinants of health and provides increased housing stability for families with minor children with case management services that emphasize building social capital. Social capital can be described as increased peer support and a sense of community; connections to family, friends, and neighbors; participation in community and faith-based organizations; school and workplace connections; leadership and professional development programs; engagement with case managers; and other social networks. It produces information, emotional or financial support, and/or other resources. Research shows that individuals with higher levels of social capital are happier and healthier, obtain permanent housing, find better jobs, and live longer. Further, communities with higher levels of social capital have higher educational achievement, faster economic growth, and less crime.

While the state RRH program focuses on placing individuals and families into housing and providing support to sustain housing, it is one piece of a larger state strategy, which includes other interventions (e.g., Family Assessment Centers, Housing First, homeless outreach, and civil legal services, etc.) that address the broader population of homeless persons that include homeless youth and families.

As previously noted, homelessness is one of the most persistent and pressing issues facing Hawaii. Additionally, the demand for homeless services has steadily increased from 2022 to the present, reflecting the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. During this period, the number of homeless individuals per the annual statewide Point in Time Count increased by 7% from 5,967 to 6,389. Based on a review of data following the 2009 economic recession, homelessness is projected to continue steadily increasing for the next several years and is expected to impact both single adults and families with minor children. Specifically, between 2009 and 2016, the number of people experiencing homelessness increased from 5,782 to a high of 7,921, a 37% increase over the 7 years. Accordingly, there is a need to sustain effective homeless services that emphasize placement into permanent housing to mitigate future increases in the number of individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

HMS 236 – Case Management for Self-Sufficiency

Prog ID/Org	Dept Pri	BUDGET REQUEST Description	MOF	FY 26			FY27		
				FTE (P)	FTE (T)	Amount (\$)	FTE (P)	FTE (T)	\$ Amount
236LC-05	1	Transfer out 1.00 FTE and Salary from HMS 236 to HMS 302	A	(0.57)		(20,062)	(0.57)		(20,062)
236LC-05	1	Transfer out 1.00 FTE and Salary from HMS 236 to HMS 302	N	(0.43)		(24,820)	(0.43)		(24,820)
236LC-01	24	Funds for Security Guards	A			794,488			794,488
236LC-01	24	Funds for Security Guards	N			599,265			599,265
236LC-02	36	Funds for the Wahiawa Civic Center Move	A			201,894			-
236LC-02	36	Funds for the Wahiawa Civic Center Move	N			152,306			-
236LC-03	12	Transfer out FTE and Salaries of 5.00 Perm Positions from HMS 236 to HMS 903	A	(1.63)		(51,926)	(1.63)		(51,926)
236LC-03	12	Transfer out FTE and Salaries of 5.00 Perm Positions from HMS 236 to HMS 903	N	(1.37)		(74,761)	(1.37)		(74,761)

236LC-05: Transfer out 1.00 FTE and Salary from HMS 236 to HMS 302

This request is submitted to transfer out FTE and salary of position #31066 from HMS 236 to HMS 302. This request is a companion to the HMS 302 request (302DA-01) transferring an Office Assistant IV position from the Oahu Section 2 Kapolei Processing Center to the Child Care Subsidy Unit (CCSU).

Act 248, SLH 2022, approved 25 permanent positions and operating costs to implement the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) program within DHS with the intent to improve efficiency, timeliness, payment accuracy, and communication with families. Subsequent to that legislative approval, the CCSU was established in January 2023 with approval to transfer one permanent Office Assistant (OA) IV position from the Oahu Section 2 Kapolei Processing Center to the CCSU to bring the total number of positions for this newly established CCSU to 26 positions. The CCSU will service families statewide under a statewide model to be able to efficiently and effectively manage the statewide CCS caseload.

The OA IV will play a key role in providing the CCSU clerical support to two CCSU Supervisors, 16 Eligibility Workers (EW), and 6 Social Service Assistants (SSA) in managing the CCSU administrative duties and client-related activities.

236LC-01: Funds for Security Guards

DHS Benefit, Employment and Support Services Division (BESSD) has processing centers, care licensing offices, and first-to-work offices statewide. These processing centers house all the office assistants, eligibility workers, self-sufficiency and support services staff, human services professionals, and social workers who provide services and eligibility determination to most of our programs, including Supplemental Nutrition Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Aged, Blind and Disabled payments, General Assistance Payments, Child Care, and First-to-Work.

Security guards play a crucial role in the safety of all employees, clients, and visitors in each of our offices by ensuring a secure environment, and as a protective physical deterrent. Their presence also prevents unauthorized access and criminal activity. These contracted security guards work with the processing center staff to oversee who enters, exits, and moves around the facility. With the presence of security guards, people within our offices feel safe, and employees feel valued at work, which boosts their morale, allowing them to focus on their work.

Act 164, SLH 2023 appropriated additional funding for security guard services, though it is limited to FY24 and FY25. The appropriation should be recurring and made part of the base budget. The rate of security guard services has increased over the years, and currently, the rate per hour is \$29.04. With the re-opening of our offices post-pandemic, our lobbies are busier, and we are now utilizing a total of 28 security guards statewide.

Below is the calculation for the amount being requested.

Hourly Rate	Total salary per month per security guard (\$31.67 x 40 hrs x 4.333 weeks)	Number of Security Guards	Total Wages per month for 28 security guards	Total Wages per year for 28 security guards
\$ 31.67	\$ 5,489.04	28	\$ 153,693.24	\$ 1,844,318.92
		Total Needed for FY26	Currelty on base budget for FY26	Additional funding needed for FY26
A (57%)		\$ 1,051,261.78	\$ 256,774.00	\$ 794,487.78
N (43%)		\$ 793,057.13	\$ 193,792.00	\$ 599,265.13
Total		\$ 1,844,318.92	\$ 450,566.00	\$ 1,393,752.92

236LC-02: Funds for the Wahiawa Civic Center Move

DHS continues to maintain a presence in communities around the state to provide services efficiently and accurately. For the residents of Wahiawa, North Shore, and the surrounding areas, our Wahiawa First-to-Work and Wahiawa Processing Center will soon be co-located in the new Wahiawa Civic Center. This move will allow DHS to maximize the use of our allotted space and provide streamlined services to our clients. The building of the new civic center started in October 2023 and is expected to be completed by the end of FY 2025. With completion next year, DHS requires funds to move current offices to the civic center. The civic center will also house offices for the Judiciary and the Department of Health.

The funds being requested are to furnish the new space and for moving and disposing of equipment and furniture from the old offices. It also includes expenses for the installation of phones and cabling of the new Wahiawa Civic Center, and the removal of cabling from the old offices. This funding is required for DHS to relocate staff and all required equipment and other necessary items.

As of September 2024, Wahiawa Processing Center and Wahiawa First-to-Work are currently serving a combined 2,727 households. There will be 23 employees from the Processing Center and First to Work office that will be consolidated at the Wahiawa Civic Center. Failure to fund the move may adversely impact operations for Wahiawa and impact the 2,700 clients receiving financial and SNAP benefits or receiving First to Work services.

236LC-03: Transfer out FTE and Salaries of 5.00 Perm Positions from HMS 236 to HMS 903

This request is to transfer out the FTE and salaries of five permanent positions from HMS 236 to HMS 903. This is a companion of the HMS 903 request (903FA-01) to transfer in and redescribe the positions to address the division's staffing needs.

Transferring the five positions will enable the division to function more efficiently and will support compliance with federal regulations. The positions will also support more timely and accurate processing of public benefits, thereby improving services for clients and reducing the risk of federal penalties related to delays in timeliness and increases in payment errors.

HMS 302 – General Support for Child Care

Prog ID/Org	Dept Pri	BUDGET REQUEST Description	MOF	FY 26			FY27		
				FTE (P)	FTE (T)	Amount (\$)	FTE (P)	FTE (T)	\$ Amount
302DA-01	1	Transfer in 1.00 FTE and Salary from HMS 236 to HMS 302	A	0.57		20,062	0.57		20,062
302DA-01	1	Transfer in 1.00 FTE and Salary from HMS 236 to HMS 302	N	0.43		24,820	0.43		24,820

302DA-01: Transfer in 1.00 FTE and Salary from HMS 236 to HMS 302

This request is a companion to the HMS 236 request (236LC-05) for transferring the 1.00 FTE and salary of position #31066, Office Assistant IV.

The child-care subsidy program implements federal and state child-care subsidy programs to help families afford child care, reduce their child-care expenses, and provide equal access to high-quality care for both underserved and at-risk families. The Child Care Subsidy Unit (CCSU) receives and processes applications; determines eligibility and issues child-care subsidy payments; provides technical assistance and resource and referral activities; and conducts background checks on all applicants, their household members, and licensed and registered providers to determine their risk with respect to children in care.

Act 248, SLH 2022, approved 25 permanent positions and operating costs to implement the Child Care Subsidy (CCS) program within DHS with the intent to improve efficiency, timeliness, payment accuracy, and communication with families. Subsequent to that legislative approval, the CCSU was established in January 2023 with approval to transfer one permanent Office Assistant (OA) IV position from the Oahu Section 2 Kapolei Processing Center to the CCSU to bring the total number of positions for this newly established CCSU to 26 positions. The CCSU will service families statewide under a statewide model to be able to efficiently and effectively manage the statewide CCS caseload.

The OA IV plays a key role in providing the CCSU clerical support to two CCSU Supervisors, 16 Eligibility Workers (EW), and 6 Social Service Assistants (SSA) in managing the CCSU administrative duties and client-related activities, including but not limited to:

1. Answering and/or routing incoming questions based on knowledge and understanding of the CCSU to address situations that may occur in the absence of the unity supervisors, referring visitors and callers to appropriate staff.
2. Receiving and processing incoming mail and responding to routine correspondence.

3. Issuing Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards and working with the client to activate the card.
4. Conducting simple procurement activities for the CCSU.
5. Assisting with registering applications and cases in the system of record and uploading documents into the electronic case file (ECF) record.
6. Preparing Administrative Hearing requests and monitoring/maintaining hearing schedules and decisions.
7. Preparing and managing CCSU reports for submission to the Supervisors.
8. Making arrangements for equipment and technology maintenance, upgrades, refreshes, and replacement.
9. Preparing telecom and staff training requests.
10. Maintaining position inventory.
11. Processing travel arrangements.
12. Preparing Human Resource documents, attendance and leave records, reallocation requests, and requests to fill.

As the CCSU works to become fully staffed, it is imperative to have this OA IV position transferred into the applicable Program ID, HMS 302, to complete the recruitment process to fill this key support role in the new CCSU.

HMS 903 – General Support for Self-Sufficiency Services

Prog ID/Org	Dept Pri	BUDGET REQUEST Description	MOF	FY 26			FY27		
				FTE (P)	FTE (T)	Amount (\$)	FTE (P)	FTE (T)	\$ Amount
903FA-01	12	Transfer In FTE and Salaries of 5.00 Perm Positions from HMS 236 to HMS 903; Redescribe Positions	A	1.60		92,178	1.60		92,178
903FA-01	12	Transfer In FTE and Salaries of 5.00 Perm Positions from HMS 236 to HMS 903; Redescribe Positions	N	1.40		135,054	1.40		135,054
903FA-03	20	Add 1.00 FTE and Funds for the Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (S-EBT)	A	0.50		1,738,556	0.50		1,734,310
903FA-03	20	Add 1.00 FTE and Funds for the Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (S-EBT)	N	0.50		1,761,060	0.50		1,757,206
903FA-05	35	Funds for SNAP Smart Food Program	A			1,500,000			-
903FA-07	3	Funds for Benefits Eligibility Solution (BES) Ongoing Software Costs	A			1,060,000			1,060,000
903FA-07	3	Funds for Benefits Eligibility Solution (BES) Ongoing Software Costs	N			940,000			940,000

903FA-01: Transfer in FTE and Salaries of 3.00 Perm Positions from HMS 236 to HMS 903; Redescribe Positions

This request is a companion to the HMS 236 request (236LC-03) transferring the FTE and salaries of 3.00 permanent positions. In addition, the purpose of the request is to redescribe the positions to meet the needs of the division. The Purchasing Tech II, Investigator III, and Outreach Manager (Self-Sufficiency Support Services Specialist V) positions are especially critical due to the increasing number of applications and calls for assistance received by the Statewide Branch (SB). For example, currently, the SB receives 33,600 calls monthly and 8,800 applications monthly compared to 4,412 applications in February 2020 (pre-pandemic).

The FNS recently informed DHS in June 2024 that we will face financial penalty for increased error rates in processing during the pandemic waiver years and has placed DHS in corrective

action for not meeting federal timeliness standards for SNAP. The five positions listed below will support increased efficiency in the overall operations of the BESSD, increase capacity to respond to and comply with federal requirements regarding program integrity and restitution of overpayments, and enable the SB to refine outreach, the call center, and business processes to increase timeliness and reduce instances of payment error in benefit processing.

Purchasing Tech II

BESSD Administrative Management Services Office (AMSO) and Support Services Office (SSO) had a Purchasing Technician position that was defunded in FY21 and unfortunately abolished in FY22. This position is very crucial as it is the only purchasing technician for our division. The position is responsible for purchasing supplies and equipment for the entire Division. The position also reviews supplies and equipment requests from the Statewide Branch (SB) and recommends approval/disapproval or suggests alternatives/substitutes to the Staff Services Supervisor; conducts procurement of leased equipment such as multi-function devices, postage machines, and monthly air conditioning maintenance for SB units; assists in processing pCard/Purchase Orders (PO)'s and invoices for security guards, courier services, janitorial services, telephones, etc., assists with units' moves to other offices, and contacts the various vendors for moving services, equipment disposals, etc. The Purchasing Tech position also processes inventory paperwork for the Division administrator's signature. Since we currently do not have a purchasing technician position, all of these responsibilities are added to the duties of the Staff Services Supervisor, alongside managing several positions at the central files office. In particular, funding the Purchasing Tech II position would better enable the division to support the operations of SB, which provides direct assistance to clients applying for and receiving SNAP and financial assistance benefits.

Investigator III

The primary function of the Restitution Control Staff (RCS) of the Investigations Office (INVO) is to establish and implement the Department's statewide program to control and enforce restitution due to DHS because of overpayments and over issuances made in the various public assistance programs administered by DHS. One Investigator III position in this office was abolished in FY22.

The primary purpose of the Investigator III positions is to provide investigative services in support of the recovery of monies due to the Department; locate persons of interest for other DHS program offices and other State Departments as requested; provide mandated support to the FBI Fleeing Felon Program; and conduct other investigations as directed.

The workload for the Restitution Control Staff requires a minimum of three investigators. Additionally, due to the sensitivity of information in some of the tasks, access to the information is only granted to one investigator. In the past, the workload was divided among three investigators to maintain efficiency, accuracy, and confidentiality. For example, INVO receives an FBI fleeing felon list of over 1,000 pages, with at least 100 names on each page every three months. The RCS Investigators must screen the list to identify individuals who have

outstanding warrants and are residing in Hawaii. Once they identify those individuals, they then must attempt to locate those individuals. The tasks for completing this function are extensive and require the investigator to research various databases and coordinate with other agencies to verify and locate the individual.

Other functions include but are not limited to screening restitution accounts for accuracy, providing testimony in bankruptcy proceedings, and identifying and locating family members of deceased account holders. With only one Investigator III, RCS would not be able to continue to function efficiently and effectively and would have a negative impact on DHS's ability to fulfill its obligations and oversight requirements mandated by FNS.

Outreach Manager

As we continue to provide services for the most vulnerable members of our community, SB coordinates outreach efforts with various community partners. There has been an increased demand for eligibility staff to attend outreach events to assist with eligibility processing, including Rapid Response with the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR) when businesses shut down or reduce operations and community service fairs. Outreach staff assist attendees with applying for benefits and services, conduct and complete interviews, and provide answers to questions about programs or case status. DHS is requesting a position to manage and oversee this service provision.

The Outreach Manager would ensure staffing for outreach events, coordinate with the community partners, manage the field operations, and troubleshoot during events (including supervising staff during events, providing clarification on basic policy and procedures of determining eligibility, and assisting eligibility staff as needed), create and maintain policies and procedures for SB Outreach, continue to build partnerships within the community and manage logistics and equipment needs for events and operations. Allowing someone to focus on this important outreach effort fully will also assist SB in more fully developing its outreach coordination and activities. Residents will benefit from services in their communities that generally take place during non-traditional office hours. It is the goal of SB to eventually have a separate group of eligibility staff that would devote their time to outreach in the community.

903FA-03: Add 1.00 FTE and Funds for the Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer (Summer EBT)

The Consolidated Appropriations Act 2023 (P.L. 117-328) authorized a permanent, nationwide Summer EBT program that began in 2024. Branded as "SUN Bucks" in Hawaii, Summer EBT intends to reduce hunger and food insecurity for children who lose access to free and reduced-price meals through the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program during the summer when school is not in session.

Hawaii's participation in the new federal Summer EBT program required and continues to require a 50/50 match of state funds to federal funds to administer the program. Act 155, SLH

2024 established the Summer EBT program in DHS, subject to the availability of funds, and provided the general funds needed for the federal fund match to implement Summer EBT for FY2024-2025 that was used for the 2024 Summer break. The inaugural Summer EBT program served approximately 90,000 children statewide by providing each child with a food benefit of \$177 to purchase approved food items and address their food needs during the summer break period. These benefits were 100% federally funded and totaled nearly \$16 million in food purchasing benefits that could be spent at local food retailers. Notably, each \$1 of this benefit spent has a multiplier effect of generating \$1.80 in economic stimulus for the local economy.

This budget request completes the intent of Act 155, SLH 2024, by establishing permanent administrative funding for the continued operation of the Summer EBT program. Act 155, SLH 2024, authorized 1.00 FTE position in DHS to be the administrative and implementing lead for Hawaii's SUN Bucks program. Act 155, SLH 2024, further appropriated funds for the contracting of the operational services and technical system development services.

The Summer EBT contracts break down as follows:

- \$1,431,920 On-going system costs.
- \$1,344,000 Summer EBT/SUN Bucks Customer Service (call center & application processing);
- \$ 500,000 EBT vendor costs; and
- \$ 120,000 Notice printing and mail distribution.

As mentioned previously, administration of this program requires a 50% state match. Without the State match, the only alternative to consider is not to operate the program. However, given the high cost of food, continuing access to federal nutrition benefits for school children on summer break is a priority to reduce food insecurity and child hunger.

903FA-05: Funds for SNAP Smart Food Program

Hawaii has an estimated food insecurity rate of 13.1%, with approximately 10.9% of Hawaii's population receiving benefits from the SNAP program. Food insecurity is associated with numerous adverse social and health outcomes and is increasingly considered a critical public health issue. Key drivers of food insecurity include unemployment, poverty, and income shocks, which can prevent adequate access to food.

Additionally, food prices in Hawaii continue to increase.

To address food insecurity and rising food prices, DHS will implement the Smart Food supported by the Governor's office. The Smart Food Program matches surplus food with local SNAP recipients. This program will allow Hawaii food producers and retailers to make specific food items, including fresh produce, available at discounted prices to SNAP recipients in specific stores where surplus inventories are identified through a mobile application. This virtual

marketplace will coordinate the offers of food as digital coupons to be shared with participating SNAP recipients. Moreover, the mobile application will deliver tailored nutrition information to SNAP recipients to encourage healthy food choices. The State of Delaware will be the first state to use this mobile application, and Hawaii proposes to be the next State to implement this.

The service will be done via contract. The deliverable will be a mobile application that SNAP recipients could voluntarily enroll in that would provide them alerts of reduced-priced food items as well as access to other cost-saving information that would allow them to have greater purchasing options with their limited benefits.

903FA-07: Funds for Benefits Eligibility Solution Ongoing Software Costs

DHS is currently working on the development and implementation of its new Benefits Eligibility Solution (BES) eligibility system, which is the replacement eligibility system for the department's legacy Hawaii Automated Welfare Information (HAWI) eligibility system. DHS expects to implement the BES statewide in late 2025. BES will be the system to determine eligibility, authorize benefits, and provide ongoing eligibility case management for the department's public benefits programs, including Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Temporary Assistance for Other Needy Families (TAONF), General Assistance (GA), and Aid to the Aged, Blind, and Disabled (AABD).

Previous funding for maintenance & operations (M&O) for BES was appropriated initially in 2018 and was adjusted last legislative session to add \$288,177 A funds and \$255,500 N funds. While implementation was initially scheduled for mid-2024, implementation has been delayed, and the M&O estimates have been reevaluated to include additional ongoing software costs at \$2M per year on a recurring basis. The additional \$2M being requested includes annual Google Cloud subscription services supporting multiple environments (Engineering, Development, Testing, Integration, Staging, Production, Security, Training, and Disaster Recovery) that are necessary for the BES system modernization.

In addition to this request, there is a separate one-time budget request (above) for \$10M in FY26 for BES development and testing, as well as a legislative proposal to request a \$5.4M Emergency Appropriation (EA) in FY25. The EA is specifically to reinvest a portion of a federal penalty for payment errors to build additional functionality in BES aimed at improving the accuracy of SNAP benefit processing and reducing errors related to overpayments and underpayments. All three requests are necessary to support the full development and implementation of BES.

BES is especially critical to address the FNS penalty for failing to achieve a SNAP payment error rate for federal fiscal year 2023 at or below the national average of 11.68%. The BES will include necessary functionality to reduce and prevent payment errors, such as an automated

rules engine that will increase efficiency and streamline existing processes. If BES development is not completed and does not have sufficient funding for ongoing operation and maintenance of critical BES environments, Hawaii will be at increased risk of high payment error, potentially delayed timeliness in processing benefits, and may be at increased likelihood of incurring additional financial penalties from FNS in future years.

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)

HMS 802 – Vocational Rehabilitation

Prog ID/Org	Dept Pri	BUDGET REQUEST Description	MOF	FY 26			FY27		
				FTE (P)	FTE (T)	Amount (\$)	FTE (P)	FTE (T)	\$ Amount
802GA-02	30	Randolph Sheppard Revolving Account Ceiling Request	W			669,800			669,800

802GA-02: Randolph Sheppard Revolving Account Ceiling Request

This request is to permanently increase the revolving fund appropriation ceiling for DVR’s (HMS 802) Randolph-Sheppard Revolving Account from \$1,330,200 to \$2,000,000. Additional Governor discretion to raise the ceiling in increments of \$1,000,000 as needed would also facilitate the administration of the Randolph-Sheppard program.

The Randolph-Sheppard (or “Blind Vending”) program exists to provide quality employment opportunities for blind entrepreneurs licensed by the State of Hawaii DHS/DVR/Ho`opono-Services for the Blind Branch (the “SLA” or State Licensing Agency”). The Randolph-Sheppard program is mandated to continuously seek new opportunities for requesting to keep the ceiling for the Randolph-Sheppard S-350 Account at \$2 million. The account funds are used to assist licensed blind vendors statewide at county, state, and federal locations with costs of renovations, purchases/repair of equipment, supplies, vendor benefits, and professional development. This includes new facilities, as well as providing necessary upgrades, renovations, equipment, and supplies to existing facilities, which can range from small sundry shops to larger-scale cafeterias on county, state, and federal properties.

The income that funds this account comes primarily from the Honolulu Airport Settlement Agreement and non-assigned vending machines on federal property and is sufficient to maintain the budget at \$2 million permanently. The Randolph-Sheppard Revolving Account is used for these purposes, as well as the overall provision of management services, training, equipment, retirement and medical benefits, and travel for blind vendors. The ever-increasing cost of medical services causes a need to increase annual medical benefits for the vendors.

Funding for renovations to blind vending stands (\$415,276), increased medical insurance (\$167,450), and increased retirement costs for blind vendors (\$87,074) have been deemed non-recurring and are not considered part of the base budget. Therefore, the ceiling of \$1,330,200.00 is insufficient to cover these ongoing expenditure requirements.

Med-QUEST Division (MOD)

HMS 401 – Health Care Payments

BUDGET REQUEST			FY 26			FY27			
Prog ID/Org	Dept Pri	Description	MOF	FTE (P)	FTE (T)	Amount (\$)	FTE (P)	FTE (T)	\$ Amount
401PE-01	1	Establish Special Fund Appropriation Ceiling for the Nursing Facility Sustainability Special Fund	B			30,000,000			30,000,000
401PE-02	2	Establish Special Fund Appropriation Ceiling for the Hospital Sustainability Special Fund	B			200,000,000			200,000,000
401PE-03	3	Increase Payments to Professional Services Providers	A			12,053,060			12,053,060
401PE-03	3	Increase Payments to Professional Services Providers	N			17,402,121			17,402,121
401PE-04	4	Increase Provider Payment Rates for Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) Services	A			2,690,000			2,690,000
401PE-04	4	Increase Provider Payment Rates for Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) Services	N			3,810,000			3,810,000
401PE-05	5	Increase In-Home HCBS	A			-			-

		BUDGET REQUEST		FY 26		FY27	
401PE-05	5	Increase In-Home HCBS	N		14,060,000		14,060,000
401PE-06	6	Add General Funding for Death Benefits Program	A		277,600		277,600
401PE-07	7	Add General Funding for Child Wellness Incentive Pilot Program	A		750,000		750,000

401PE-01: Establish Special Fund Appropriation Ceiling for the Nursing Facility Sustainability Special Fund

The purpose of this request is to establish a special fund appropriation ceiling in HMS 401 for the Nursing Facility Sustainability Special Fund, which is established in Chapter 346F, HRS. This appropriation ceiling was established in Act 109, SLH 2023, and not in the executive budget act. This special fund collects revenue from the Nursing Facility Sustainability Program, which was made permanent in 2023. Expenditures from this special fund will directly support Hawaii's nursing facilities, to maintain access to care for Medicaid recipients and allow these facilities to continue to serve uninsured or underinsured patients.

401PE-02: Establish Special Fund Appropriation Ceiling for the Hospital Sustainability Special Fund

The purpose of this request is to establish a special fund appropriation ceiling in HMS 401 for the Hospital Sustainability Special Fund, which is established in Chapter 346G, HRS. This appropriation ceiling was established in Act 110, SLH 2023, and not in the executive budget act. This special fund will collect revenue from the Hospital Sustainability Program, which was made permanent in 2023. Expenditures from this special fund will directly support Hawaii's private hospitals, to maintain access to care for Medicaid recipients and allow these hospitals to continue to serve uninsured or underinsured patients.

401PE-03: Sustain Increase Payments for most Medical - Professional Services

This request is to sustain the increased reimbursement rates for most medical professional services (e.g., Doctor's visits) to 100% of the Medicare fee schedule. Without this increase, the fee schedule would be reduced back to approximately 60% of the Medicare fee schedule for most of the medical/professional services. This request makes these funds a recurring item in the base budget as funds appropriated for this increase in fiscal biennium FY23-FY25 were non-recurring.

401PE-04: Increase Provider Payment Rates for Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) Services

This request is to provide recurring funding increases for Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) services. The appropriation in 2024 was non-recurring. In 2023, Senate Concurrent Resolution 132, Senate Resolution 152, and House Resolution 207 requested DHS to take necessary steps to ensure adequate provider rates are established for ABA services. DHS contracted Miliman to do the study, which was completed and submitted to the Legislature in December 2023. The study uses a payment model based on an Independent Rate Model methodology, which means building the component parts of the rates from the ground up. Key components of this rate study included outreach and engagement with ABA provider agencies, providers, and their associations, collecting provider agency cost and wage survey data, and getting feedback on draft rate calculations. The rate study provided three scenarios (Scenario 1, 2, and 3), and this request is based on Scenario 1.

401PE-05: Increase In-Home HCBS

This request is to authorize federal funds to increase rates for in-home Home and Community Based Services (HCBS). In 2022, the Legislature requested that the DHS study the feasibility of increasing rates for Community Care Family Foster Homes, Adult Residential Care Homes, and other Home and Community Based Services (HCBS). As a result, the Med-QUEST Division worked with actuaries to do the rate study. A key part of the rate study included stakeholder outreach and engagement with HCBS providers and their associations, collecting provider cost and wage survey data, and getting provider feedback on draft rate calculations. Not surprisingly, the provider surveys showed significant wage pressure given the current labor market. The rate study methodology used wage and salary data for direct care staff and supervisors, employee-related expenses, transportation and administration, program support, overhead, and Bureau of Labor and Industry Wage Indices to pay for employee benefits such as health insurance. The final rate study was presented in December 2022 with three options for levels of funding - Low, Medium, and High. This request represents the "Low" option for the In-Home HCBS services.

These services provide eligible members with daily living services and supports (meal preparation, cleaning, bathing, community residential, home modifications, personal care) that help individuals live in the community or in their own homes instead of in institutional (nursing facility) care. The Legislature provided funding to increase the rates for all of the other Home and Community Based Services. The In-Home service increases, even at the "Low" option, reflects the competition for workers for this type of work (e.g., the hospitality sector). Without the increase, it will become increasingly difficult to find personal care workers needed for our kupuna and individuals with disabilities wishing to remain living in their own homes. If people cannot remain in their own homes, they will likely need more support in a more costly setting such as a nursing facility or other community residential setting.

The general fund portion of this request will come from the existing general fund appropriation for HMS 401.

401PE-06: Add General Funding for Death Benefits Program

In 2024, Act 108 appropriated \$277,600 to the DHS, Med-QUEST Division, to increase payments for the cost of the mortuary, crematory, or hydrolysis facility services for unclaimed dead human bodies from \$800 to \$1,600. Funding was only appropriated for FY 2025, so this request is to include the funds in the base budget on a recurring basis to make this increase permanent.

401PE-07: Add General Funding for Child Wellness Incentive Pilot Program

This request appropriates funds to the Med-QUEST Division's budget for the Child Wellness Incentive Pilot Program established in Act 127, SLH 2022. Act 127, SLH 2022, makes a \$50 payment to each state Medicaid benefit recipient for each completed well-child examination of that recipient parent's child, provided that only one payment may be made per child each year. Med-QUEST requested and received an appropriation in the Fiscal Biennium FY23-FY25 budget, but this funding was designated as non-recurring. This program is established for five years, ending on June 30, 2027; thus, funding needs to be included in the Med-QUEST budget in order for the program to continue to make these incentive payments through June 20, 2027.

HMS 902 – General Support for Health Care Payments:

		BUDGET REQUEST		FY 26			FY27		
Prog ID/Org	Dept Pri	Description	MOF	FTE (P)	FTE (T)	Amount (\$)	FTE (P)	FTE (T)	\$ Amount
902IA-01	4	Establish Special Fund Appropriation Ceiling for the Hospital Sustainability Special Fund	B			25,000,000			25,000,000
902IA-02	5	Establish Special Fund Appropriation Ceiling for the Nursing Facility Sustainability Special Fund	B			5,000,000			5,000,000

902IA-01: Establish Special Fund Appropriation Ceiling for the Hospital Sustainability Special Fund

The purpose of this request is to establish a special fund appropriation ceiling in HMS 902 for the Hospital Sustainability Special Fund, which is established in Chapter 346G, HRS. This appropriation ceiling was established in Act 110, SLH 2023, and not in the executive budget act. This special fund will collect revenue from the Hospital Sustainability Program, which was made permanent in 2023. 10% of the special fund fees are designated for the administration of the Medicaid program.

902IA-02: Establish Special Fund Appropriation Ceiling for the Nursing Facility Sustainability Special Fund

The purpose of this request is to establish a special fund appropriation ceiling in HMS 902 for the Nursing Facility Sustainability Special Fund, which is established in Chapter 346F, HRS. This appropriation ceiling was established in Act 109, SLH 2023, and not in the executive budget act. This special fund collects revenue from the Nursing Facility Sustainability Program, which was made permanent in 2023. Up to 12% of the fees collected in the special fund are to be used to support the Medicaid program administration.

Social Services Division (SSD)

HMS 301 – Child Protective Services

Prog ID/Org	Dept Pri	BUDGET REQUEST Description	MOF	FY 26			FY27		
				FTE (P)	FTE (T)	Amount (\$)	FTE (P)	FTE (T)	\$ Amount
301SA-01	19	Add Funds for Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS)	A			3,500,000			3,500,000
301SA-02	1	Child Protective Services Shortage Differential for Recruitment and Retention	A			3,000,000			3,000,000

301SA-01: Add Funds for Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS)

This budget request is the first request for funding of maintenance and operations necessary for HI-THRIVE. The funding will be used to procure a vendor to provide maintenance and operations so that HI-THRIVE runs smoothly and does what it is expected to do.

A modernized data system, with the use of current technology, is needed for Child Welfare Services (CWS). CWS continues to move forward with the implementation of its HI-THRIVE data system (aka the Comprehensive Child Welfare Information System (CCWIS)). HI-THRIVE is expected to provide the technological ability to access the system remotely, to be more user-friendly, to provide real-time data for a more efficient way of doing practice, and a means of having more accurate data needed in decision-making and progress monitoring.

HI-THRIVE is at the stage where the first phase of implementation should be in place by the end of Spring 2025. Once that is done, it will be necessary to have funding to provide the maintenance and operations (M&O) necessary to ensure the computer system runs smoothly. M&O will also troubleshoot identified issues that may prevent the system from optimal operations.

The funding includes the costs for various software licenses, e.g., Adobe eSign, Oracle Rule, Azure Integration, Dell Boomi, etc., which are necessary to meet the needs of the practice. The funding request also takes into account inflation and possible unanticipated reasonable expenses related to maintaining and operating HI-THRIVE, e.g., replacing incompatible equipment, updating current programs, etc. The amount requested is appropriate given the current stage of HI-THRIVE and the size of the system. Federal reimbursement for up-front costs is also available at the appropriate Title IV-E reimbursement rate.

Investing in a new system is critical in meeting the demands of daily operations and provides the ability to access and use data more effectively. Maintaining a computer system so that it

operates correctly is critical to documentation and communication. Without this funding, if there are problems with the HI-THRIVE, there is no immediate remedy to resolving it; CWS will not have a data system that is necessary to perform the essential protective services and effectively help the children and families we serve.

There are no alternatives. M&O is a necessary part of having a functional data system.

301SA-02: Child Protective Services Shortage Differential for Recruitment and Retention

The work that Child Welfare Services (CWS) workers do is vital to keeping children safe and thriving while working to reunite them with their families as soon as possible or find an alternative permanent home when families cannot be reunified. The vacancy rate of CWS has remained at least 30% for the past four years and efforts to decrease the vacancy rate have made little impact.

This workforce capacity issue with CWS is a nationwide problem. Without a shortage differential, recruitment and retention will remain challenging, and vacancies will continue to increase as more workers become eligible to retire, find higher-paying jobs, or resign due to the challenges of the job and working conditions. Non-government employers can offer wages that are much more competitive than the salaries of positions in CWS. Many critics of CWS point to the capacity issue as a factor in child death, poor and untimely assessments, and delays in reunifying children with their families. Without this funding, CWS will continue to struggle to fill vacancies and retain experienced staff.

The additional workload adds more stress to already demanding jobs, which leads to burnout. New recruits also decline job offers to accept higher paying jobs. The Legislature previously appropriated funds for a shortage differential; however, it was a non-recurring expense and only for professional staff, e.g., line workers in social worker positions.

This request is to make the shortage differential part of the base budget and to include CWS support staff as well. Vacancies of support staff positions are also problematic. and those positions are critical to meeting the expectations of all the work that needs to be done by CWS. While the professional staff does the assessments for investigations and case management, it is the support staff that arranges for medical appointments, transports and supervises visits, completes all the paperwork for travel, makes referrals and completes applications for services, makes copies of reports for hearings, and keep the physical files organized and up-to-date, amongst many other things necessary to meet the daily operations of CWS. It is anticipated that to build and stabilize the workforce so that CWS can operate using best practices, the differential will continue to be needed in the years to come to increase the recruitment and retention of CWS workers.

Alternatives to a shortage differential are to increase the salaries of the CWS positions or to offer regular financial incentives as recruitment and retainment tools.

HMS 601 – Adult Protective and Community Services

		BUDGET REQUEST		FY 26			FY27		
Prog ID/Org	Dept Pri	Description	MOF	FTE (P)	FTE (T)	Amount (\$)	FTE (P)	FTE (T)	\$ Amount
601TA-01	11	Adult Protective and Community Services Computer System Build	A			550,000			550,000

601TA-01: Adult Protective and Community Services Computer System Build

This request is for \$550,000 in recurring funds to continue the development of an information system for the Adult Protective and Community Services Branch (APCS). In 2020, APCS began working with a contracted provider, the University of Hawaii, Maui College, on the vision, design, and build of a new and updated technology infrastructure to address the specific needs of Hawaii’s APCS program. The current CPSS system is antiquated, having been conceived and implemented over 30 years ago. It was created primarily for the State’s Child Welfare Services Branch programs and is modified in small measures for APCS. Due to the age of the system and because it was never intended for Adult Protective Service data, it has been and remains inadequate for capturing information that is needed both internally as well as for state and federal reporting. It also results in laborious, ineffective, and time-consuming work for staff, who need a system that is responsive, portable, and effective for the work we do in this modern age.

The UH Maui College Software Development Center is working closely with APCS and continues to develop a new, single-entry system of record with identified functional program requirements, including modularized components from intake to investigatory abuse analysis and determination, retrieval of information to generate protective service documents, and ability to retrieve and display protective determination evidence expediently. We utilize departmental and contracted technical information technology (IT) support for the APCS new system of record, termination of data entry into the legacy system, and the ability to retrieve old data from the legacy system.

APCS has relied heavily on the beginning phases of the system, built on a series of Federal Grants (CRSA and ARPA) awarded to the program. Now that these grants are ending, we must continue to build upon the momentum and see the system-build project to fruition. For this, we will need State funding in the amount of \$550,000 built into our base budget. We will utilize these funds to continue the progress in developing a comprehensive system for assessment, investigation, case management, referral management, reporting, and business intelligence.

Many of the components are already in place, including the intake subsystem and a web-based reporter form coupled with auto-population of information into the APCS worker's intake report, making the reporting of abuse and screening process more efficient and timely, as well as an assessment tool to identify clients' areas of risk and needs, coupled with case management processes to reinforce that clients are supported with referrals and/or linkages to access needed goods and/or services.

Without adequate funding, this important project would likely be halted, and APCS would be left without a system of record as the CPSS system is phased out. APCS not having what is being requested may result in a negative impact on the most vulnerable people we service in our state, as APCS will not be able to access cases as readily, not be able to maneuver quicker to respond, and not be more mobile. We respectfully request the Legislature's support for APCS to reach our goal to adapt and change our environment so we can continue/improve service to the public efficiently and effectively.

The current antiquated system hinders the ability to serve and protect vulnerable adults. APCS needs a system that is user-friendly and supports staff in performing their important work efficiently and successfully. The current system is DOS-based and limited in its data capacity as well as in its adaptability. Very little can be done to improve upon the system to meet the current demands; it is counter-intuitive and is very difficult to train staff to use, and largely inaccessible outside the traditional office space where it is housed with the mainframe system. The system lacks built-in logic, requiring staff to perform many tedious steps, such as data code entry and navigating multiple screens, to capture documentation of incoming reports of abuse and investigations.

APCS needs a system that is both responsive and understandable to the current workforce and that enables us to access information and input data outside the traditional office space. As social workers and nurses, most of the work that is performed is done "in the field". Without the ability to access information or input data remotely, our work is delayed and less efficient. APCS needs a system that supports our ability to protect vulnerable adults seamlessly, whether working in the office or remotely.

HMS 901 – General Support for Social Services

Prog ID/Org	Dept Pri	BUDGET REQUEST Description	MOF	FY 26			FY27		
				FTE (P)	FTE (T)	Amount (\$)	FTE (P)	FTE (T)	\$ Amount
901MA-01	23	Additional Funds for Training	A			300,000			-
901MA-02	32	Add funds for Security Measures for Social Services Division	A			500,000			-

901MA-01: Additional Funds for Training

The need for training is essential in building capacity for a stable and competent workforce. This request will provide the funding to enhance the training resources available to staff in the Division. For the past four years, the Division has been trying to enhance the capability of the Staff Development Office, with limited success. Audits and comprehensive quality improvement assessments identified the need to provide a better curriculum to train staff regularly as one of the key factors in building staff capacity and competency.

Despite receiving technical assistance to improve on the training, the Division recognizes the need to seek out services from external experts to train its trainers and to create a curriculum that is evidence-based, comprehensive, and better suited to the needs of the current staff. Without external expertise, it will be a challenge to provide the skills and knowledge to move the Division towards a more efficient and knowledgeable workforce.

Other states similar to Hawaii in terms of number of staff have training academies and staff development teams that are double the size of Hawaii's. The expectation of the community is to provide the necessary training to staff so that they become more competent in the work they do. The training will provide a safety curriculum, cultural training to serve families better, legal training so workers can be more aware of legal rights, and enhancement of their knowledge about applicable statutes, administrative rules, and policies and procedures that impact their daily work. Training to stay up-to-date with best practices must also be provided, as well as training on trauma-informed approaches and self-care to address the concerns related to burnout.

Nationwide, states are facing a shortage of workers, and without the proper training and support, workers are quick to leave to find less demanding jobs. This Division, which includes Child Welfare Services and Adult Protective and Community Services, needs to build and stabilize its workforce to keep vulnerable children and adults safe. Training will assist in providing the skills, knowledge, and support to retain workers. Without the enhanced training that this funding would be used for, the Division will be unable to meet the training demands of its workers and will continue to be unable to recruit and retain employees.

The time to seek expertise from external sources to assist with and improve training needs is now if the improvements demanded by the community are to be met. Otherwise, the lack of training will continue to be a problem that will be scrutinized by the public and put the State in a vulnerable position.

901MA-02: Add funds for Security Measures for the Social Services Division

Threats and harassment to workers in the Division have increased, requiring the Department of Law Enforcement (DLE) to provide sheriff presence in offices and periodic patrolling by the sheriff in sheriff's vehicles. The Court also issued protective orders to keep targeted individual staff safe. Additionally, staff have had to make police reports related to threats about shooting workers, written attacks targeting workers on social media, and protests being held outside of offices due to fear of harm and/or threat to their physical safety.

DLE conducted an assessment of safety measures available, and additional funding is requested for the purchase of walk-in metal detectors, wand metal detectors, increased security presence, and patrolling, panic buttons in each of the offices, and software applications that can be downloaded on a worker's phone so that their location can be found if they need assistance while out in the field, doing their work.

There have been incidents of aggressive clients walking right into offices to confront workers. Protective screens at the front desk and doors with better locks, which can prevent the public from walking directly into offices, need to be installed in various offices to mitigate easy access to office spaces. The funds would also be used to purchase and install security cameras inside of office as well as in the parking lots where State vehicles are parked. There are increased incidents of state cars being stolen and/or tampered with after work hours.

This is the first time the Division is making this type of request. It is necessary to increase security measures to protect workers so they are and can feel safe and comfortable while working in the office and out in the field. If workers do not feel safe, they may look for employment elsewhere, which is detrimental to the work that needs to be done and increases the workloads and stress of the remaining staff.

Statewide Office on Homelessness & Housing Solutions (SOHHS)

HMS 777 – Office on Homelessness & Housing Solutions

		BUDGET REQUEST		FY 26			FY27		
Prog ID/Org	Dept Pri	Description	MOF	FTE (P)	FTE (T)	Amount (\$)	FTE (P)	FTE (T)	\$ Amount
777HH-01	10	Add Funding for Kauhale	A			50,000,000			50,000,000
777HH-BF1		Operating Cost for SOHHS	A			308,960			308,960

777HH-01: Add Funding for Kauhale

This request is for \$50 million a year to fund the construction and operation of Kauhale over fiscal biennium 2025-2027 (FB 25-27).

Despite necessary investments in outreach, temporary shelter, and transitional housing, the number of “unsheltered” homeless on the street continued to climb as of January 2024; however, SOHHS has since reduced homelessness in Hawaii by over 500 in less than one year. Bringing an end to homelessness requires that, in addition to these essential services, we also invest in new approaches to housing and healing people for the long term. Without long-term space for people to transition into, homeless individuals will continue to cycle in and out of shelters and temporary spaces, waiting months and years for placement into long-term housing where they can heal and grow.

Kauhale offers one such solution. Kauhale or “village-style” housing is typically envisioned as tiny homes, prefabricated homes, or other modest, low-cost housing units with bathrooms and kitchens that are shared by multiple units. Kauhale are more affordable to construct than typical transitional or permanent housing due in part to the use of existing home units and shared baths and kitchens. In addition to lowering development costs, there are communal baths, communal living spaces, kitchens with shared space for cooking and eating, recreation, a garden for growing and sharing food, and other activities so that it will reduce the physical footprint of development and can help to foster a sense of community cooperation and shared responsibility. A Kauhale could also be created in an existing apartment, dormitory, or office building, as long as there is a communal living space, a kitchen, and bathrooms. When we build Kauhale using existing homes, apartments, condos, and/or office spaces, we reduce costs significantly because we do not need to place other infrastructure like water, sewer, and electricity.

The Kauhale pilot project was inspired by successful community-based efforts to house and heal people using communal design and operations. Leading examples include Hui Mahiai Aina in Waimanalo, Kama Oku Kauhale in Kalaheo, and Puuhonua O Waianae in Waianae.

Kauhale can be created through partnerships between the state, counties, and private entities. For instance, a county may have usable land, private donors may be willing to fund construction, and the state may contract with a community organization to operate the village. Alternatively, a church may have land and be willing to operate a kauhale but need help from the county for infrastructure and from the state to pay for vertical construction. The goal is for state kauhale funds to fill funding gaps rather than shoulder the full cost of kauhale construction and operation.

The Administration is currently assessing the viability of Kauhale projects and sites. Our goal in January 2024 was to establish a minimum of 12 kauhale in the next three years, with six on Oahu and 2 in each of the neighbor island counties before the end of 2025.

Today we have surpassed that target and have upgraded our projected target to 24 Kauhale by the end of 2025 and no less than 30 Kauhale before the end of Governor Green's first term (2026).

To date, we have built 16 Kauhale within 10 months (January 2024 to October 2024): Waikiki Vista with 120 beds (Homeless families), Salvation Army Hilo with 25 beds, Middle Street with 19 beds, PaePae Hou-Wilson Street with 24 beds (drug detox – rehabilitation), Village of Redemption (re-entry) 20/24 with aquaponic and hydroponic features, Fernhurst YWCA with 29 beds (Women's re-entry), HI Public Housing (medical respite), Cedar Church Kalihi with 26 beds (Kupuna & Medical Respite), Ka Malu Ko'olau with 34 beds (Windward), Pu'uhoonua O Nene (built-in 2023), Iwilei FHB with 32 beds inside (Medical Respite) and 30 tiny homes outside (Transitional Housing), Iwilei Kauhale with 54 tiny homes, Iwilei Resource Center with 100 beds, Maui Medical Respite, with 10 beds, US Vets Waianae (60 beds for families and single Adults), and House of Redemption 2 on Halina Street (Re-entry).

This is the list of upcoming Kauhale: 1. Youth Kauhale with 20 beds (First Lady Jaime Green's vision); 2. YMCA Atkinson First Kauhale for Diversion/Re-entry with 30 beds; 3. YMCA Nuuanu has 72 beds, Housing instability; 4. 550 Halekauwila with 80 beds, Diversion/Re-entry; 5. Kaneohe Windward with 11 bedrooms, fully ADA-compliant residence for Medicaid, Hospice, and Palliative care patients; 6. Kauai, Mahelona, Homeless with 24 beds; 7. Edwin Thomas Building, Chinatown, 30 Units Permanent Supportive Housing for Kupuna; 8. Cedar Church Waianae, Homeless, 100 beds; and 9. YMCA Waianae, 25 tiny homes.

SOHHS has housed many people so far - approximately 563 people/beds. At our current pace, we will secure over 1,500 beds for individuals experiencing homelessness before the end of 2026.

First Lady Jamie Green is a part of the SOHHS Team as she is currently working with our office to open a youth Kauhale by November 2024, serving 18 homeless youth in the downtown area. She and Governor Green have helped SOHHS in presenting a \$235,000 grant to Residential Youth Services and Empowerment (RYSE), a nonprofit organization dedicated to youth services and empowerment, which offers emergency shelter for Hawaii's homeless youth.

Additionally, SOHHS is also in the process of partnering with other nonprofit organizations for youth kauhale, as well as hospice and palliative care.

Construction costs for Kauhale will vary widely depending upon the design of the Kauhale and how much infrastructure and site work is needed for a particular property. Some sites may only require renovations to existing structures or installation of prefabricated homes, while others may require new construction and installation of water and sewer lines. Our estimate is an average capital cost per kauhale of \$2.5 million, with a wide range around that average figure. For 12 Kauhale over 3 years, the total cost would therefore be \$30 million. We aim to house an average of 75 residents per Kauhale for a total of 900 people housed. This reflects a per-person cost of \$33,000 to house an individual, far below typical development costs for housing a similar number of people.

Operating costs for a Kauhale/ohana zone pilot program may initially be similar to operating costs for shelters or transitional housing projects of a similar size. For example, transitional housing for 75 people costs approximately \$2.08 million annually to operate, based on estimates from homeless service providers. Total annual operating costs for 12 kauhale under these assumptions would be \$25 million. Note that some of these costs will be covered by resident rents. It may also be possible to blend state funding with other sources of funding for Kauhale operations.

We aim to demonstrate that Kauhale operating costs can be reduced over time as residents (with help from housed community supporters) grow their capacity to assume roles and responsibilities for aspects of village operations such as security, groundskeeping, maintenance, and community governance. Increasing resident participation and ownership of village operations will reduce annual costs and their sense of ownership and responsibility. At the same time, with stable housing, residents will have greater opportunities to increase their incomes through education and employment.

This is a pilot program to demonstrate the cost-effectiveness and impact of Kauhale. As such, there are no prior expenditures.

Key performance metrics of the Kauhale pilot program will be the number of homeless individuals housed, the number who retain their placement in a kauhale, and the cost of housing individuals in a kauhale compared to other alternatives.

This is a new initiative that provides a complement to existing services and housing options. Ending homelessness requires investing in long-term affordable communities and trying new approaches, and the Kahale pilot program is such an approach.

777HH-BF1: Operating Costs for SOHHS

This request is for the operation costs for SOHHS. Act 164, SLH 2023, as amended by Act 230, SLH 2024, shows that the funds for travel, office supplies, cell phone line, miscellaneous other current expenses, staff training, and registration, facilitation or consulting contract, routine and maintenance of machines, office furniture and equipment are non-recurring funds. These funds are necessary for the operation of SOHHS in FB 25-27.

General Administration for DHS

HMS 904 – General Administration for DHS

Prog ID/Org	Dept Pri	BUDGET REQUEST Description	MOF	FY 26			FY27		
				FTE (P)	FTE (T)	Amount (\$)	FTE (P)	FTE (T)	\$ Amount
904AA-01	21	Support for IT Operations & Modernization	A			4,000,000			-
904AA-03	26	Add Funds for Family Resource Center	A			605,000			605,000
904AA-04	8	DCMP-RAP	A		3.00	411,216		-	-
904AA-04	8	DCMP-RAP	N		6.00	12,500,153		-	-

904AA-01: Add Information Technology Budget to Support IT Operations & Modernizations.

This request supports department IT operations and modernization. Today, the public is used to having online access at any time and from anywhere, quickly and seamlessly. Government services have not always been designed with the public’s needs and priorities in mind. Many programs struggle to keep up with or stay ahead of our constituent needs, as external conditions change much faster than policy, rules, or laws can be adjusted.

As we look to move beyond the COVID-19 public health emergency, DHS must continue to make investments in technology and its technology workforce to deliver simple, seamless, and secure customer experiences more in line with common consumer experiences we are accustomed to in our personal lives. Whether through the provision of DHS benefits, programs, and services or the support provided to the divisions and agencies that deliver them, our collective commitment is the same: to improve the well-being of Hawaii’s families and communities.

Our implementation of 'Ohana Nui aims to make strategic, intentional changes that enable us to reach our commitment even more effectively. Irrespective of people's age, digital ability, financial situation, disability, education, or English proficiency, our residents need a government that understands who they are, what they need, and how best to deliver for them. As such, every interaction between DHS and the public is an opportunity to show that the government can and will deliver the services people expect and deserve.

The investment decisions made today about how to shape, direct, and secure our infrastructure set the foundation for decades into the future. We must proactively plan to ensure we are positioned to react to the economic uncertainty of our local economy, rising inflation, potential recession, and the financial stock market impacts as the economy eventually recovers, both in the near and long term. Poorly designed, out-of-date, and inefficient government services are a burden to the workforce and the residents we serve. DHS must also compete with the highly competitive private sector to attract, hire, retain, develop, train, and empower talented individuals who are well-suited and well-prepared to face the challenges that we will face over the next five to ten years. As one of the largest employers in the state, we must take what we have learned from the pandemic and post-pandemic nationwide workforce and workplace trends to make the department and the Hawaii state government an ideal, modern, and forward-thinking employer.

'Ohana Nui is a proven approach that capitalizes on Hawaii's unique multigenerational family structure and provides a framework for human service delivery that positions whole families for a chance at greater well-being. Translated as extended or large family, 'Ohana Nui is an adaptation of the national two-generation approach. The approach addresses the needs of children, parents, and grandparents early and concurrently, resulting in better outcomes for the family. Practically speaking, this philosophy requires us to tear down our silos, think beyond the limitations of funding streams, and work across divisions, programs, and teams.

With the support of ETS and the IT Project Advisory Committee (PAC) throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, DHS has proven that we can successfully provide digital services quickly and efficiently by using technology to power outstanding experiences, engaging with our private-sector partners and nonprofit organizations, and collaborating with other state and county agencies to reduce the burdens of interacting with government by simplifying both public-facing and internal processes to improve efficiency, and empowering the workforce so that they can best deliver services from anywhere at any time. The primary focus was on urgent actions to keep our networks and systems up and running and to build additional capacity to increase our online capabilities to as many as possible. DHS kept operating throughout the pandemic, maintaining access to Hawaii residents while keeping clients and staff safe.

DHS made significant investments leveraging emergency COVID and ARPA funds and grant funds from federal funding partners such as the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), FNS, and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to digitize several applications

while increasing cybersecurity, antifraud, automation, artificial intelligence, and IT services. DHS has accelerated the adoption and use of secure cloud infrastructure and services to establish a platform for highly agile and responsive technical infrastructure that can easily expand and contract as resource needs change.

As more legacy and paper-based systems are modernized and made accessible to the public over the internet, the outdated systems and technical debt accumulated over decades limit the effectiveness of government and our ability to implement modern security practices as we continue to increase our online footprint. Continued investments are needed to provide new features and online capabilities, technology that enhances customer service capabilities, provides more resiliency in telecommunications and networks, and double down on automation and integration to remove wasted time in manual data entry and inefficient tasks that span across multiple systems so that the workforce can focus on delivering the benefits and services the public need.

Cybersecurity - \$500,000

Cybersecurity management, monitoring, and detection tools, and training for Security staff and DHS employees to address data loss or theft, hacker, and ransomware attacks to ensure DHS remains compliant with federal, state, and local requirements and regulations.

Secure Cloud Infrastructure - \$250,000

Secure Government Cloud subscription for sensitive or other protected data or systems

Telecommunications and Network Redundancy - \$200,000

To provide multiple dedicated, high-speed network transport services between DHS offices, DHS computing data centers, and the public cloud services that DHS receives from Google and Microsoft.

Antifraud and Identity Proofing - \$650,000

Software and Services that provide electronic identity proofing for online applications that minimize, detect, and help prevent fraudulent applications, block known bad internet systems and networks, and Antifraud Analytics solutions that assist DHS investigations to prevent and detect potential fraudulent claims for food, financial, and Medicaid health insurance benefits. DHS distributes over \$3 billion each year in federal and state funds to support the nutrition, financial, and health insurance benefit programs to nearly one-third of Hawaii's residents.

Software-based Robotic Process Automation (RPA) - \$450,000

Software tools that mimic the mundane human tasks (i.e., eliminate double data entry and repetitive system tasks) to increase the speed and accuracy of data entry tasks between multiple systems within DHS and systems outside of DHS where programmatic or system-to-system integrations are not possible.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) - \$400,000

DHS has invested in AI/ML technologies as a result of the pandemic and the sudden and sharp increases in demand for DHS benefits, increased number of new applications and clients, and the need to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of staff. At the same time, the state suffered from a shortage of workers due to a statewide hiring freeze, defunding of vacant positions, and a dramatic number of retirements over the past 3 years. The AI/ML technologies use natural language processing and intelligent searching to process and present data that is locked in the unstructured text, like case notes in mainframe applications or transcriptions for voice and chatbots tied to our cloud-based contact center to better serve DHS clients.

Customer Service Technologies that provide more client self-service capabilities 24x7x365 - \$400,000

Cloud-based DHS-wide contact center/call center software services, constituent issue tracking system for consolidated reporting and seamless transfers between AI virtual voice agents and virtual chatbots, emails and "contact us" form DHS websites, internal case or eligibility staff, and external DHS partners where clients can get information that they want 24x7, the help they need during business hours without having to repeat their story or situation over and over if they are transferred from one person to another.

IT Consulting Services - \$300,000

The IT consulting services needed in support of the DHS initiatives and investment areas are needed to ensure that these technologies are effectively implemented, managed, and maintained while DHS works to recruit and rebuild its IT workforce and provide sufficient training to existing and new staff. DHS, like many other state agencies, has operated with legacy systems that are outdated, unsupported, and unable to be enhanced or modified effectively. The legacy systems are costly to maintain, and the workforce with expertise in those systems has retired or will retire within the next 3-5 years.

Data Management - \$800,000

DHS seeks to establish and implement a formalized Data Management program based on industry best practices and frameworks that include Data Governance, Data Integration, Data Sharing, Reporting, and Analytics capability. During the pandemic, DHS established a technical solution and platform tool that enables DHS to integrate, transform, or orchestrate the movement of data from one system to another, from one format to another, or with any combination with a number of systems to build quick web interfaces leveraging the data, centrally storing master data records for reporting, and enabling secure sharing and hosting datasets in a data catalog. However, DHS needs to continue investing in both technical and, more importantly, non-technology people, process, and organization practices to establish a formal data management and data governance program which will allow DHS to expand its data

sharing capabilities as the state moves toward closer collaboration and sharing of data between state and local agencies, and providing more transparency of government services through advanced reporting and analytics.

IT Workforce Development & IT Innovation Projects - \$50,000

The department seeks to invest \$20,000 in IT Workforce Development and \$30,000 in IT Innovation Projects as a commitment to the ongoing IT Modernization and DHS Transformation initiatives. This annual investment enables the transformation of the way DHS builds, buys, delivers, and shares technology using modern methodologies and technologies to assist the department in improving the public's experience with DHS. The department will focus investments to help make our IT services more accessible, efficient, and effective by building and providing technology applications, platforms, processes, training and certifications for staff, and supplemental software solutions. DHS will continue to build the foundation for digital transformation with a focus on putting users first, building, sharing, and using open source code, public and private cloud, and platform technologies, and improving upon our existing shared services, enterprise platforms, and security.

904AA-03: Add Funds for Family Resource Centers

Act 129, SLH 2022, relating to Family Resource Centers (FRC), is a five-year pilot program within DHS. This request is to fund one full-time equivalent (1.0) family resource center coordinator position to 1) further develop and implement a statewide network of school- and community-based FRCs; 2) establish definitions, standards, and best practices; 3) identify and align available services, goals, and outcomes; and 4) develop referral and data tracking protocols.

Family Resource Centers (FRCs) are safe, welcoming, and culturally appropriate spaces that support and strengthen families; utilize a multigenerational, strengths-based, and family-centered approach; and provide concrete supports, activities, and programs designed to reflect and be responsive to the specific needs, cultures, and interests of the communities and populations served.

According to the National Family Support Network (NFSN), FRCs play a critical role in preventing child abuse and neglect, strengthening children and families, connecting family-impacting agencies and programs, creating connections to resources and parent support systems, and increasing family engagement which all leads to greater student success in school. The local statewide network is the Hawaii 'Ohana Support Network (HOSN).

Current resources:

Act 129, SLH 2022, \$300,000 Family Resource Center for FY 2022-2023, for a five (5) year pilot project.

Act 125, SLH 2022/Act 133, SLH 2023, \$305,000 relating to incarcerated individuals for a child visiting and family resource center at Waiawa Correctional Facility. Funds were encumbered: \$274,500 (\$305,000 minus 10% restriction).

Expenditures in the prior year:

Funds were appropriated through Act 125, SLH 2022/Act 133, SLH 2023 for a child visiting and family resource center at Waiawa Correctional Facility. A vendor was procured in November 2023 and awarded in January 2024. The contract was executed in May 2024. Of the \$305,000 appropriated funds, 10% was restricted under execution policies, and \$274,500 was released and encumbered. For FY24, family resource centers expended \$219,950 out of the \$270,000 (\$300,000 minus 10% restriction) to develop HOSN, contract a vendor to establish the Waiawa Correctional Facility child visiting and family resource center, offer training, and purchase school furnishings to transform space into a family resource center. The total expended was \$494,450.

Other relevant factors:

The devastation from the Maui Wildfires and the continuing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic highlights the need for mental health services and opportunities to build social capital for both children and adults. FRCs assist families by providing a safe and caring place, resources, and support to strengthen families, connect them to public benefit programs, address the lingering mental health issues of children and families, and provide family engagement for increased school readiness and academic success.

Impact on program performance measures:

The current target group size is statewide, and the current total of FRCs is eight (8) community-based (aka Neighborhood Places), 13 school-based, and one (1) correctional facility. Over the last two years, five (5) more school-based FRCs were started (only 5 in 2022), with three (3) others in the development stages (hiring staff and finding a space on campus). One community-based organization launched a community-based FRC in October 2023, and a child visiting and family resource center started at Waiawa Correctional Facility in April 2024.

Notably, a memorandum of understanding was signed in July 2024 among the Departments – of Education (DOE), Health (DOH), and Human Services (DHS), giving school principals the authority to create FRCs on their campuses in partnership with full support of the Superintendent and in partnership with DOH and DHS. As a result, principals are finding that FRCs are the added support teachers need for family engagement and parent participation on campuses. As an example, one school has several students who are raised by grandparents. Those grandparents formed a group and call themselves the "kupuna crew" and are on campus. They plan and execute Native Hawaiian activities with the students. Many of the grandparents also attended the same school when they were in elementary school. The presence of grandparents on campus changed the campus culture. In addition, the FRC offers concrete

supports of food, clothing, and household items through community partnerships. The FRC is a gathering place to meet and engage with other families of varying cultures and ethnicities. Previously, one of the schools that now has an FRC had tension between ethnic groups. Now, families bring things to share. They give as well as take items they need.

Families with children find it difficult to navigate and maneuver through state systems for public benefits and seek help to meet their specific needs of mental health, parenting education, and further learning opportunities for their children. Some parents experience traumas from their own childhood school experience. FRCs bridge the communication gap between families and school faculty and provide parents with training to help their children succeed in school by increasing family engagement, which helps to motivate students to become academically successful, reduce chronic absenteeism, and increase graduation rates.

In addition, the fathers incarcerated at Waiawa Correctional Facility are eager to learn parenting skills and healthy relationships to reconnect with their children and caregivers. The partnership with the newly created Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) (previously known as the Department of Public Safety) and DHS is working well, and inmates indicated that reconnection to their children is a great incentive to reduce recidivism.

Accomplishments:

The Implementation Plan resulted in the FRC network governance, definition of roles, operational guidelines, and membership agreement. Also, the three departments (education, health, and human services) memorialized Act 129, SLH 2022, with a memorandum of understanding that was signed in July 2024. In addition, training sessions are offered on the NSFN Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening & Support, and Parent Advisory Council (PAC). Additionally, courses were offered to train the trainers on the 5 Protective Factors for family strengthening and parent leadership (as a precursor to PAC training).

HOSN presented at numerous conferences, meetings, and collaboratives at the local and national forums, including informational sessions for potential school-based FRCs, national and congressional delegate briefings, continued collaborative work with the DOE Community School model for Title 1 schools with principals and coordinators, and special focus on Comprehensive Support and Improvement Schools, which are usually the schools with the lowest graduation rates. HOSN continues to host meetings every other month with the larger community of FRCs and family strengthening organizations, Network Executive and Steering Committees meetings monthly, as well as individual school-based FRC coaching and monthly technical assistance for regional school-based FRCs.

Procurement and selection of a vendor for the child visiting and family resource center at Waiawa Correctional Facility was completed, and the contract was executed in May 2024. Waiawa Correctional Facility, including the men incarcerated there, built the center and patio area and installed a playground with regulation foundation and padding.

The contracted vendor is building trusted relationships with fathers who are incarcerated. It is conducting intake assessments with fathers and families and has started conducting parenting classes specifically for dads. They are offering virtual healthy relationships courses for teens and complete pre- and post-visit sessions with children and moms/caregivers before in-person visitation with their dads. The pre-and post-visit sessions are aimed at reducing anxiety and emotional or behavioral issues and provide tools and resources for coping with the emotions of a visit with a dad and easing the transition back to daily life with mom/caregiver.

Alternatives:

If the pilot project is not funded for additional years, then children, families, and communities will not have the essential space, training, and technical assistance to help families address their concerns about their child when concerns first arise. Having a trusted person to turn to in a familiar location supports the child's, family's, and community's overall well-being so the child and family can thrive. Pandemic rules and restrictions resurfaced a more profound need and inequities requiring healing from historical and cultural trauma that was not adequately addressed prior to the pandemic. In particular, the schools with FRCs are seeing positive impacts on campuses and increased family engagement. Discontinued funding of the five (5) year pilot project would disrupt these nurturing and safe space avenues to seek family strengthening and mental health alternatives for students, families, and even faculty, who often use or staff the FRCs.

Other alternatives explored in the past, include the establishment of a navigator position(s) to help families with complex cases of multiple challenges and needs was suggested pre-pandemic. Vacant positions to set up this position were difficult to find or were defunded during the pandemic. Social workers or case managers have been difficult to hire or keep due to non-competitive salaries or early burn-out. For greater efficiency, state programs have moved from case management to task orientation to accommodate the increased volume and need for public assistance programs. Lastly, the loosely formed group of state agencies and community organizations needed a way to establish FRCs at the state level. Grassroots efforts are important, but determined FRCs needed more recognition, committed funding, and have standards or a framework embedded into state law.

This request is to provide continued funding for the five-year Family Resource Center Pilot Program to establish a family support network and increase the number of family resource centers to serve the children, families, and communities in Hawaii.

FRC Network	FY25	FY26
Training	\$12,500.00	\$12,500.00
Contract Coordination	\$474,500.00	\$474,500.00
Dues & Subscriptions	\$2,400.00	\$2,400.00
Administration	\$115,600.00	\$115,600.00
Total	\$605,000.00	\$605,000.00

904AA-04: Disaster Case Management Project - Rental Assistance Program

DHS requires general fund appropriations to support the department's Maui wildfire emergency management and long-term recovery response, including the State's Disaster Case Management Program (DCMP). This request includes approval and requests for appropriations for eight (8) temporary exempt administrative positions dedicated to the Maui response, operations, and IT support and funds to meet the needs of survivors, including those who may also be ineligible for FEMA or other federal disaster assistance. Specifically, this request is to ensure the continuity of the assistance and programs led by DHS for the first three (3) years of the Maui wildfire disaster response and recovery efforts.

Six (6) of the positions are specific to the DCMP, which is currently 100% funded by a FEMA grant for the first 24 months following the date of disaster. FEMA funds are expected to be extended an additional 12 months—for a total of 36 months of 100% FEMA funding. Thus, while FEMA will fund the first 36 months of the program, given the level of devastation from the disaster, it is expected that this program will be needed for five years to ensure successful recovery for survivors.

The remaining two (2) positions that require 100% general funds are for the administrative (including responses to Uniform Information Practices Act requests and attendance at meetings) and operations functioning of the state's Rental Assistance Program. This request will ensure the Director's Office continues to have staff and resources dedicated to the 2023 Maui wildfire relief efforts to lead an equitable recovery.

Significantly, DHS is the State's lead agency for the State's DCMP that provides intensive disaster case management for all survivors of the Maui wildfires. At Governor Green and HIEMA's request, DHS was the State's applicant for the FEMA DCMP grant, which is initially 24 months of performance with a possible single extension of 12 months. Thus, FEMA funding cannot exceed 36 months. DHS was initially awarded \$17.2M by FEMA on November 8, 2023, for an initial performance period from August 10, 2023, through August 10, 2025. During the first year, FEMA has provided additional funds. To date, DHS has received a total of \$25.15M from FEMA to ensure sufficient funds to serve approximately 3,000 households for the first 24 months of this program. Currently, the DCMP has served over 5,000 individuals and has active cases for over 3,800 survivors. Given the documented high level of need for recovery, additional funding for years 4 and 5 of this program is required.

To immediately implement the DCMP and other Maui Wildfire response and recovery efforts, DHS created a special project for six additional temporary exempt administrative positions in the Director's Office to oversee both the DCMP and all Maui recovery efforts. This special project was expanded and includes additional positions, including (two) 2 additional positions for the DCMP. The FEMA grant covers the salaries of all 6 DCMP positions, including the DCMP Director (\$150,216), DCMP Administrator (\$113,940), DCMP Financial Director (\$120,576),

DCMP Administrative Assistant (\$62,400), DCMP Screening, Eligibility, and Outreach Care Navigation Branch Program Manager (\$76,788), and the DCMP Communications and Outreach Director (\$109,992).

The DCMP serves as a connection point for all other DHS wildfire response initiatives. The DCMP includes seven Maui community-based organizations and up to 55 disaster case managers, as well as 20 Outreach Care Navigators, and all requisite support staff for a total program footprint of approximately 90 individuals. The DCMP provides case management and navigation assistance for all Maui fire survivors and has the funding capacity to serve approximately 3,000 households—or nearly 8,000 individuals.

Ultimately, DHS continues to strive to provide a program that is available for all fire survivors, regardless of FEMA eligibility, to assist in navigating recovery and identifying resources across all stakeholders to ensure all unmet needs of survivors that arose from the disaster are met. The consistency and continuity of this program are vital to support survivors' recovery, hence the importance of funding to ensure uninterrupted program operations.

Now that we are in the second year of the program, we will soon apply for a 12-month extension of the FEMA grant. However, given the magnitude of the disaster, we forecast the DCMP will be a three- to five-year effort.

The Maui Emergency Response Director (\$112,944) and Emergency Management Finance, Procurement, and Grants Manager (\$109,308) will continue to coordinate the Rental Assistance Program and other DHS-led Maui response efforts that are not DCMP-specific. Since the August 8, 2023 wildfires, DHS has actively worked to address the immediate needs of individuals, families, and community providers. DHS facilitated the state's Emergency Support Function (ESF) 6 – Mass Care & Feeding, and at the direction of the Governor, DHS developed and launched the state's Rental Assistance Program, in partnership with Airbnb, Global Empowerment Mission, and most recently with the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement.

Auditor VII:

This position is necessary to provide audit reports to the Legislature and the Governor and to ensure that accounting, reporting, expenditures, contracts, procurement, and finances comply with laws, rules, regulations, and grant requirements. Reporting includes but is not limited to, responding to Act 10, SLH 2024

The Auditor VII position is essential to ensure the integrity and accountability of federal and state funds allocated for Maui wildfire recovery efforts and future disasters. This role will play a critical function in safeguarding public resources and promoting transparency in government operations.

This position will conduct audits of the department's financial, operational, and compliance activities. Audit activities include assessing the effectiveness of internal controls, identifying

risks, and recommending improvements to ensure compliance. Failure to comply with federal grant requirements can lead to a variety of penalties, ranging from financial penalties, such as cost disallowances, interest charges, or loss of future funding, to program termination.

This position will prepare audit reports that clearly communicate audit findings, recommendations, and management responses. This position will also support the training of fiscal and budget officers to ensure compliance with laws, rules, regulations, and grant requirements. This position will further assist in plan formulation for implementing audit recommendations, including as it may relate to federal grant opportunities.

The Auditor VII position is crucial for several reasons:

- **Accountability and Transparency:** By conducting independent audits, this position will help ensure that public funds are used appropriately and for their intended purposes.
- **Risk Mitigation:** Identifying and addressing risks associated with disaster recovery efforts will help protect public resources and improve the effectiveness of disaster response.
- **Compliance Assurance:** Ensuring compliance with laws, regulations, and grant requirements will help avoid penalties and maintain eligibility for future funding.
- **Improved Efficiency:** Auditor recommendations can help improve the efficiency and effectiveness of departmental operations.
- **Public Trust:** This position will help maintain public trust in the government's ability to manage funds responsibly.

DHS Overall

Federal Fund Adjustment Requests

Prog ID/Org	Dept Pri	Description	MOF	FY 26			FY 27		
				FTE (P)	FTE (T)	\$ Amount	FTE (P)	FTE (T)	\$ Amount
401PE-FF	1	Increase Federal Fund Ceiling	N			51,457,265			51,457,265
902IA-FF	1	Increase Federal Fund Ceiling	N			15,834,833			15,834,833
206PF-FF	1	Increase Federal Fund Ceiling	N			2,641,432			2,641,432
302DA-FF	1	Increase Federal Fund Ceiling	N			1,000,000			1,000,000
903FA-FF	1	Increase Federal Fund Ceiling	P			19,550,000			19,550,000
802GA-FF	1	Increase Federal Fund Ceiling	N			54,287			54,287
220RH-FF	1	Increase Federal Fund Ceiling	N			10,342,944			15,592,944
222RA-FF	1	Increase Federal Fund Ceiling	N			6,095,975			9,766,700
601TA-FF	1	Increase Federal Fund Ceiling	N			39,905			39,905
303WP-FF	1	Increase Federal Fund Ceiling	N			1,502,000			1,502,000
301SA-FF	1	Increase Federal Fund Ceiling	N			1,639,500			1,639,500
501YA-FF		Increase Federal Fund Ceiling	N			515,865			-

Form FF Reconciliation

Additional federal fund ceiling is requested based on a comparison of federal fund appropriations under Act 164, SLH 2023, amended by Act 230, SLH 2024, and anticipated federal fund requirements for FY26 and FY27.

Attachment – DHS Key Performance Indicators for FY24

STATEWIDE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING INDICATORS

	SFY17 (6/30/17)	SFY18 (6/30/18)	SFY19 (6/30/19)	SFY20 (6/30/20)	SFY21 (6/30/21)	SFY22 (6/30/22)	SFY23 (6/30/23)	SFY24 (6/30/24)
1. EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC SELF-SUFFICIENCY. Number of families exiting Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) with employment. <i>Reference: G1, Obj1, Strat1</i>	1,370; <i>approx. 114 families per month</i>	1,294; <i>approx. 107 families per month</i>	1,037; <i>approx. 86 families per month</i>	712; <i>approx. 59 families per month</i>	559; <i>approx. 47 families per month</i>	1,145; <i>approx. 95 families per month</i>	743; <i>approx. 62 families per month</i>	461; <i>approx. 38 families per month</i>
2. TANF PROGRAM. The impact due to the pandemic. Average number of applications per month. <i>Reference: G1, Obj1, Strat1</i>	N/A	N/A	1,342	1,518	1,225	1,147	1,020	953
a. Average number of approvals per month [also convert average number of approvals to %]	N/A	N/A	295 22.0%	441 29.0%	349 28.4%	304 26.5%	193 18.9%	191 20%
b. Average number of denials per month [also convert average number of denials to %].	N/A	N/A	568 42.3%	608 40.0%	509 41.5%	878 76.6%	956 93.7%	834 87.5%
i. Percentage of applications denied due to income	N/A	N/A	27.8%	34.9%	35.2%	30.1%	22.3%	24.7%
ii. Percentage of applications denied due to failure to provide required documents	N/A	N/A	6.6%	8.0%	26.5%	37.4%	10.7%	13.9%
iii. Percentage of applications denied for other reasons.	N/A	N/A	65.6%	57.1%	38.3%	32.5%	67%	61.4%
c. Average Work Participation Rate (WPR) pre-pandemic (FFY 2020) compared to the WPR during pandemic (March 2020 – September 2020 and FFY 2021)	N/A	N/A	28.8% All-Family and 45.8% Two-Parent (FFY 2019)	Pre-Pandemic: 18.2% All-Family & 26.4% Two-Parent (2 nd quarter of FFY 2020)	12.19% All-Family and 8.94% Two-Parent (2 nd quarter of FFY 2021) (March 2020-September	12.6% All-Family & 17.4% Two-Parent (as of Q2 FFY 2022)	14.6% All-Family & 21.6% Two-Parent (as of Q2 FFY 2023)	17.6% All-Family & 24.8% Two-Parent (as of Q1 FFY 2024)

STATEWIDE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING INDICATORS

	SFY17 (6/30/17)	SFY18 (6/30/18)	SFY19 (6/30/19)	SFY20 (6/30/20)	SFY21 (6/30/21)	SFY22 (6/30/22)	SFY23 (6/30/23)	SFY24 (6/30/24)
					2020 and FFY 2021)			
3. EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT SERVICES. Number of individuals receiving First to Work (FTW) and Employment & Training (E&T) support benefits and services. <i>Reference: G1, Obj1, Strat1</i>								
a. First to Work (FTW) Program <i>The number of participants who received support and benefit services may not equal the total number of participants because participants may receive multiple support services.</i>	4,129; education (93), work-related (512), medical (4), transportation (3,634), child care subsidies (1,208)	3,523; education (57), work-related (353), medical (6), transportation (3,130), child care subsidies (867)	3,081; education (54), work-related (393), medical (2), transportation (2,784), child care subsidies (613)	2,898; education (35), work-related (819), medical (3), transportation (2,427), child care subsidies (451)	2,420; education (29), work-related (1,060), medical (0), transportation (1,605), child care subsidies (329)	1,944; education (23), work-related (296), medical (7), transportation (1,320), child care subsidies (298)	1,926; education (22), work-related (236), medical (1), transportation (1,451), child care subsidies (216)	1,490; education (20), work-related (200), medical (2), transportation (1,072), child care subsidies (196)
b. Employment & Training (E&T) Program <i>The number of participants who received support and benefit services may not equal to the total number of participants because participants may receive multiple support services.</i>	405; education (68), work-related (95), transportation (341), other (2)	434; education (163), work-related (68), transportation (374), other (4)	403; education (191), work-related (66), transportation (355)	385; education (149), work-related (68), transportation (335)	376; education (142), Work-related (60), Transportation (271)	382; education (158), Work-related (44), Transportation (322)	326; education (138), Work-related (79), Transportation (267)	377; education (116), work-related (27), transportation (233), dependent care (1)
4. JOB RETENTION. Number of individuals receiving employment support benefits/services who remained employed for 30, 60, 90, and more than 90 days. <i>Reference: G1, Obj1, Strat1</i>	1,210 total participants employed	870 total participants employed	726 total participants employed	536 total participants employed	921 total participants employed	530 total participants employed	452 total participants employed	310 total participants employed
a. 1-30 days	133	107	89	44	56	51	50	37
b. 31-60 days	131	91	89	44	57	63	47	25

STATEWIDE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING INDICATORS

	SFY17 (6/30/17)	SFY18 (6/30/18)	SFY19 (6/30/19)	SFY20 (6/30/20)	SFY21 (6/30/21)	SFY22 (6/30/22)	SFY23 (6/30/23)	SFY24 (6/30/24)
c. 61-90 days	129	108	84	37	89	41	44	28
d. >90 days	817	564	464	411	719	375	311	220
5. WAGE PROGRESSION. Number and percentage of individuals receiving First to Work (FTW) services who may have experienced increased wages, no changes in their wages, or decreased wages. <i>Notes: Percentages are approximate. State Minimum Wage increased incrementally during the period. The period for wage progression is 4 years, i.e. June 2013 is the baseline to measure wage progression for June 2017.</i> <i>Reference: G1, Obj1, Strat1</i>	1,335 <i>total participants employed</i>	1,139 <i>total participants employed</i>	1,976 <i>total participants employed</i>	1,542 <i>total participants employed</i>	1,704 <i>total participants employed</i>	1,765 <i>total participants employed</i>	1,258 <i>total participants employed</i>	792 <i>total participants employed</i>
a. Percentage who may have experienced increases in their wages	16%	21%	40%	37%	30%	32%	30.21%	32.95%
b. Percentage who may have seen no changes in their wages	80%	76%	54%	55%	65%	62%	63.91%	61.87%
c. Percentage who may have experienced a decrease in their wage	4%	3%	6%	8%	5%	6%	5.88%	5.18%
6. CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND SCHOOL READINESS. Number of children enrolled in Preschool Open Doors (POD). <i>Reference: G1, Obj2, Strat1</i>	1,659 (5/31/17)	1,590 (5/31/18)	1,416 (5/31/19)	1408 (5/31/20)	628 (5/31/21)	620 (5/31/22)	816 (5/31/23)	666 (5/31/24)
7. HEALTHCARE COVERAGE. Number of people who are enrolled with Medicaid. <i>Reference: G1, Obj3, Strat3</i>	361,929 <i>April, 2017</i>	354,245 <i>April, 2018</i>	342,428 <i>April, 2019</i>	350,194 <i>April, 2020</i>	422,492 <i>April, 2021</i>	445,815 <i>April, 2022</i>	463,028 <i>April, 2023</i>	467,182 <i>April, 2024</i>
8. CHILD HEALTH. Percentage of children who received an Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) visit. <i>Reference: G1, Obj3, Strat1</i>	98% (data from Federal FY 2016)	100% (data from Federal FY 2017)	100% (data from Federal FY 2018)	100% (data from Federal FY 2019)	100% (data from Federal FY 2020)	100% (data from Federal FY 2021)	72% (data from Federal FY 2022)	80% (data from Federal FY 2023)

STATEWIDE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING INDICATORS

9. CHILD AND ADULT SAFETY.

Reference: G1, Obj3, Strat1

	SFY17 (6/30/17)	SFY18 (6/30/18)	SFY19 (6/30/19)	SFY20 (6/30/20)	SFY21 (6/30/21)	SFY22 (6/30/22)	SFY23 (6/30/23)	SFY24 (6/30/24)
a. Number and percentage of victims (vulnerable adults) with two or more confirmed abuses within a 12-month period.	7/149, 4.7%	1/99, 1%	3/126, 2.4%	4/90, 4.4%	1/75, 1.3%	1/62, 1.6%	0/45, 0%	3/53, 5.7%
b. Number and percentage of foster children who have stable placement.	1061/1203, 88.2%	1028/1265, 81.3%	1096/1299, 84.4%	1036/1191, 87%	890/1047, 85%	864/1030, 84%	636/757, 84%	898/1007, 89.2%

10. HOUSING STABILITY.

Reference: G1, Obj4, Strat1

a. Number of homeless individuals statewide. <i>Note: Numbers are approximate and are based on self-reports.</i>	7,220	6,530	6,448	6,458	N/A	5973	6223	6389
b. Number of individuals served by the HPP Program, SHEG Program, Outreach Program, Emergency Shelter, or Transitional Shelter.	19,382	16,544	14,941	13,448	10,887	10,084	10,112	7971
c. Number of individuals who exited to permanent housing from the HPP Program, SHEG Program, Outreach Program, Emergency Shelter, or Transitional Shelter.	5,189	5,000	5,595	4,963	3,261	2525	4125	5701
d. Number of households served at the Family Assessment Center (FAC) in Kakaako. <i>Note: The FAC opened in September 2016, so data is measured from 9/1/16 to 10/1/17. FAC-K closed in February 2022.</i>	54	53	55	45	26	17	N/A	76
				37	47	33	40	43

STATEWIDE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING INDICATORS

	SFY17 (6/30/17)	SFY18 (6/30/18)	SFY19 (6/30/19)	SFY20 (6/30/20)	SFY21 (6/30/21)	SFY22 (6/30/22)	SFY23 (6/30/23)	SFY24 (6/30/24)
The second FAC in Puna started in SFY20 through Act 209, SLH 2018.								
e. Percentage of households at the FAC in Kakaako who were successfully housed in permanent housing. <i>Note: The FAC opened in September 2016, so data is measured from 9/1/16 to 10/1/17.</i>	17/30, 56.7%	26/42, 61.9%	18/41, 43.9%	17/39, 43.59%	7/19, 36.84%	13/17, 76.47%	N/A	8/8 100%
The second FAC in Puna started in SFY20 through Act 209, SLH 2018.				15/30, 50%	19/39, 48.72%	5/26, 19.23%	21/32 66%	20/33 61%
11. FOOD ACCESS. <i>Reference: G1, Obj5, Strat1</i>								
a. Number of individuals receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.	166,923 Monthly Average FY17	164,746 Monthly Average FY18	158,628 Monthly Average FY19	159,734 Monthly Average FY20	190,791 Monthly Average FY21	178,486 Monthly Average FY22	156,967 Monthly Average FY23	162,733 Monthly Average FY24
b. Percentage of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) applications processed in a timely manner.	98%	97%	97%	96%	91%	79%	80%	83%

Explanation of KPI trending:

KPI #1 (Employment and Economic Self-Sufficiency) -

SFY 2024 – 08/06/24

- There continues to be a demand for workforce so businesses may continue to offer competitive wages causing applicants to not qualify or recipients to exit TANF sooner. Furthermore, the State Minimum Wage increased from \$12.00 to \$14.00 per hour beginning January 1, 2024.

SFY 2023 – 07/31/23

- There continues to be a demand for workforce so businesses may continue to offer competitive wages causing applicants to not qualify or recipients to exit TANF. The waiver for eligibility interviews for applicants ended post-pandemic.

SFY 2022 – 08/15/22

- With businesses operating close to pre-pandemic, families are obtaining employment. In addition, there are greater demand for workforce so businesses may be offering wages above minimum wage causing families to exit TANF.

SFY 2021 - 7/27/21

- The pandemic impacted the number of families who exited TANF with employment. With the shutdown, unemployed recipient families were not able to engage in job search activities, and employed families were either laid-off, furloughed, or scheduled work hours reduced.

SFY 2020 - 7/24/20

- [Pre-pandemic] Decrease in the number of FTW participants who exited TANF with employment was proportionate to the decrease in TANF caseload. Fewer families needing TANF assistance may be the result of lower unemployment rates and greater workforce demand by employers. Catherine Scardino, who is ETPO Program Administrator, also noticed families were not staying on assistance for long. Approximately 47% of families who received assistance in fiscal years 2018, 2019 or 2020 (July 2019 – March 2020), utilized only 36 months or less of TANF benefits (limit is 60 cumulative months in a family's lifetime). These reasons combined would cause a compounded effect on the TANF caseload to move downward aggressively.
- Catherine thought the required upfront work program participation (aka Upfront Universal Engagement or UFUE) may also be a factor to the declining caseloads. In 2009, TANF rules were amended to require applicants to fulfill one week of upfront work program participation, within a 21-day period, as a condition of eligibility for TANF benefits. Participants were engaged in the FTW Program by the time their applications were approved.

SFY 2019 - 8/8/19

- Between Federal Fiscal Years (FFY) 2014 and 2018, Hawaii's TANF caseload steadily declined. The average monthly TANF caseload in FFY 2018 was 4,593 recipient families, a decline of 45.8% when compared to the monthly average of 8,470 families in FFY 2014. As the result, the number of FTW participants declined proportionately (KPI #1 and 3a). The average TANF caseload for FFY 2019 was 4,330/month, about 5.7% decline compared to FFY 2018 at 4,593 families/month. Number of people who received TANF benefits declined over the 3-year period due to an improvement in the economy.

KPIs #2 and 2a (TANF Program) -

SFY 2024 – 08/06/24

- There continues to be a demand for workforce so businesses may continue to offer competitive wages causing applicants to not qualify or recipients to exit TANF sooner. Furthermore, the State Minimum Wage increased from \$12.00 to \$14.00 per hour beginning January 1, 2024.

SFY 2023 – 07/31/23

- There continues to be a demand for workforce so businesses may continue to offer competitive wages causing applicants to not qualify or recipients to exit TANF. The waiver for eligibility interviews for applicants ended post-pandemic.

SFY 2022 – 08/15/22

- With the state and businesses operating close to pre-pandemic and families obtaining employment, less families are applying for TANF financial assistance, therefore, resulting in decreases to the number of applications and approvals.

SFY 2021 – 10/26/21

- The decreased number of applications and number of approvals from SFY 2020 to 2021 can be attributed to the reopening of businesses, allowing families to go back to work.

SFY 2020 – 10/26/21

- The increased number of applications and number of approvals from SFY 2019 to 2020 can be attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic.

KPI #2b (TANF Program) -

SFY 2024 – 08/06/24

- There continues to be a demand for workforce so businesses may continue to offer competitive wages causing applicants to not qualify or recipients to exit TANF sooner.

Furthermore, the State Minimum Wage increased from \$12.00 to \$14.00 per hour beginning January 1, 2024.

SFY 2023 – 07/31/23

- The waiver for eligibility interviews for applicants ended post-pandemic which may be the reason for significant increase in denials for other reasons.

SFY 2022 – 08/15/22

- The decrease in denied applications due to income may correlate to the decline in the number of applications because not as many families require financial assistance when compared to the period when the pandemic was at its peak in 2021.

SFY 2021 – 10/26/21

- The number of denials due to income increased from SFY 2020 to 2021 as the result of families having income above the income threshold. State reopening allowed families to go back to work.

SFY 2020 – 10/26/21

- The number of denials increased from SFY 2019 to 2020 can be attributed to the increased number of denials due to income which increased from 27.8% to 34.9% (change of 7.1%). Applicant families may have other sources of income such as second adults still employed, countable unearned income (e.g., Social Security benefits, pension/retirement, worker's comp/TDI benefits not considered earnings, etc.).

KPI #2c (TANF Program) -

SFY 2024 – 08/06/24

- In addition to the reinstatement of the upfront work participation requirements, the decrease in caseload may provide staff more opportunity to work closely with recipient families.

SFY 2023 – 07/31/23

- The reinstatement of the upfront work participation requirements may have attributed to the increase in the work participation rates. In addition, the decrease in caseload may provide staff more opportunity to work closely with recipient families.

SFY 2022 – 08/15/22

- During 2021 until June 2022, the upfront work participation requirements, as a condition of initial eligibility, were waived for all TANF applicants. Pre-pandemic, the upfront work participation requirements were effective in preparing TANF applicants to fully engage in the FTW program by the time their applications were approved.

However, with the pandemic and waived requirements, participants were unable to engage in the FTW program. Effective applications received from June 1, 2022 and forward, the upfront work participation requirements have been re-implemented for all TANF applicants.

SFY 2021 – 10/26/21

- Although the State reopened between SFY 2020 and 2021, FTW participants who were able to return to work did not stay long on assistance, causing the WPR to decrease.

SFY 2020 – 10/26/21

- The decreased WPR from FFY 2019 to 2020 can be attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic and state shutdown. It limited the FTW participants' ability to engage in work activities (e.g., job search, volunteering, attending classes in-person, etc.).

KPI #3a (Employment Support Services) –

SFY 2024 – 08/06/24

- The decrease in the number of FTW participants receiving supportive services is reflective of the decreasing caseload.

SFY 2023 – 07/31/23

- The decrease in the number of FTW participants receiving support services is reflective of the decreasing caseload. Note: The SFY 2022 total number of FTW participants who received support services that was previously reported was incorrect.

SFY 2022 – 08/15/22

- The number of FTW participants receiving support services decreased due to the decreasing FTW caseloads. Furthermore, there are still some participants who are unable to fully engage in the FTW program, therefore, do not qualify for support services.

SFY 2021 - 7/27/21

- There were less participants receiving supportive service payments as the result of participants' inability to engage in work activities during the pandemic. To be eligible for supportive service payments, participants must be actively engaged in work activities.

SFY 2020 - 7/24/20

- The one-time rent support payments may have caused the significant increase from 2019 to 2020. The FTW Program provides up to two months of one-time rent support to FTW participants who need to secure housing or are at risk of eviction. We were able to increase the one-time rent support from two to four months when the governor

suspended HRS §341-261 through his Sixth and subsequent Supplementary Proclamations.

- An average of 21 FTW participants per month received one-time rent support between July 2019 and April 2020. In the months of May and June, about 216 participants each month received rent support.

SFY 2019 – 8/8/19

- Between Federal Fiscal Years (FFY) 2014 and 2018, Hawaii’s TANF caseload steadily declined. The average monthly TANF caseload in FFY 2018 was 4,593 recipient families, a decline of 45.8% when compared to the monthly average of 8,470 families in FFY 2014. As the result, the number of FTW participants declined proportionately (KPI #1 and 3a). The average TANF caseload for FFY 2019 was 4,330/month, about 5.7% decline compared to FFY 2018 at 4,593 families/month. Number of people who received TANF benefits declined over the 3-year period due to an improvement in the economy.

KPI #3b (Employment Support Services) –

SFY 2024 – 08/06/24

- The increase in the number of E&T participants receiving supportive services is reflective of the increase in referrals in anticipation of the waiver ending effective June 30, 2024.

SFY 2023 – 11/6/23

- Due to the ABAWD waiver, work participation requirements have been waived which has led to a decrease in participation. The current participation waiver is set to expire in June 2024, which will lead to an increase in participation in SFY 2025.

SFY 2022 – 8/4/22

- Overall trend continues to increase and return to pre-pandemic levels. There has been an increase in transportation support services due to the increase in fuel prices. Education has also increased and could be attributed to the need for skills development.

SFY 2021 - 7/27/21

- Returning to pre-pandemic levels beginning the latter part of SFY2021.

SFY 2020 - 7/24/20

- There was an increase of clients until the last two months of SFY20 due to the pandemic.

KPI #4 (Job Retention) –

SFY 2024 – 08/09/24

- The decrease in the number of employed FTW participants and job retention figures are reflective of the decreasing TANF caseload.

SFY 2023 – 07/31/23

- The decrease in number of employed FTW participants and job retention figures in reflective of the decreasing TANF caseload.

SFY 2022 – 08/15/22

- There may be a correlation between the increased number of families exiting TANF due to employment and the decreased number of employment participants. Although the number of participants retaining their employment longer than 90 days is significant, some of these employed participants may be exiting shortly after passing the 90-day mark.

SFY 2021 - 7/27/21

- There may be a correlation between the decreased number of FTW participants exiting TANF with employment and the increased number of employed participants retaining their employment for more than 90 days. FTW participants may be retaining their employment, but they are not earning high enough wages to exit TANF or may still be underemployed (working less than full-time hours).

SFY 2020 - 7/24/20

- Decrease in the number of employed participants and the job retention figures are in line with the decreasing TANF caseload [pre-pandemic].

SFY 2019 - 8/8/19

- Between Federal Fiscal Years (FFY) 2014 and 2018, Hawaii's TANF caseload steadily declined. The average monthly TANF caseload in FFY 2018 was 4,593 recipient families, a decline of 45.8% when compared to the monthly average of 8,470 families in FFY 2014. As the result, the number of FTW participants declined proportionately (KPI #1 and 3a). The average TANF caseload for FFY 2019 was 4,330/month, about 5.7% decline compared to FFY 2018 at 4,593 families/month. Number of people who received TANF benefits declined over the 3-year period due to an improvement in the economy.

KPI #5 (Wage Progression) –

SFY 2024 – 08/09/24

- The decrease in the number of employed FTW participants is reflective of the decreasing TANF caseload. The percentages of participants who experienced wage progression, no change, or a decrease in wages, are comparable to previous fiscal year.

SFY 2023 – 07/31/23

- There was a small increase in the number of FTW participants who experienced a wage increase. The demand for workforce and businesses offering competitive wages causing may be a factor to the wage increases.

SFY 2022 – 08/15/22

- The increased number of FTW participants that experienced a wage increase may be reflective of the higher workforce demand and businesses offering higher wages to recruit new employees and incentivize for them to remain employed.

SFY 2021 - 7/27/21

- The number of FTW participants who experienced no wage increase, increased from FY 2020 to 2021. This may be the result of participants gradually returning to the workforce, particularly those who were laid-off or furloughed. In addition, with the economic downturn as the result of the pandemic, employers may have made it financially challenging to grant wage increases to employees.

SFY 2020 - 7/24/20

- Differences between 2019 to 2020 were not significant (1% - 3%).

SFY 2019 - 8/8/19

- Hawaii's low unemployment rates and slower caseload decline may be factors to the number of employed FTW participants increasing from SFY 2018 and 2019. The State's minimum wage increase to \$10.10/hour may have caused the percentage of participants who may have experienced increases in their wages to go up from SFY 2018 to 2019 [KPI #5a].

KPI #6 (Childhood Development and School Readiness) –

SFY 2024 – 7/23/24

- The decrease of 18% can be attributed to a decrease in enrollment for the 2023 – 2024 program year as DHS conducted three (3) open application periods as opposed to five (5) open application periods the previous program year. The program office did not have a permanent POD Specialist overseeing the program and the contracted staff could not support more open application periods due to vacancies. Program office also worked on returning the contracted CCDF subsidy program back to DHS. The contracted POD staff vacated their positions assuming all contracted subsidy services would return to DHS. The POD program was left without a full-time operations manager and limited support staff and would not be able to process additional applications for the remaining year resulting in a decrease of eligible families.

SFY 2023 – 8/9/23

- The increase in number of children being served in SFY 2023 is due to restored state funding and the department supporting extended application periods to eligible families. The 32% increase meant more children experienced school readiness services that addressed their physical, cognitive, linguistic, social, and emotional development in the year prior to kindergarten.

SFY 2022 – 8/4/22

- Differences between 2021 to 2022 were not significant (1.3%). POD matched the emergency child care rates offered by the federal Child Care Connection program and could not serve as many POD families which led to the department requesting additional funds to support existing POD families for the remaining two (2) months of the POD school year.

SFY 2021 - 8/3/21

- From Aug 2020 to June 2021, there was an average of 230 providers that served POD families. While some schools remained open during the SFY 21, POD continued to make payment to POD providers that were still closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic so that the child had a spot when the provider decided to reopen. The POD preschool pre-assessment was not required by its usual due date since many staff and children did not return to the preschool in Jan 2021. During the Covid-19 pandemic emergency, the Governor's Emergency Proclamation suspended eligibility and other requirements for family units that were impacted by an emergency and allowed for re-determinations of eligibility and monthly payment amounts until 6/30/21.

SFY 2020 - 7/14/20

- Only about a half-percent change for SFY 2020 from SFY 2019, which is not a significant variance.

It is noted that while only about 30% of regulated child care facilities and homes chose to remain open during the Governor's stay-at-home orders, DHS did continue to assist families participating in the POD child care subsidy program and pay to hold the child's seat at their usual preschool provider so that families had child care arrangements set when parents returned to their places of employment.

SFY 2019 - 8/7/19

- The decrease in number of children being served in SFY 2019 is due to the decrease in the number of applications the Preschool Open Doors program received, as DHS conducted only two open application periods for the SFY 2019 POD service year, as opposed to *three* open application periods conducted for SFY 2017 and SFY 2018 POD service years. DHS received almost 1,000 fewer applications total for the SFY 2019 POD

service year, and less children were enrolled for POD services for SFY 2019. The third application period usually would be in October, and in 2018, CCPO had a vacant position, staff were out, and a batch of contract renewal agreements were past due. So, the program specialist overseeing POD had to assist and focus on the contract renewals in order for the contractors to get paid, including the contract for POD case management services. If there were no contract funds to support the organization (which holds several contract services with DHS BESSD CCPO), the organization would not be able to continue services on their own and there would be no contract staff to assist families, receive applications, and process disposition on applications for a third application period. The application periods for the POD service year are always ahead of the service year itself. So, the application period for SFY 2019 was conducted during SFY 2018. Because of the way the POD program operates, application periods/applications received are always referred to which POD year (SFY) they apply to regardless of when the application periods occurred.

KPI #7 (Healthcare Coverage) -

SFY 2024 – 7/3/24

- Number of people who enrolled with Medicaid increased in 2024 related to continued impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

SFY 2023 – 7/13/23

- Number of people who enrolled with Medicaid increased in 2023 related to continued impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

SFY 2022 – 8/12/22

- Number of people who are enrolled with Medicaid increased in 2022 related to continued impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

SFY 2021 - 7/21/21

- Number of people who are enrolled with Medicaid increased in 2021 related to impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

SFY 2020 - 7/21/20

- Number of people who are enrolled with Medicaid increased in 2020 related to impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

SFY 2019 - 8/18/19

- Number of people who are enrolled with Medicaid declined over the 3-year period due to an improvement in the economy.

KPI #8 (Child Health) -

SFY 2024 – 7/3/24

- Note: Med-QUEST and health plans have been working on increased outreach to providers and members on the new periodicity schedule. As a result, the number of screenings has increased since the year before. MQD expects this to continue to increase in future years.

SFY 2023 – 8/31/23

- Note: Med-QUEST (MQD) updated its Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT)/Well-Child periodicity schedule in January 2022 to align with national recommendations. The reason the percentage is low in SFY23 compared to the previous years is because the national recommendation has changed to increase the total number of required screenings. MQD is seeing more screenings than in prior years, but the increase in screenings has not caught up to the national recommendations. The number of screenings increased by nearly 5% this year compared to the previous year. MQD is working with Health Plans to conduct outreach and education to members and providers on the increased number of necessary screenings for each age group and expects this KPI to increase as members and providers adjust to the new periodicity schedule.

SFY 2022 – 8/12/2022

- Note: The Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) data for 2022 is always a year behind. This metric is the percentage of children receiving an EPSDT visit in 2021 that MQD will report to Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in 2022.

SFY 2021 - 7/21/21

- Note: The Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) data for 2021 is always a year behind. This metric is the percentage of children receiving an EPSDT visit in 2020 that MQD will report to Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in 2021.

SFY 2020 - 7/21/20

- Note: The Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) data for 2020 is always a year behind. This metric is the percentage of children receiving an EPSDT visit in 2019 that MQD reported to Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) in 2020. This aligns with the number they report to us each year.

KPI #9 (Child and Adult Safety) - The variance for both a and b are too small to justify so there is no explanation.

KPI #10 (Housing Stability) –

SFY 2024 – 8/9/24

- a. 6389 people experiencing homelessness according to the 2024 statewide Point in Time (PIT) Count Report.
 - i. 4494 on Oahu and 1895 on all neighbor islands.
 - ii. An increase of 2.6% for Oahu from 2023
 - iii. A decrease of 13.7% for all of neighbor island from 2023
 - iv. An increase of 2.66% statewide from 2023
- b. The total number of individuals served decreased from 10,112 in State Fiscal Year 2023 (SFY23) to 7,971 in State Fiscal Year 2024 (SFY24), marking a reduction of 21.17%. This decline is primarily due to enhanced diversion strategies that prevent individuals from entering the homelessness system, the implementation of targeted and intentional services, and a decrease in available shelter beds.
- c. The total number of individuals who exited to permanent housing rose from 4,125 in State Fiscal Year 2023 (SFY23) to 5,701 in State Fiscal Year 2024 (SFY24). This increase can be attributed to several key factors, including significant efforts on the neighbor islands, where the permanent housing exit rate exceeded 34% compared to Oahu's 9%. Additionally, the implementation of targeted and intentional services, enhanced outreach and engagement strategies, and a growing recognition of the benefits of stable housing for overall health and well-being have all contributed to this positive trend.
- d. The FAC-K was relocated and reopened in Maili on 3/18/2024. Between the FAC on Oahu and the other in Puna they served a total of 119 households compared to 40 the year before.
- e. The relocated FAC in Waianae officially reopened on March 18, 2024. From July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024, the new FAC achieved a perfect record by transitioning all 8 families it served into permanent housing. The center maintained a 100% placement rate, with families moving into permanent housing within an average of 77 days, or just under three months.
From July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024, the FAC of Puna successfully transitioned 20 of 33 families into permanent housing, achieving a 61% placement rate. Families were moved into permanent housing in an average of 77 days, just under three months, which represents a 12-day improvement over the previous year's average.

SFY 2023 – 11/7/23

- a. 6223 people experiencing homelessness according to the 2023 statewide Point in Time (PIT) Count Report.
 - i. 4,028 on Oahu and 2195 on all neighbor islands.
 - ii. An increase of 4.18% from 2022
 - i. PIT Count Report includes people in homeless shelters. There was a significant decrease in people served in homeless shelter programs due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Homeless Shelter Providers were challenged with implementing and complying with CDC guidelines, shortage in personnel, and implementing changes in administering services with the community in consideration for everyone's health and safety.
- b. Number of individuals served by HPP, SHEG, Outreach, and shelters increased slightly despite the Providers continued challenges with implementing and complying with CDC guidelines, shortage in personnel, and implementing changes in administering services with the community in consideration for everyone's health and safety.
- c. Number of individuals who exited to permanent housing from HPP, SHEG, Outreach, and shelters showed a significant increase of 1,600 individuals or 63.37% from the previous year despite the on-going challenges with the COVID-19 pandemic. Providers continued to face critical shortage of affordable housing in each county, on-going challenges with implementing and complying with CDC guidelines, shortage in personnel, and implementing changes in administering services with the community in consideration for everyone's health and safety.
- d. Number of households served at Family Assessment Centers (FAC), Kakaako and Puna:
 - i. The FAC in Kakaako (FAC-K) transitioned its last family in February 2022.
 - ii. The emergency proclamation that supported FAC-K ended, and the City could no longer allow for the park facility to be used as a homeless shelter. The City was working with DHS-HPO to identify another location to continue FAC-K services, however no location was identified.
 - iii. In SFY20, HPO was able to add another FAC in Puna (FAC-P), Hawaii through Act 209, SLH 2018. In its first year, FAC-P served 37 households. The FAC-P has 9 units and is projected to serve approximately 32 households each year. The FAC-P implemented and complied with CDC guidelines to ensure the health and safety of participants and FAC-P staff.
 - iv. In SFY21, the total number of households served by the FAC-P was 47 which was an increase of 10 or 27.03% compared to the year before. This increase was possible even during the COVID-19 pandemic due to having individual units instead of a congregate setting. Households were safe in their own units and practiced social distancing while in common areas.
 - v. In SFY22, the total number of households served by the FAC-P was 33 which was a decrease of 14 or 29.79% when compared to the year before but still exceeded

contract projections by one household. This decrease compared to the year before was due to on-going challenges with the COVID-19 pandemic such as less households seeking services, a critical shortage of affordable housing while the public demand remains consistently high, and limited staffing capacity experienced by the service provider.

- vi. In SFY23, the total number of households served by the FAC-P was 40 which was an increase of 7 or 21.21% when compared to the year.

SFY 2022 – 8/9/22

- a. 5973 people experiencing homelessness according to the 2022 statewide Point in Time (PIT) Count Report.
 - i. 3,951 on Oahu and 2,022 on all neighbor islands.
 - ii. A decrease of 20.37% from 2020 (there was no PIT Count in 2021).
 - i. PIT Count Report includes people in homeless shelters. There was a significant decrease in people served in homeless shelter programs due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Homeless Shelter Providers were challenged with implementing and complying with CDC guidelines, shortage in personnel, and implementing changes in administering services with the community in consideration for everyone's health and safety.
- b. Number of individuals served by HPP, SHEG, Outreach, and shelters remained the same as 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Providers continue to face challenges with implementing and complying with CDC guidelines, shortage in personnel, and implementing changes in administering services with the community in consideration for everyone's health and safety.
- c. Number of individuals who exited to permanent housing from HPP, SHEG, Outreach, and shelters slowed and showed another decrease of 736 individuals or 22.56% decrease from the previous year due to the on-going challenges with the COVID-19 pandemic. Providers face critical shortage of affordable housing in each county, on-going challenges with implementing and complying with CDC guidelines, shortage in personnel, and implementing changes in administering services with the community in consideration for everyone's health and safety. These challenges resulted in less individuals exiting to permanent housing.
- d. Number of households served at Family Assessment Centers (FAC), Kakaako and Puna:
 - i. Number of households served by the FAC in Kakaako (FAC-K) showed a decrease of 9 or 34.62% less than the year before due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The FAC-K has a maximum capacity of 15 households or 50 individuals. The FAC-K continued to comply with CDC guidelines which reduce capacity by half, serving

up to 8 households at any point in time, which resulted in less households served during the year.

- i. In addition to the challenges described above, the FAC Kakaako stopped taking new households in December 2021 in preparation to close in February 2022. The emergency proclamation that supported FAC-K ended, and the City could no longer allow for the park facility to be used as a homeless shelter. The City is working with DHS-HPO to identify another location to continue FAC-K services.
 - ii. In SFY20, HPO was able to add another FAC in Puna (FAC-P), Hawaii through Act 209, SLH 2018. In its first year, FAC-P served 37 households. The FAC-P has 9 units and is projected to serve approximately 32 households each year. The FAC-P implemented and complied with CDC guidelines to ensure the health and safety of participants and FAC-P staff.
 - iii. In SFY21, the total number of households served by the FAC-P was 47 which was an increase of 10 or 27.03% compared to the year before. This increase was possible even during the COVID-19 pandemic due to having individual units instead of a congregate setting. Households were safe in their own units and practiced social distancing while in common areas.
 - iv. In SFY22, the total number of households served by the FAC-P was 33 which was a decrease of 14 or 29.79% when compared to the year before but still exceeded contract projections by one household. This decrease compared to the year before was due to on-going challenges with the COVID-19 pandemic such as less households seeking services, a critical shortage of affordable housing while the public demand remains consistently high, and limited staffing capacity experienced by the service provider.
- e. Percentage of households at the Family Assessment Centers (FAC), Kakaako and Puna who were successfully housed in permanent housing:
- i. The total number of households who exited to permanent housing from the FAC-K was 13 out of 17 or 76.47% of the households who exited during the year. Although an 85.71% increase from the year before, the FAC-K was challenged with the COVID-19 pandemic, shortage in personnel and staffing patterns, and a critical shortage of affordable housing while the public demand remains consistently high.
 - ii. In SFY20, HPO was able to add another FAC in Puna (FAC-P), Hawaii through Act 209, SLH 2018. In its first year, FAC-P housed 15 out of 30 or 50% of the households who exited the FAC-P.
 - iii. In SFY21, the total number of households who exited to permanent housing from the FAC-P was 19 out of 39 or 48.72% of the households who exited during the year which is comparable to the year before.

- iv. In SFY22, the total number of households who exited to permanent housing from the FAC-P was 5 out of 26 or 19.23%, a significant decrease from the two prior years. As the COVID-19 pandemic persists, the more difficult it is to overcome challenges such as shortages of affordable housing and shortages in personnel and staffing patterns.

SFY 2021 - 8/4/21

- a. In 2021, no unsheltered count was conducted due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - i. The 2021 sheltered count showed an overall decrease of 318 fewer people in shelter compared to the prior year.
 - ii. Decreases were primarily due to shelters reducing their capacity served by implementing and complying with CDC guidelines to reduce the transmission of COVID-19.
- b. Number of individuals served by HPP, SHEG, Outreach, and shelters showed a decrease of 2,561 or 19.2% less than the year before due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Providers are challenged with implementing and complying with CDC guidelines, shortage in personnel, and implementing changes in administering services with the community in consideration for everyone's health and safety. Overall, less individuals reached out and engaged in a variety of services.
- c. Number of individuals who exited to permanent housing from HPP, SHEG, Outreach, and shelters showed a decrease of 1,702 individuals or 34.2% less than the year before due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Less households reached out and engaged in services, resulting in less individuals exiting to permanent housing.
- d. Number of households served by the FAC showed a decrease of 19 or 42.2% less than the year before due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The FAC has a maximum capacity of 15 households or 50 individuals. To implement and comply with CDC guidelines the FAC needed to reduce capacity by half, serving up to 8 households at any point in time, which resulted in less households served during the year.
- e. The total number of households who exited to permanent housing from the FAC showed a decrease of 10 households or 58.8% less than the year before due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Besides a decrease in households seeking services, the Provider was challenged with implementing and complying with CDC guidelines, shortage in personnel and staffing patterns, and implementing changes in administering services with the community in consideration for everyone's health and safety.

SFY 2020 - 7/20/20

- 1. Numbers reflect permanent housing (PH).

- a. Transitional housing (TH) is considered temporary housing (not permanent) and is not included in the count.
2. Challenges throughout the fiscal year included lack of affordable housing inventory, unemployment, poverty, limited services for mental illness and substance abuse which were exacerbated with the current COVID-19 pandemic that started to affect Hawaii from March 2020.
3. Other challenges Providers experienced over the last year includes:
 - a. Implementation of the Coordinated Entry System (CES) by both Partners in Care (PIC) and Bridging the Gap (BTG). CES makes referrals to housing resources such as Transitional Shelter, RRH, and PSH. Both CoCs working to improve efficiency of CES to meet the needs of the homeless population and homeless service providers.
 - b. Reduced number of Transitional Shelter units.
 - c. Reduced number of homeless households served due to COVID-19 pandemic.
 - d. Reduced number of permanent housing units available due to COVID-19 pandemic.

SFY 2019 - 8/13/19

1. Numbers reflect permanent housing (PH).
 - a. Transitional housing (TH) is considered temporary housing (not permanent) and is not included in the count.
2. Challenges include lack of affordable housing inventory, unemployment, poverty, limited services for mental illness and substance abuse.
3. Other challenges Provider experienced over the last three years included:
 - a. Staff turnover and changes,
 - b. Provider expansion; Provider started two new contracted services which strained their resources,
 - c. Training resources and opportunities were limited,
 - d. Loss of flexible funding and support services,
 - e. Poor internet connectivity at facility (FAC).

KPI #11 (Food Access) –

SFY 2024 – 8/22/24

- As the State continues to define the new normal, residents continue to remain employed and ineligible for SNAP. Staffing shortages remain a key factor in our timeliness rate. Our highest rate was at 88.0% in February 2024; our lowest rate was in July 2024 at 78.0%. Annual average was at 83.5%.

SFY 2023 – 11/6/23

- As the State finds a new normal, residents continue to remain employed and ineligible for SNAP. Staffing shortages remain a key factor in our timeliness rate. Our highest rate

was at 83.4% in October 2022; our lowest rate was in June 2023 at 73.0%. Annual average was at 78.1%.

SFY 2022 – 8/4/22

- As situation starts to go back to normal after the expiration of the State’s public health emergency in March 2022, most households can find jobs and made them ineligible for SNAP benefits. Others chose not to continue participation in the program. Less staffing and issues with the telephone system (contacting clients and processing centers) contributed to backlog in case processing and decrease in application processing timeliness rate. The decrease in the timeliness rate started in September 2021, the lowest in February 2022. June 2021 timeliness rate shows a big improvement- 89.5%.

SFY 2021 - 8/5/21

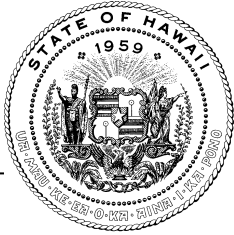
- Due to the pandemic, there were an increase of individuals who received SNAP benefits and a decrease in percentage of SNAP applications processed in a timely manner.

SFY 2020 - 7/16/20

- First eight months of SFY20 continued the slight declining trend from last year. Then pandemic struck.

SFY 2019 - 8/8/19

- Number of individuals receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits declined over the past 3 years largely due to the economy.
- Percentage of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) applications processed in a timely manner (stable for the last 3 years).



HAWAII STATE ENERGY OFFICE STATE OF HAWAII

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JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT. GOVERNOR

MARK B. GLICK
CHIEF ENERGY OFFICER

(808) 451-6648
energy.hawaii.gov

Testimony of
MARK B. GLICK, Chief Energy Officer

before the
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Wednesday, March 5, 2025
9:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308 and Videoconference

In Support of
HB 300

RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET.

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee, the Hawai'i State Energy Office (HSEO) strongly supports HB300, which appropriates funds for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027.

We respectfully seek your support of HSEO's BED120's budget requests to ensure HSEO is appropriately staffed and funded to carry out the State's top priorities on the critical path to a secure, resilient, clean energy economy.

The first request will appropriately fund the position of the Chief Energy Officer, established by the Legislature under Act 122, SLH 2019. Additional funds are needed to cover a payroll shortfall from the salary amount currently provided for the position that places the agency's statutory head among the lower half of paid positions in the agency. The requested salary adjustment will realign the budget with actual costs and allow the program to utilize OCE funds now covering the shortfall to support critical operational expenses.

The second request is an increase in payroll for the salaries of six mission critical positions in the HSEO program to a market standard level. Since January of 2023, HSEO secured approximately \$102 million in federal grants that fund mission critical

programs and added 11 new federally funded positions to carry out the State's energy strategy. This expansion of programmatic activity to accelerate the energy transition has resulted in an increase in workload for the general funded positions specified in our budget request who provide oversight and support to the federally funded positions and programs. These subject matter experts consistently perform above expectation, take on more responsibilities, and contribute to a well-coordinated agency effort that exponentially leverages the federal funds.

HSEO respectfully requests your favorable consideration of these requests.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



MIKE LAMBERT
DIRECTOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LT GOVERNOR
KE KE'ENA

STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT
Ka 'Oihana Ho'okō Kānāwai
715 South King Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

JARED K. REDULLA
Deputy Director
Law Enforcement

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 300
RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET
Before the House Committee on
FINANCE

Wednesday, March 5, 2025, 9:00 AM

State Capitol Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

Testifiers: Mike Lambert

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the Committee:

The Department of Law Enforcement (DLE) strongly supports House Bill 300, which appropriates funds for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027.

As a relatively new department with growing responsibilities, adequate funding is critical to DLE's mission of providing comprehensive law enforcement services throughout the state. The DLE acknowledges the importance of sound fiscal planning in supporting our operational needs, including staffing, equipment, facilities, and training. Proper budget allocation enables us to fulfill our expanding jurisdictional responsibilities at airports, harbors, state facilities, and in support of county law enforcement agencies. The appropriations contained in this budget are essential for maintaining public safety and security across Hawaii.

DLE would requests that the following priorities be considered in HB300:

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT REQUESTS

- DKI Airport Facility: \$16.4M for a receiving desk, detention center, and operations hub.
- Law Enforcement Training Center: \$4M for site selection and design.
- Central Oahu Substation: \$3M for an agricultural enforcement hub.
- Waianae Substation & Mental Health Facility: \$4M to expand law enforcement presence and community services.

OPERATING BUDGET REQUESTS

- Law Enforcement IT Infrastructure: \$50M over two years to modernize technology and enhance crime prevention analytics.
- Additional Deputy Sheriffs & Investigators: \$12.6M to expand agricultural law enforcement presence.
- Prescription Drug Monitoring Program: \$921K for maintenance and operations.
- Annual Operating and Laboratory Maintenance Costs: \$932K for increased operational expenses and forensic lab support.

We appreciate the Legislature's recognition of public safety as a priority in this budget. The funding levels proposed in HB300 will allow DLE to continue developing our administrative capacity, hire necessary personnel, and acquire equipment required to execute our statutory duties effectively.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 10:05:13 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Craig Nakamoto	HCDA - DBEDT	Support	In Person

Comments:

The Hawaii Community Development Authority, Executive Director, Craig Nakamoto strongly supports HB300, which appropriates funds for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal years 2025 - 2026 and 2026 - 2027. HCDA requests consideration and support of BED150 line items that are included in DBEDT Director James Kunane Tokioka's testimony.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support.



STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
KA 'OIHANA PONO LIMAHAHA

March 5, 2025

To: The Honorable Kyle Yamashita, Chair,
The Honorable Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair, and
Members of the House Committee on Finance

Date: Wednesday, March 5, 2025
Time: 9:00 a.m.
Place: Conference Room 308, State Capitol

From: Jade T. Butay, Director
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR)

Re: HB 300 RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

The **DLIR strongly supports HB 300**, which includes the following budget requests critical to our department:

- \$2.9+ million to fund the maintenance and operation of the Disability Compensation Division's (DCD) Electronic Case Management System, including associated licenses and cloud services. The funding provides the means for injured workers, employers, attorneys, and physicians to electronically file and access workers' compensation and temporary disability cases in a secured cloud environment. To date, there's been \$16.7M invested in the project and without funding the Division would need to reinstitute paper-based claims and shut down the public portal.
- \$126,000 for two Human Resources Specialist IV positions to implement the Holo delegation and Act 186 hiring programs. The DLIR currently has 73 designated classes of work delegated by DHRD, these two positions will facilitate implementing Act 186 and facilitate participation in Holo delegation.
- Two Labor Law Enforcement Specialist positions to address the backlog of labor law complaints investigated by the Wage Standards Division.

- Two DCD Enforcement Specialist IV positions (1 on Oahu, 1 in Hilo) to help ensure that eligible employees receive the medical and economic protection guaranteed by workers' compensation, temporary disability insurance, and prepaid health care laws.
- Changing the method of for two positions in the Unemployment Insurance (UI) Division without additional funding. This change in funding will ensure stable, long-term support for the Unemployment Insurance Division's critical equity and access initiatives.
- Funding for the Hawai'i Labor Relations Board Staff Attorney to implement the criteria and procedures established by Act 143 for the creation of new bargaining units. Act 143 (SLH, 2024) provided funding for FY2024-25 and this request funds that temporary position through the biennium as Act 143 expires on July 1, 2027.
- Two positions for the Office of Community Services (OCS) to provide more direct client assistance in the Immigration Resource Centers. Act 207 (SLH, 2024) provided funding for two FTE to OCS to create an Immigrant Services and Access Unit, however, the funding is limited to the appropriation made by the Act and non-recurring.
- Pursuant to G.M. 4, \$720,000 to address Hawaii Retirement Savings Program's startup costs of consultant contracts (\$75,000), marketing and communications (\$500,000), and legal, audit, and insurance (\$145,000) in order to establish baseline information for program administration; create a financial model to determine fees necessary to support Program costs; evaluate and determine investment design and policy statement; program administration services; and participant marketing, financial education, and disclosures.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on these important matters.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



STEPHEN F. LOGAN
MAJOR GENERAL
ADJUTANT GENERAL
KA 'AKUKANA KENELALA

PHILLIP L. MALLORY III
BRIGADIER GENERAL
DEPUTY ADJUTANT GENERAL
KA HOPE 'AKUKANA KENELALA

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
KA 'OIHANA PILI KAUA
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
3949 DIAMOND HEAD ROAD
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96816-4495

March 4, 2025

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 300
RELATING to the State Budget
BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

BY
MAJOR GENERAL Stephen F. Logan
ADJUTANT GENERAL
AND DIRECTOR OF HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Takenouchi, and members of the committee:

I am Major General Stephen Logan, Adjutant General and Director of Hawaii's Emergency Management Agency, State of Hawaii, Department of Defense.

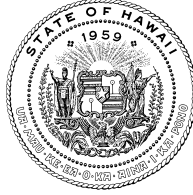
The Department of Defense (DEF) provides written testimony in **SUPPORT** of HB300.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Department of Defense. Highlights in DODs request include:

- 1) \$93M (\$35M bond funds and \$58M other Federal funds) in Office of Veteran Services for 3rd Hawaii State Veteran's Home, Maui.
- 2) \$15M in Youth Challenge Academy for Buildings 1786 and 1787 upgrades and improvements, O'ahu.
- 3) ~\$2M in Youth Challenge Academy to fund federal payroll fringe benefits.
- 4) 20.00 temporary positions and \$1.9M (\$1.4M in general funds and \$0.5M in other Federal funds) in Hawaii Emergency Management Agency to restructure the Emergency Management function.

Thank you for the opportunity to support HB300.

If you should have any questions, please contact Col (Ret) Rusty Spray, Administrative Services Officer at: rusty.spray@hawaii.gov or 808-369-3458.



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 FINANCE

Wednesday, March 5, 2025

9:00 a.m.

State Capitol, Conference Room 308, and Videoconference

In Support

House Bill No. 300, RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

The Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions (SOHHS) supports H.B. 300, Relating to the State Budget. We respectfully ask for your favorable consideration of the Executive Biennium Budget.

H.B. 300 will allow SOHHS to continue the implementation of Kauhale initiatives across the state. Currently, we have 18 Kauhale active across the state and have a goal to establish 30 kauhale villages by the end of 2026. This was made possible by the generous support of the Hawai'i State Legislature which appropriated \$33 million for FY25 for kauhale initiatives. These projects directly support and house residents experiencing or at risk of homelessness. The request for \$50 million in the Executive Biennium Budget will develop new Kauhale programs and maintain operations including critical wrap around services for our unsheltered neighbors statewide who.

As the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness, I am honored to further the important work of this office and the administration for the state. In 2024, the Green Administration set out with an ambitious goal of housing and sheltering half of our unsheltered homeless population by the end of 2026. I am confident that with this request, SOHHS will further expand deeply affordable housing inventory and supportive services for individuals experiencing homelessness through the state's Kauhale Initiative.

Currently, we have 18 Kauhale active across the state and have a goal to establish 30 kauhale villages by the end of 2026. This was all made possible by the generous support of the Hawai'i State Legislature which appropriated \$33 million for FY25 for kauhale initiatives. More than just temporary shelter, Kauhale is a unique and innovative approach that strives to demonstrate a new, cost-effective model that centers housing as a critical component of healthcare. Our Kauhale communities pair personal spaces with shared living spaces, often

Jun Yang Testimony on HB300
House Committee on Finance
March 5, 2025
Page 2

envisioned as tiny homes communities or repurposed commercial, hotel, or apartment buildings, that respond to the unique needs of subpopulations experiencing homelessness. The model is built on the foundation of fostering community and responsibility among residents. Residents of Kauhale are provided 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. This is what makes Hawaii and our kauhale initiatives different and unique.

SOHHS appreciates your consideration of our request to further our efforts to reduce and prevent homelessness across the state. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



TESTIMONY BY:
EDWIN H. SNIFFEN
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

Deputy Directors
Nā Hope Luna Ho'okele
DREANALEE K. KALILI
TAMMY L. LEE
CURT T. OTAGURO
ROBIN K. SHISHIDO

STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII'
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION | KA 'OIHANA ALAKAU
869 PUNCHBOWL STREET
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813-5097

Wednesday, March 5, 2025
9:00 AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 308 & Videoconference

H.B. 300
RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET

House Committee on Finance

The Hawaii Department of Transportation (HDOT) **supports** H.B. 300, which appropriates funds for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027.

Additionally, the HDOT respectfully requests your consideration of the additional budget requests for the department as included in Governor's Message #4 dated February 18, 2025.

Fiscal Biennium 2025–2027

Program/Project Appropriations

HDOT supports all the program and project appropriations indicated in HB300 relating to the State Budget as amended by Governor's Messages.

HDOT would also like to highlight and respectfully requests the Committee's favorable consideration for the following new additional budget items:

Airports

- Combine three part-time Visitor Information Program Assistants (VIPA) positions into two full-time VIPA positions.

Harbors

- Funds to buy-out and terminate the existing energy savings lease to avoid contract cost escalations and to realize greater savings in the long term;
- Funds to support revised facility security plans at five ports at inter-island barge terminals; and
- Funds to support additional special maintenance projects, including paving, pier substructure, bollards, fenders, security fencing, lighting, and utility repairs, to maintain port facilities in good working order.

Provisos/Provisions

HDOT supports including all the provisos and/or provisions indicated in HB300 relating to the State Budget.

HDOT would like to highlight and respectfully request favorable consideration for the following O&M and CIP provisos and/or provisions:

- Section 17. Airport Revenue Bonds
- Section 18. Rental Motor Vehicle Customer Facility Revenue Bonds
- Section 19. Harbor Revenue Bonds
- Section 20. Highway Revenue Bonds
- Section 23. Supplement Allotments and Transfer Unrequired Balances
- Section 24. Supplement Allotments and Transfer Unrequired Balances; Airport Passenger Facility Charge
- Section 25. Supplement Funds from Cost Element Transfers
- Section 26. Extend Lapse Date; Capital Improvement Projects
- Section 29. Delegate Authority to Expend
- Section 31. Natural Disasters or Unforeseen Emergencies
- Section 32. Natural Disasters or Unforeseen Emergencies; Supplement Appropriations and Transfer Unrequired Balances
- Section 36. Extend Lapse Date; Operating, Federal Funds
- Section 37. Unanticipated Federal Funding Cutbacks, Utilize Savings
- Section 38. Increase Federal Funds Ceiling
- Section 39. Extend Lapse Date; Federal Funds and Other Means of Financing, Except General Funds
- Section 40. Private Contributions
- Section 41. Land Acquisitions **revised to include “or other appropriate agency” to include HDOT
- Section 42. Federal or Non-General Fund Reimbursement
- Section 43. Transfer Funds
- Section 44. Transfer Positions
- Section 52. Protocol Fund

Fiscal Biennium 2023–2025

Provisos/Provisions

HDOT respectfully requests that the contents of HB1153 HD1 be additionally consolidated into HB300 (2025) to amend part VII of Act 164, Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH) 2023, as amended by Act 230, SLH 2024, by adding the following sections for the purposes indicated:

- Supplement Allotments and Transfer Unrequired Balances
- Supplement Allotments and Transfer Unrequired Balances; Airport Passenger Facility Charge
- Protocol Fund **revision to include Effective Dates for Different Parts of the Same Bill

HDOT respectfully requests favorable consideration of an additional amendment to Act 164, SLH 2023, as amended by Act 230, SLH 2024, to amend the project

description of a prior appropriation in order to expand the scope of the capital improvement project:

- Item C-21.1 Kakaako Road Improvements, Oahu

HDOT also respectfully requests that the contents of HB1164, HD1 be additionally consolidated into HB300 (2025) to amend part VII of Act 164, Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH) 2023, as amended by Act 230, SLH 2024, by adding the following section for the purpose indicated:

- Highway Revenue Bonds

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



DEPARTMENT OF WATER SUPPLY • COUNTY OF HAWAII

345 KEKŪANAŌ'A STREET, SUITE 20 • HILO, HAWAII 96720

TELEPHONE (808) 961-8050 • FAX (808) 961-8657

March 3, 2025

TESTIMONY OF KEITH K. OKAMOTO, MANAGER-CHIEF ENGINEER
DEPARTMENT OF WATER SUPPLY, COUNTY OF HAWAII

HEARING BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

DATE: March 5, 2025

TIME: 9:00 AM

PLACE: Via Videoconference, Conference Room 308

**HB 300 - RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET
LNR404, SEQ # 104-001**

Honorable Chair Yamashita; Vice-Chair Takenouchi, and committee members,

The enhancements to Hawai'i's climate and hydrologic monitoring capacity proposed in this bill will greatly assist us in fulfilling our mission as stewards and stakeholders associated with managing water and environmental resources effectively. Therefore, the County of Hawaii, Department of Water Supply (DWS) **strongly supports HB 300, LNR404, SEQ #104-001.**

Reliable, real-time weather data is essential for managing Hawai'i Island's vast and diverse water systems. The Hawai'i County Department of Water Supply (DWS) depends on accurate climate monitoring to address the island's highly variable rainfall, prolonged droughts, and extreme weather events. The Hawai'i Mesonet provides the detailed environmental data necessary to safeguard our water supply, support conservation efforts, and strengthen infrastructure resilience.

The Hawai'i Mesonet is critical to DWS operations, providing data that helps:

- Enhance Water Conservation & Supply Management – Real-time rainfall and soil moisture data improve groundwater recharge assessments, ensuring responsible aquifer use and reducing unnecessary pumping.
- Improve Drought Preparedness – Long-term precipitation and temperature trends inform adaptive water management strategies, helping DWS anticipate shortages and allocate resources effectively.
- Support Infrastructure Resilience – Temperature and soil moisture data help identify areas where aging pipelines are at greater risk of leaks or breaks, allowing for targeted maintenance and upgrades.
- Manage Wildfire Risk – Many of DWS's sources and infrastructure are in fire-prone areas. Mesonet stations track wind, temperature, and humidity conditions, aiding in wildfire risk mitigation and emergency planning.

With 27 Mesonet stations already operating on Hawai'i Island, this network has proven invaluable in monitoring changing weather patterns and protecting our water supply. Continued investment in the Hawai'i Mesonet will ensure that DWS has the data needed to plan for future challenges, maintain critical infrastructure, and safeguard water resources for generations to come.

...Water, Our Most Precious Resource...Ka Wai A Kāne...

The Department of Water Supply is an Equal Opportunity provider and employer.

Testimony for HB 300 – Relating to the State Budget
Department of Water Supply, County of Hawai'i
March 3, 2025
Page 2 of 2

We urge the Legislature to support continued funding through bill HB300, program number LNR404, SEQ #104-001 for this vital program.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

**BOARD OF WATER SUPPLY
KA 'OIHANA WAI
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

630 SOUTH BERETANIA STREET • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96843
Phone: (808) 748-5000 • www.boardofwatersupply.com

RICK BLANGIARDI
MAYOR
MEIA

ERNEST Y. W. LAU, P.E.
MANAGER AND CHIEF ENGINEER
MANAKIA A ME KAHU WILIKI

ERWIN KAWATA
DEPUTY MANAGER
HOPE MANAKIA



NĀ'ĀLEHU ANTHONY, Chair
JONATHAN KANESHIRO, Vice Chair
BRYAN P. ANDAYA
LANCE WILHELM
KĒHAULANI PU'U
EDWIN H. SNIFFEN, Ex-Officio
GENE C. ALBANO, P.E., Ex-Officio

March 5, 2025

The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
and Members
Committee on Finance
House of Representatives
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 308
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Chair Yamashita and Members:

Subject: House Bill 300: Relating to the State Budget

The Honolulu Board of Water Supply (BWS) supports House Bill (HB) 300, Item LNR 404, specifically relating to SEQ#104-001 to add funds for Water Resources for hydrologic data collection, which appropriates funds to improve the State's water resource management and hydrologic data collection.

BWS supports the maintenance and expansion of the Hawaii Mesonet advanced weather and climate monitoring network and have assisted the University of Hawaii to add more weather stations on O'ahu. Historical and near-real time weather data is essential for continued hydrologic research and monitoring climate change indicators, drought intensity that can exacerbate wildland fires, and early warning high rainfall events that cause localized flooding.

Thank you for your consideration of our testimony in support of HB 300.

Very truly yours,

ERNEST Y. W. LAU, P.E.
Manager and Chief Engineer

DEPARTMENT OF WATER

COUNTY OF KAUA'I

4398 PUA LOKE STREET LIHUE, HAWAII 96766

WWW.KAUAIWATER.ORG (808) 245-5400 BUSINESS (808) 245-5813 FAX



JOSEPH E. TAIT
MANAGER AND CHIEF ENGINEER

MICHAEL K. HINAZUMI, P.E.
DEPUTY MANAGER-ENGINEER

March 4, 2025

The Honorable Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
and Committee Members
House Committee on Finance
Hawaii State Capitol, Room 306
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi and Committee Members:

Subject: HB 300 – LNR404, SEQ # 104-001 Executive Request: Add Funds for Water Resources (LNR404/GC)

The County of Kaua'i Department of Water (DOW) relies on accurate, real-time weather data to manage our island's water resources safely and efficiently. The Hawai'i Mesonet provides this critical data, helping us address the challenges of extreme rainfall, reservoir safety, and wildfire risk – issues that are becoming more frequent and severe. We strongly support continued funding through bill HB300, program number LNR404, for this essential network.

The Mesonet supports water managers by:

- Improving flood preparedness and reservoir safety – Real-time rainfall and soil saturation data help prevent reservoir overtopping, structural damage, and landslide risks.
- Enhancing wildfire risk management – Wind speed, temperature, and humidity data allow for better allocation of fire-fighting resources and water supplies.
- Strengthening climate resilience – Long-term weather trends help plan for infrastructure upgrades, optimize water storage, and improve watershed protection.

With five Hawai'i Mesonet stations already operating on Kaua'i, DOW has firsthand experience of their critical role in safeguarding water resources and infrastructure. Continued investment in the Mesonet will ensure our ability to respond to extreme weather, protect reservoirs, and maintain a resilient water supply.

We strongly urge the Legislature to support funding for this essential program.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Tait". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "J" and a cursive "Tait".

Joseph E. Tait
Manager and Chief Engineer

RICHARD T. BISSEN, JR.
Mayor



JOSIAH K. NISHITA
Managing Director

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
COUNTY OF MAUI
200 SOUTH HIGH STREET
WAILUKU, MAUI, HAWAII 96793
www.maui-county.gov

TO: Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

FROM: Richard T. Bissen, Jr., Mayor
John Stufflebean, Director of Water Supply

DATE: March 4, 2025

SUBJECT: **SUPPORT OF HB300, RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of this important measure. The Act Appropriates funds for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027.

The County of Maui, Department of Water Supply is in full support of the CWRM Budget FY2025-2027. It is essential to Hawai'i's comprehensive hydrological monitoring network and therefore critical to characterizing the consequences of climate change on water availability, while supporting the regulation and management of Hawai'i's water resources. These are critical in advancing additional water resources and adding reliability to the Department's growing needs.

The additional housing that is needed is directly affected by the decisions made by CWRM. Their ability to make these critical decisions are based on a budget that supports extensive water resource management.

Mahalo for your consideration.



04 March 2025

Dear Committee on Finance,

Testimony pertaining to HB 300

In Support: On behalf of ABC Group Hawaii (Autism Behavior Consulting Group, Inc) serving individuals with autism in Hawaii, we ask that you approve the funds allocated for rates to maintain as part of the Governor's budget. Please approve funding in SB300, which appropriates funds to make the temporary reimbursement rates for ABA service providers PERMANENT.

Thank you for your consideration,

Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair

Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

Ensuring an adequate provider network is established by offering appropriate rates that are reflective of the costs of living, and reimbursement rate increases over time is critical. The MedQuest Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) reimbursement rates in Hawaii have experienced capitation for more than a decade: and those rates having been set in 2015 after the passage of ABA Legislation. We should be reminded that these rates selected in 2015 were set BASED ON 2002-2004 the publicly available TRICARE rates from that time period. The rates we operate on today are not dissimilar to those we accepted from TRICARE in 2004. 21 years later, reimbursement rates remain generally unchanged, and not reflective of cost of living increases or wage increases for technician level providers.

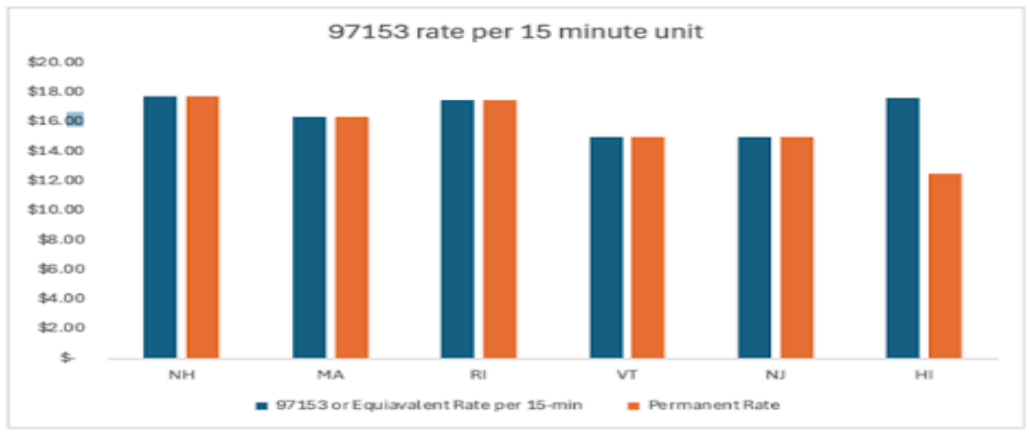
Capitation of rates, and increased costs of living >70% for Oahu alone since 2004 (US Bureau of Labor Statistics), make it impossible to sustain the provision of high quality, clinic based medically-necessary Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) treatment

programs for young children impacted by autism. Since 2015, wages have increased in Hawaii over 30%, forcing providers like us to make difficult decisions without having reimbursement rate increase as a reflection of the economic conditions or cost of living increases in Hawaii.

The provider shortage is real, and we are tasked with training up providers who leave soon after hire, for rates that are near double, within the Department of Education (DOE) educational systems. Our long waitlist continues to grow, and the staffing barriers have restricted our ability to reduce the length of our waitlist to change the lives of Hawaii’s children diagnosed with autism. Our waitlist at ABC today consists of 60% MedQuest children who need intensive ABA treatment and are unable to access that care in a timely manner, per Medicaid standards. This has caused us and other providers to maintain long wait lists (some several years long!) for children who are in dire need of services and appears to be in direct opposition to the requirements of EPSDT and Medicaid.

The existing MedQUEST rates were increased **TEMPORARILY** for 2025 to reflect the increased cost of providing services, per the Milliman Study conducted and the Legislature adopted at the lowest reimbursement recommendation level.

As indicated below, other states with similar costs of living have **PERMANENT** rates (orange) more in line with economic forces and cost of living. Further, recent CMS guidance from SHO 24-0005 was consistent with these concerns: “Although adequate provider rates are not, in and of themselves, enough to ensure a sufficient network, without them, any steps a state might take to improve the provider workforce likely will be less effective.”



According to the most recent estimates from the Centers for Disease Control, 1 in every 36 children are diagnosed with Autism. This indicates that more than 2.78% of Hawaii's children on Medicaid have Autism. MANY of these young children are unable to access the most basic, evidence-based, medically-necessary treatments to ameliorate symptoms of their diagnosis and in some cases, change the trajectory of their lives.

We greatly appreciate the efforts taken in 2024 to include funding for increased rates for MEDQUEST funded ABA treatment. These funds were nonrecurring, only providing an increase for 2025, therefore it is imperative we pass additional legislation in the 2025 session to maintain these rates beyond 2025.

On behalf of ABC Group Hawaii (Autism Behavior Consulting Group, Inc) serving individuals with autism in Hawaii, we ask that you approve the funds allocated for rates to maintain as part of the Governor's budget. Please approve funding in SB300, which appropriates funds to make the temporary reimbursement rates for ABA service providers PERMANENT.

Thank you for your efforts to ensure all MedQUEST beneficiaries, including children with autism, have access to the life-changing, evidence-based care called ABA.

Sincerely,



Dr. Amy Smith Gebhard, PhD, BCBA-D, LBA

Founder/Owner

Autism Behavior Consulting Group, Inc. (ABC Group Hawaii)

Serving Oahu Children and Families Since 2006

References:

<https://www.medicaid.gov/federal-policy-guidance/downloads/sho24005.pdf> 2

Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services. Informational Bulletin, Clarification of Medicaid Coverage of Services to Children with Autism, July 7, 2014 (hereinafter "CMS Informational Bulletin"), available at

<http://www.medicaid.gov/Federal-Policy-Guidance/Downloads/CIB-07-07-14.pdf>.

<https://www.bls.gov/>



Responsive Caregivers of Hawaii
PO Box 75380
Kapolei, Hawaii 96707

A private, non-profit organization

March 5, 2025

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee on Finance,

I represent Responsive Caregivers of Hawaii, a nonprofit organization supporting individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) through the Medicaid 1915(c) Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Waiver, administered by the Department of Health's Developmental Disabilities Division.

We strongly support the following budget item in **HB 300**, scheduled for hearing on **March 5, 2025 at 9:00AM HTH 501 – Developmental Disabilities,) Page 24-25, Item NO. 18.**

HTH 501 includes the addition of \$10,100,000 for FY 26 and \$21,400,000 FY 27 to increase urgently needed services through the Medicaid 1915(c) Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Waiver for Individuals with I/DD and their families.

Why This Funding is Critical

- **Severe Workforce Shortage:** Providers cannot offer competitive wages to Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), leading to a crisis in care.
- **Inadequate Reimbursement Rates:** Rates have not kept pace with rising costs, putting services at risk.
- **Rate Study Findings:** After the 2026 minimum wage increase, service costs will be **24% higher** than current reimbursement rates. Federal Medicaid requires sufficient rates to ensure access to care.
- **Access & Equity:** Funding supports workforce development, improves access on **neighbor islands**, expands employment opportunities, and increases residential options.
- **Preventing Service Cuts:** Without funding, providers may **reduce services** or **serve fewer individuals**, leaving families without support.
- **Avoiding Institutionalization:** Families should not have to choose between placing a loved one in a facility or leaving the workforce to provide care.
- **Cost-Saving Measure:** HCBS services save the state **\$77,000 per person annually** compared to institutional care. Medicaid Waiver funding also brings a **\$0.48 federal match per state dollar** invested, saving taxpayers **\$300 million annually**.

This funding is essential to keeping families together, preventing unnecessary institutionalization, and ensuring individuals with I/DD receive the support they need to live independently.

Hawai'i's **I/DD HCBS Waiver program** serves **3,000 of our most vulnerable individuals** each year, supported by **1,900 DSPs** who help them fully participate in the community.

Mahalo for your time and consideration, and for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 300 HTH 501.

Sincerely,
Michael P. Marsh, MA, CFRE
President & CEO

Written Testimony

Committee on Finance

Wednesday, March 05, 2025 / 9:00 am
Conference Room 308, Hawai'i State Capitol

By

Christine K. Walton, PhD, BCBA-D, LBA
President, Behavior Analysis No Ka Oi, Inc.

HB300– Appropriates funds to increase the funding for applied behavioral analysis services for persons with autism.

Representative Kyle Yamashita, Chair, Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony supporting HB300, which seeks appropriate funding for the Med-Quest Division to address non-covered or under-covered behavioral health services for Med-Quest beneficiaries.

I am the President of Behavior Analysis No Ka Oi, Inc., a Kaka'ako-based clinic that has been providing services to individuals with autism for over 15 years. Our clinic specializes in applied behavior analysis (ABA), an empirically validated, medically necessary treatment for children diagnosed with autism and related disorders. While the passing of Luke's Law in 2015 was a significant milestone, requiring health insurance coverage for autism diagnosis and treatment, the Medicaid fee schedule for ABA services has remained unchanged.

Over the past decade, operational costs have risen significantly. Expenses related to rent, employee health insurance and benefits, and mileage reimbursements for employees commuting to homes and community sites have all increased. Despite these rising costs, the lack of increases to the Medicaid fee schedule has severely impacted our ability to recruit and retain qualified providers.

We cannot offer competitive wages compared to school-based services, which are reimbursed at higher rates. This has led to challenges in hiring the best providers and retaining experienced staff. Many of our qualified professionals have relocated to the mainland, where the cost of living is lower, and fee schedules are more favorable, or leave the field completely. As a result, our clinic now has a waitlist of approximately three years for services. While the passage of Luke's Law was a monumental advancement in securing services for the people of Hawai'i, it is not impactful if those it was meant to serve cannot find providers.

In conclusion, additional funding for the Med-Quest Division is essential to address the gap in non-covered or under-covered behavioral health services. This funding will ensure that medically necessary ABA services are accessible to individuals with autism in Hawai'i and help clinics like ours recruit and retain qualified providers to meet the growing demand for services.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 1:39:21 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carrie Miranda	PAKOLEA SUPPORT SERVICES	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing as the President of the board of directors at Pakolea Support Services, a non profit ABA company on Kauai serving children with autism. There is a huge need for ABA services for kids with autism and our company has struggled the past 4 years to hire and retain sufficient service providers leaving a wait lists of 2 years or more before children can receive needed support. The QUEST reimbursement rates have remained stagnant and inflation has resulted in our inability to pay livable wages. As a result, we have seen a significant reduction in our work force since 2021.

Over 80% of the clients we serve get their medical insurance through QUEST. Please keep the funds allocated for QUEST ABA services in the budget. I would strongly support making the QUEST ABA rates permanent as this has the potential to greatly expand the ABA service field in Hawaii.

On behalf of children with autism and their families, I ask that we give them the support and care they deserve, now and into the future.

With aloha,

Carrie Miranda, M.Ed., BCBA, LBA



Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee on Finance,

My name is Jim Kilgore, and I am the Executive Director of Full Life and serve on the Board of the Hawai'i Waiver Providers Association (HWPA). HWPA represents providers supporting individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) through the Medicaid 1915(c) Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Waiver, administered by the Department of Health's Developmental Disabilities Division.

We strongly support the following budget item in **HB 300**, scheduled for hearing on **March 5, 2025 at 9:00AM** :

HTH 501 – Developmental Disabilities,) Page 24-25, Item NO. 18

HTH 501 includes the addition of \$10,100,000 for FY 26 and \$21,400,000 FY 27 to increase urgently needed services through the Medicaid 1915(c) Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Waiver for Individuals with I/DD and their families.

Why This Funding is Critical

- **Severe Workforce Shortage:** Providers cannot offer competitive wages to Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), leading to a crisis in care.
- **Inadequate Reimbursement Rates:** Rates have not kept pace with rising costs, putting services at risk.
- **Rate Study Findings:** After the 2026 minimum wage increase, service costs will be **24% higher** than current reimbursement rates. Federal Medicaid requires sufficient rates to ensure access to care.
- **Access & Equity:** Funding supports workforce development, improves access on **neighbor islands**, expands employment opportunities, and increases residential options.
- **Preventing Service Cuts:** Without funding, providers may **reduce services** or **serve fewer individuals**, leaving families without support.
- **Avoiding Institutionalization:** Families should not have to choose between placing a loved one in a facility or leaving the workforce to provide care.
- **Cost-Saving Measure:** HCBS services save the state **\$77,000 per person annually** compared to institutional care. Medicaid Waiver funding also brings a **\$0.48 federal match per state dollar** invested, saving taxpayers **\$300 million annually**.

This funding is essential to keeping families together, preventing unnecessary institutionalization, and ensuring individuals with I/DD receive the support they need to live independently.

Hawai'i's **I/DD HCBS Waiver program** serves **3,000 of our most vulnerable individuals** each year, supported by **1,900 DSPs** who help them fully participate in the community.

Mahalo for your time and consideration, and for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 300 HTH 501.



Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee on Finance,

My name is Jim Kilgore, and I am the Executive Director of Full Life. Full Life provides services through the Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) Home and Community Based Medicaid Waiver Program. We serve people with I/DD on Hawai'i Island.

We strongly support the following budget item in **HB 300**, scheduled for hearing on **March 5, 2025 at 9:00AM** :

HTH 501 - Developmental Disabilities,) Page 24-25, Item NO. 18

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This funding is essential to keeping families together, preventing unnecessary institutionalization, and ensuring individuals with I/DD receive the support they need to live independently.

Mahalo for your time and consideration, and for the opportunity to testify in support of **HB 300 HTH 501**.



Full Life: person-centered support services filled with aloha spirit.
KONA OFFICE 75-6082 Alii Drive, Suite 8, Kailua-Kona, HI 96740 Phone: 808-322-9333
HILO OFFICE 792 Piilani Street, Hilo, HI 96720 Phone: 808-935-7699
Email: info@FullLifeHawaii.org • www.fulllifehawaii.org • Tax ID 99-0350129



HAWAII ORAL HEALTH COALITION

Date: March 3, 2025

To: The Honorable Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
The Honorable Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Finance

Re: Support for HB 300, Relating to the State Budget

Hrg: March 5, 2025 at 9:00 AM - Conference Room 308 & via Videoconference

The Hawai'i Oral Health Coalition, a program of the Hawai'i Public Health Institute¹, is in **support of HB 300**, which appropriates funds for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027.

The mission of the Hawai'i Oral Health Coalition (HOHC) is to improve the overall health and well-being of all Hawai'i residents by improving access and equity in oral health care through collaborative partnerships, advocacy, and education. HOHC is a community-driven organization comprised of members representing organizations and individuals from diverse sectors across Hawai'i.

Oral health is essential to the overall physical, psychological, social, and economic well-being of Hawai'i's residents. Yet, our residents suffer from poor oral health:

- Hawai'i has among the highest prevalence of dental decay in children and adults compared to other states.
- Low-income families, intellectually and developmentally disabled residents, kūpuna, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander populations, and neighbor island residents are disproportionately impacted by poor oral health.
- Lack of an in-state dental school, geographic isolation, lack of community water fluoridation, and societal inequities are significant contributors to our poor oral health status.

Forty-two states maintain dedicated public dental health staff responsible for assessing and monitoring the population's oral health status, community needs, and infrastructure; informing and educating the public about the importance of oral health; and working to reduce barriers to dental care. Funding for the state public oral health program was cut in 2009, with limited funding to sustain the Hospital and Community Dental Services Branch only, which has been positioned under the Developmental Disabilities Division since then.

¹ Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI) is a hub for building healthy communities, providing issue-based advocacy, education, and technical assistance through partnerships with government, academia, foundations, business, and community-based organizations.

According to HRS [§321-61](#) - 63, the Hawaii State Department of Health must study and appraise the State's dental health needs and resources, and shall foster the development and expansion of dental health services to the people of the State. To accomplish this the department requires adequate resources to:

- Conduct research, investigations, experiments, demonstrations, and studies relating to the incidence, causes, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of dental diseases;
- Supervise, provide, and direct clinical dental health services for adults and children in the State;
- Develop and conduct a program of dental health education of the public;
- Provide information and education relating to dental health to public health nurses, teachers, social workers, and others who deal in a professional capacity with the public, through publications, seminars, institutes, and other appropriate means; and
- Provide training for professional personnel to staff state and local dental health programs.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention currently only provide funding to 20 states and one US territory². Hawai'i is not among these states. Furthermore, the extent to which federal funding will reach Hawai'i for oral health programming in the future is more uncertain than ever.

It has been more than 10 years since the most recent statewide oral health assessments of Hawai'i residents. Key findings indicate that Hawai'i's keiki experience the highest rates of tooth decay in the nation³. The state continues to see high rates of emergency department (ED) utilization for preventable oral health conditions, with the greatest rate of ED visits occurring on neighbor islands, and among Medicaid patients⁴. Additionally, Just over half of children with Medicaid (54.3%) are receiving preventive dental services⁵.

It is imperative that we invest resources to re-establish the state's oral health program to better understand the full scope of oral health needs, resources, infrastructure, and to identify evidence-based best practices, which can best address the barriers and gaps in our existing oral health care systems. dedicated staffing under the Department of Health is necessary to identify and develop the strategies that address the critical needs of our communities, provide ongoing assessment of oral health trends and systems, and work with stakeholders to develop effective approaches to improving oral health outcomes for all Hawai'i residents.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,



Patrick Donnelly
Statewide Oral Health Coalition Manager
Hawai'i Public Health Institute

² <https://www.cdc.gov/oral-health-funded-programs/funding/oral-health-program-funding.html>

³ https://health.hawaii.gov/about/files/2013/06/Key_Findings_wC.pdf; <https://health.hawaii.gov/about/files/2013/06/Hawaii-Smiles-Report.pdf>

⁴ <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38509055/>

⁵ <https://www.hawaiihealthmatters.org/indicators/index/view?indicatorId=12247&localeId=14>

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45-539 Plumeria Street

HILO

190 Keawe St, #12

KAPA'AU

54-3885 Akoni Pule Hwy

OCEAN VIEW

92-1804 Keaka Parkway

Federal ID

99-0108896

March 3, 2025

To: Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Finance

Date: March 5, 2025, 9:00 am, Room 308, State Capitol and
Videoconference

RE: Testimony **Supporting HB 300**
HTH 501 – Developmental Disabilities, Page 24-25, Item
No. 18

The Arc of Kona is a private non-profit organization that provides services to people with disabilities that encourage personal growth and quality of life through empowerment and choice throughout the Island of Hawaii. We support individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) through the Medicaid 1915(c) Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Waiver administered by the Department of Health, Developmental Disabilities Division. As the President/CEO of the Arc of Kona, I am writing on behalf of our organization and the people and families we serve to **strongly support budget item number 18 HTH 501 – Developmental Disabilities on page 24-25 of HB 300.**

HTH 501 includes the addition of \$10,100,000 for FY 2026 and \$21,400,000 FY 2027 to increase urgently needed services through the Medicaid 1915(c) Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Waiver for people with I/DD and their families.

Why This Funding is Critical

- **Severe Workforce Shortage:** Providers are unable to offer competitive wages to Direct Support Professionals (DSPs), leading to a crisis in care.
- **Inadequate Reimbursement Rates:** Rates have not kept pace with rising costs, putting services at risk.
- **Rate Study Findings:** After the 2026 minimum wage increase, service costs will be **24% higher** than current reimbursement rates. Federal Medicaid requires sufficient rates to ensure access to care.



"Expanding the Possibilities"
"Ho'o Nui Ka Hiki"

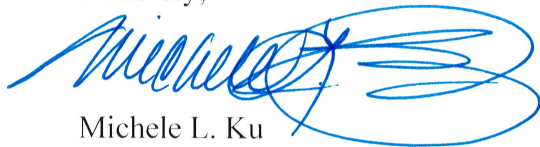
- **Access & Equity:** Funding supports workforce development, improves access on **neighbor islands**, expands employment opportunities, and increases residential options.
- **Preventing Service Cuts:** Without funding, providers may **reduce services** or **serve fewer individuals**, leaving families without support.
- **Avoiding Institutionalization:** Families should not have to choose between placing a loved one in a facility or leaving the workforce to provide care to their family member.
- **Cost-Saving Measure:** HCBS services save the state **\$77,000 per person annually** compared to institutional care. Medicaid Waiver funding also brings a **\$0.48 federal match per state dollar** invested, saving taxpayers **\$300 million annually**.

This funding is essential in keeping families together, preventing unnecessary institutionalization, and ensuring individuals with I/DD receive the support and assistance they need to live independent, self-determined lives.

Hawai'i's I/DD HCBS Waiver program serves **3,000 of our most vulnerable individuals** each year, supported by **1,900 DSPs** who help them fully participate in the community.

Thank you for your time and consideration, as well as the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 300 HTH 501.

Sincerely,



Michele L. Ku
President and Chief Executive Officer



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAI'I

COMMENTS ON HB 300: RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET

TO: House Committee on Finance
FROM: Tina Andrade, President and CEO, Catholic Charities Hawai'i
Hearing: **Wednesday, 3/5/25; 9:00 am;** Room 308 or via videoconference

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members, Committee on Finance:

Catholic Charities Hawai'i provides comments on HB 300, the state budget bill, which appropriates funds for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal years 2025–2026 and 2026–2027.

Catholic Charities Hawai'i (CCH) has provided social services in Hawai'i for over 77 years, assisting 40,000 people annually. Our services target the most vulnerable in Hawai'i, including elders, veterans, children, families, houseless individuals, and immigrants. As a member of the Hawai'i True Cost Coalition, we stand with over 70 organizations serving 500,000 residents.

Community-based agencies deliver essential services but face severe funding challenges. State funding has remained stagnant for over a decade, and potential federal cuts threaten their ability to serve. Without action, critical services relied upon by Hawai'i families are at risk, especially in the wake of crises like the Maui wildfires.

We urge decisive action to secure funding for essential services through the Department of Human Services, the Department of Health, and the Judiciary.

Catholic Charities Hawai'i also strongly supports the following HB 300 budget items:

- **HMS 224:** Fund core homeless services in the base budget of DHS, including Housing First, Family Assessment Centers, Homeless Outreach, Legal Services, and Rapid Re-housing.
- **BED 160:** Allocate \$50 million annually to Tier 1 and \$75 million annually to Tier 2 of the Rental Housing Revolving Fund.
- **GIA:** Provide \$175,000 to Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center to support education, recreation, and social services that enable seniors to remain independent in our community.

Catholic Charities Hawai'i respectfully requests increased funding to reflect the true cost of sustaining health and human services for Hawai'i residents.

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





Testimony on House Bill 300
Relating to the State Budget
Submitted by Dr. Steven Pine, DDS.
March 3, 2025

The Honorable Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
The Honorable Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee on Finance

Re: **Support for HB 300** – Relating to the State Budget

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee on Finance,

I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 300, which appropriates critical funding for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027.

As the Chief Dental Officer for Hawai'i Island Community Health Center, I have witnessed firsthand the urgent need for sustainable funding for Hawai'i's public oral health programs. Oral health is inextricably linked to overall health and well-being, yet Hawai'i continues to experience some of the highest rates of dental disease in the nation, disproportionately affecting low-income families, kūpuna, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities, and individuals with disabilities.

Hawai'i has been without a fully funded public oral health program since 2009. Currently, 42 states have dedicated public dental health staff to assess community needs, educate the public, and reduce barriers to care. However, Hawai'i remains one of the few states without this critical public health infrastructure. The Department of Health (DOH) is mandated under **HRS §321-61 - 63** to study and improve the state's oral health, yet without sufficient resources, this statutory obligation remains largely unmet.

The need for investment in oral health infrastructure is clear:

- Hawai'i's children experience the highest rates of tooth decay in the nation.
- Emergency department visits for preventable dental conditions remain alarmingly high, particularly on the neighbor islands and among Medicaid recipients.
- Only **54.3% of children with Medicaid receive preventive dental services**—far below national benchmarks.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) currently funds state oral health programs in **only 20 states and one U.S. territory—Hawai'i is not one of them**. Without dedicated state investment, we cannot rely on federal funding to address these longstanding disparities.



HB 300 represents an opportunity to restore the state's public oral health program and allocate the necessary resources to:

- Conduct statewide oral health assessments to understand the full scope of need.
- Develop evidence-based prevention strategies to reduce dental disease.
- Improve public education on oral health's impact on overall health.
- Strengthen the workforce pipeline to address shortages in dental professionals.

Without action, we will continue to see worsening disparities, preventable suffering, and increasing healthcare costs due to untreated dental disease. Funding the restoration of a robust state oral health program is a cost-effective investment in public health, improving outcomes and reducing strain on emergency services.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to support HB 300 and prioritize funding for the Department of Health's oral health initiatives.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Steven Pine

Steven C. Pine, DDS
Chief Dental Officer
Hawai'i Island Community Health Center



holomua

COLLABORATIVE

OUR MISSION

To support and advance public policies that make Hawai'i affordable for all working families.

OUR VISION

Collaborative, sustainable, and evidence-based public policies that create a diverse and sustainable Hawai'i economy, an abundance of quality job opportunities, and a future where all working families living in Hawai'i can thrive.

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HolomuaCollaborative.org

Page 1 of 2

Committee: House Committee on Finance
Bill Number: HB 300, Relating to The State Budget
Hearing Date and Time: March 05, 2025, 9:00am (Room 308)
Re: Testimony of Holomua Collaborative – Support

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the committee:

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony **in support** of HB300, Relating to The State Budget. In particular, Holomua Collaborative writes in support of three items in the budget:

1. \$1,000,000 for FY 26 for the Department of Human Resources Development (DHRD) to conduct a civil service position classification and compensation study;
2. Adds \$338,150 for FY 26 and \$1,343,400 for FY 27 for consultant services to maintain Tax System Modernization (TSM) projects; and
3. Adds 6.00 permanent positions and \$294,796 for FY 26 and 7.00 permanent positions and \$664,592 for FY 27 for the Department of Taxation (DOTAX) to establish a Tax System Modernization Office and integrate the Internal Revenue Services' Direct File Project with TSM.

In October 2024, a survey¹ gathering information about the day-to-day financial experience of local workers was released, and it suggests that the high cost of living and resulting outmigration is a growing crisis that has the potential to reach staggering levels. When nearly 1,500 local workers were asked if they may need to move to a less expensive state, only thirty-one percent answered a definitive “no,” while sixty-nine percent said “yes” or “unsure.” Each local worker and family we lose to the continent contributes to a loss of our economy, our culture, and our family.

Many factors contribute to the high cost of living in the state, and Holomua Collaborative is devoted to finding ways to keep all local working families in Hawai'i by making sure they can afford to stay. Each of the budget requests identified above represent a way to help families stay in Hawai'i.

Civil Service Position Classification and Compensation Study

State government jobs are categorized and filled via 1,400+ civil service position classifications, which form the basis for 17,000+ position descriptions. This system and the 1,400 + position descriptions are outdated in terms of structure, requirements, and compensation, and need to be modernized to reflect current workforce needs and attract a broader pool of applicants. The DHRD budget request detailed above will accomplish this.

¹ <https://holomuacollective.org/survey/>

As of November 2024, the State government had a job vacancy rate of 24%.² with nearly 31% of employees eligible to retire within five years.³ The large vacancy rate contributes to less efficient government operations and services, including delayed delivery of services relied upon by neighbors in need, such as SNAP, MedQuest, and Unemployment Insurance. Furthermore, as long as the position classifications and compensation remain outdated, our local workforce will be less inclined to seek out and apply for State jobs over better opportunities on the continent. With so many vacancies available and the volume of outmigration we face, making State employment a competitive and attractive choice is an efficient investment that will pay dividends in our future.

Maintain Tax System Modernization (TSM) projects, establishing a TSM Office, and Integrating the Internal Revenue Services' Direct File Project with TSM

On average, taxpayers spend approximately 13 hours and \$270 preparing their taxes each year.⁴ A significant number of these taxpayers are low-income workers using fee-based tax preparers such as TurboTax and H&R Block. This reduces the amount of money they may get back in tax credits on preparation services. A free program from the Internal Revenue Service, Direct File, is currently available for families to prepare and file federal and/or state taxes in twenty-five states. The Department of Taxation (DOTAX) already uses the same vendor as the participating states.

Including funding in the State budget for expanding access to Direct File for the use of residents to file their taxes could save Hawai'i taxpayers \$34.6M in filing fees annually and deliver \$83.1M in total value to Hawai'i taxpayers, between filing fees, the time cost of filing, and additional federal credits claimed.⁵ Including the funding for the maintenance of the Tax System Modernization (TSM) projects is necessary to have an e-filing option to integrate with Direct File.

We urge you to support these budget requests to make life in Hawai'i a little easier for all our neighbors.

Sincerely,



Joshua Wisch
President & Executive Director

² 2024 State of Hawai'i Act 57, SLH 2019, Vacancy Report, page 1.

³ *Id.* at page 6.

⁴ IRS Direct File Service, <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/inflation-reduction-act/irs-direct-file-service>.

⁵ Gabriel Zucker and Bharat Ramamurti, Economic Security Project, "The Impact of Direct File – by the Numbers", page 13, March 11, 2024.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 6:08:39 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Louis Erteschik	Hawaii Disability Rights Center	Comments	In Person

Comments:

Re: HTH 501 Developmental Disabilities

We wish to comment on this Budget Request.

Twenty years ago our office entered into a Settlement Agreement in a lawsuit that we brought against the Developmental Disabilities Division which obligates them to annually assess the needs of the DD population and make specific efforts to secure a Budget that will adequately serve them.

We have reason to believe that they have failed to comply with the Settlement Agreement and have failed over the years to seek appropriate funding for the DD Home and Community Based Waiver. We say this in part because we have seen a growing decrease in the amount of services provided to waiver recipients as well as a tightening up of eligibility criteria. This has greatly impacted several of our clients. That would not occur if they were carrying out the terms of the Settlement.

We note that while the current request seeks an additional 10 million dollars we have been told that this is allocated to pay higher rates to providers. While we have no issue with providing sufficient incentives to DD providers, what is needed are sufficient funds to properly serve the ID/DD population.

We urge the Legislature to closely scrutinize the HTH 501 Budget Request and make necessary adjustments so that the State will comply with its legal obligation.



Dedicated to safe, responsible, humane and effective drug policies since 1993

**TESTIMONY ON HB 300
(Opposing Funding for New Jail Construction)**

TO: Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Takenouchi & FIN Committee Members

FROM: Nikos Leverenz, Board President

DATE: March 5, 2025 (9:00 AM)

Drug Policy Forum of Hawai'i, a member of the Reimaging Public Safety Coalition, strongly opposes additional expenditures to construct a new jail facility in Halawa, [which is estimated to cost over \\$1 billion](#).

[A recent analysis by the Prison Policy Initiative](#) noted that pretrial incarceration is overused in the state, undermining the presumption of innocence and negatively implanting public health and public safety. More jail beds would worsen lasting racial disparities in the state's criminal legal system, with those who are Native Hawaiian, Pasifika, or Black subject to heightened levels of surveillance, arrest, prosecution, incarceration, and post-release supervision. Further, a new facility will not rectify the persistent staffing problems faced at facilities administered by the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

The memo observes that "[people incarcerated at OCCC are overwhelmingly there for low-level, non-violent charges, including technical violations of probation conditions, and there are a wealth of opportunities to decrease Hawai'i's jail population to the point where new jail construction may not be necessary.](#)" As such, the state should endeavor to enact meaningful probation reforms, including limits on the use of technical violations as a basis for re-incarceration. As it stands, Hawai'i leads the nation in its average term of probation (59 months).

Modification of pre-trial practices can help reduce jail populations and further justice by helping to ensure that people are not incarcerated before they are convicted of an underlying offense. A short list of modifications includes creating a presumption of release for all arrestees in statute; reducing or eliminating the use of cash bail; and ensuring due process protections for bail hearings.

The state should instead dedicate additional resources to providing behavioral health care services to those in need outside of the context of the criminal legal system, including outpatient mental health support, counseling for substance use problems, and treatment for substance use disorder.

Modifications to underlying laws related to the possession of drugs for personal use, which is erroneously labeled “promotion” under current HRS provisions, and the repeal of the state’s drug paraphernalia statute would also help reduce jail populations as well as align state policy with the recommendations of the American Public Health Association, the American Medical Association, the Global Commission on Drug Policy, and other medical groups and non-governmental organizations.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony.



Committee on Finance
Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

Wednesday, March 5, 2025
TIME: 9:00 AM
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE
Conference Room 308
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

SUPPORT HB300 RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET

Honorable Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Hawai'i Association for Behavior Analysis (HABA), we sincerely thank you for including Medicaid rate increases for applied behavior analysis (ABA) services for children with autism in last year's budget bill. After nearly a decade of stagnant rates, 2025 finally brings an increase—but the funds that were passed were nonrecurring, meaning they are only secured for 2025. We urge you to maintain the appropriation for this included in the Executive Budget submitted for this year's budget bill to maintain the increased rates and prevent disruptions in services for families who depend on them.

ABA is a **medically necessary service** covered under QUEST for individuals under 21 with an autism diagnosis, as mandated by federal law through the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) benefit (Social Security Act §1905(r)). EPSDT ensures that children receive comprehensive and necessary healthcare services, including ABA, and remains a protected federal mandate. Given its focus on children, EPSDT funding is unlikely to face federal cuts if there are reductions to Medicaid. However, while the federal government requires coverage, states play a critical role in determining reimbursement rates and ensuring providers can continue offering services. Without adequate state funding, access to care remains limited, and families face significant barriers to obtaining the support their children need.

As noted in the recent ABA rate study ([DC233](#)), providers continue to face **workforce shortages** due to low reimbursement rates, leading to **long waitlists** and limited access to services, particularly on neighbor islands. Some providers have even **stopped accepting QUEST** due to unsustainable rates. Without competitive reimbursement, families will continue to struggle to access the services their children desperately need.



The Legislature took an **important first step** by increasing rates last session, but these were just made available on 01/01/2025 and many providers are still working on their updated contracts with the QUEST health plans therefore not yet able to bill the increased rates. However, we know that without **maintaining these adjustments**, providers will not be able to offer competitive pay and will likely lose staff, resulting in families facing uncertainty about their children's care or being unable to access care at all. Investing in ABA services now ensures children receive early intervention, reducing long-term costs and allowing them to **reach their full potential**.

We urge you to **maintain funds for QUEST ABA rates in the DHS budget appropriations** to secure a **sustainable future** for ABA services in Hawai'i. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Mahalo,
Marija Čolić, PhD, BCBA, LBA
Legislative Chair
Hawai'i Association for Behavior Analysis
Legislation@hawaiiaba.org



COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Honorable Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Honorable Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

HEARING DATE: Wednesday, March 5, 2025
TIME: 9 am, Via Videoconference & Conference Room 308

TESTIMONY FOR HB 300 RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET

[Hawai‘i Friends of Restorative Justice](#) (HFRJ) supports the appropriations in this bill for the Department of Education and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs. We strongly oppose the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation’s request for \$30 million for a bigger O‘ahu jail. The state has already spent about \$45 million on planning incarceration in the last decade.

Instead of investing more in incarceration infrastructure, these funds should be redirected to education to address the root causes of crime that provide a more effective long-term solution for public safety. Incarceration has done little to reduce recidivism or improve community well-being. Research consistently shows that [investments in education](#)—especially [early childhood education](#), vocational training, and [higher education](#)—significantly reduce crime rates by providing individuals with the skills and opportunities needed to succeed. Education reduces poverty, fosters economic growth, and strengthens communities, [whereas jails perpetuate cycles of disadvantage](#), disproportionately [impacting Native Hawaiians](#) and other marginalized groups.

Spending \$30 million on planning a new jail is an irresponsible use of taxpayer dollars, especially when our schools face funding shortages, teacher shortages, and inadequate infrastructure, and we face federal funding cuts. Instead, we should prioritize expanding educational access, supporting after-school programs, and increase mental health resources in schools, all of which have been shown to prevent criminal behavior and improve social outcomes.

Rather than perpetuating a punitive system that has failed to rehabilitate individuals or enhance public safety, we need to redirect our resources toward proactive solutions that uplift communities. Education is the most powerful tool to break cycles of incarceration, reduce crime, and ensure a more just and prosperous future for our state.

We urge you to reject DCR’s request for additional jail planning funds and instead allocate these resources to education initiatives that will provide lasting benefits to our people.

Mahalo for your service. Please contact me if you have any questions about our position.

Aloha,

Lorenn Walker, JD, MPH
Director, HFRJ

**Testimony of The Nature Conservancy
Supporting HB300, Relating to the State Budget.
Committee on Finance
March 5, 2025 at 9am
Conference Room 308 and via Videoconference**

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) Hawai'i and Palmyra supports funding to enhance, protect, conserve, restore and manage Hawaii's natural resources in HB300, especially the line items expressed below.

1. TNC supports the DLNR and the Governor's request for LNR401 Ecosystem Protection, Restoration, and Fisheries Management.

These investments in programs to support our marine and coastal resources will ensure that the reefs that line our coasts, which are environmental, economic, recreational, and cultural treasures, will continue to support our island lifestyle and livelihoods. Each year, our reefs provide flood protection to people, property, and jobs valued at more than \$836 million, support nearshore fisheries worth \$13.4 million, and contribute more than \$1.2 billion through reef-related tourism to the state's economy. We must continue to make the vital investments to protect and sustainably manage our aquatic resources.

2. TNC supports the DLNR and the Governor's request for LNR404 Water Resources, which funds the Commission on Water Resource Management Hawai'i Mesonet (SEQ# 104-001).

The Hawai'i Mesonet informs disaster preparedness and response, climate research and forecasts and long-term environmental monitoring through a network of sensing equipment strategically located throughout Hawai'i. One such sensor is located at TNC's Waikamoi Preserve and is linked directly to the National Weather Service. Accurate weather data, including wind, precipitation and humidity, directly informs management of Waikamoi Preserve. For example, our team uses this data to predict where the integrity of predator fencing may be compromised, which is critical to the overall health of the landscape. Long-term data is needed to track changes in climate that affect our forests and oceans, and the Mesonet network fills gaps that allow for climate and water modelers to make better predictions about our water resources.

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3. TNC supports the DLNR and the Governor's Message request for LNR407 Natural Area Reserves & Watershed Management.

These funds provide critical funding that provides long-term conservation of watershed forests statewide. These investments help reduce erosion, prevent extinction of endangered species, increase carbon storage in native forests, and protect Hawai'i's fresh water. Forested watersheds provide Hawai'i with drinking water, cultural resources, and are home to unique plants and wildlife found nowhere else in the world. Protection is needed to safeguard these invaluable resources in the face of threats such as invasive species and climate change. Continuing investment in these vital resources will have immense long-term impacts for our forests and far beyond.

4. TNC supports the DLNR and the Governor's Capital Improvement Plan request for \$1,750,000 in FY 26 for Pohakea Fire Prevention and Suppression Infrastructure.

Three watersheds including Pohakea, Waikapu, and Waiakoa all flow into Ma'alaea Bay, which once supported unique limu and coral reef habitat on the leeward Maui coastline. Stormwater infrastructure modifications, increased ungulate presence and fire have led to big mud slides entering the bay during storms. Hui o ka Wai Ola data show that the bay is impaired from turbidity, and working to protect the mauka watershed is key to restoring ecosystem health. Fire and erosion control at Ma'alaea is needed to contain wildfires at this ignition hotspot and prevent them from spreading. The State's proposal would leverage federal funds to replace high fuel load invasive vegetation with native plants adapted for riparian green belts. The strategic restoration of these fire-prone lands provides important cost-effective protections for life and property in nearby Ma'alaea Village. The proposed improvements would hold back sediments from reaching the unique and valuable Ma'alaea coral reefs and harbor, thereby saving on future restoration costs.

5. TNC supports DNLN and the Governor's Operating Budget request for \$3,000,000 in FY26 for West Maui fire prevention: Ukumehame Wetland and Stream, Maui.

Besides providing habitat for endangered water birds and other native plant and animal species, the Ukumehame Wetland serves as hazard mitigation for environmental threats such as lowland wildfire, coastal flooding and upland erosion, protecting coastlines and the precious 939-acre Olowalu coral reef system. These wetlands are degraded from sugar-era land use and draining, and once provided key habitat for wetland birds, plants, insects and fish, as documented through 'olelo, photos, wetland surveys and historical maps. Restoration of Ukumehame Wetlands is positioned for success as the lands designated for the project are generally undeveloped and already under state jurisdiction, and the investment will unlock additional federal support critical to its completion. This is an excellent opportunity to expand the effective foot print of the wetland from 25 to 88 acres, replace high fuel load invasive plants with low stature native wetland vegetation, and

restore riparian buffers and fuel breaks at two gulches that feed to Ukumehame Wetland, Makiwa and Hana'ula.

These budget items contribute to the resilience, sustainability and continued health of our islands' environment, economy, and quality of life. We thank you for appreciating the critical importance of protecting the lands and waters on which all life depends.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in support of HB300.

Guided by science, TNC is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of the lands and waters upon which all life depends. The Conservancy has helped protect more than 200,000 acres of natural lands in Hawai'i and Palmyra Atoll. We manage 40,000 acres in 13 nature preserves and have supported over 50 coastal communities to help protect and restore the nearshore reefs and fisheries of the main Hawaiian Islands.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 6:43:03 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Taylor Kellerman	Kualoa Ranch	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha

As a working ranch and visitor destination, Kualoa Ranch depends on accurate, real-time weather data to ensure the safety of guests, staff, and livestock while managing diverse operations that include ranching, farming, conservation, and outdoor tourism. A Mesonet station installed within the ranch is already providing valuable data, helping to track rainfall, wind speeds, soil moisture, and temperature fluctuations that impact daily operations.

Reliable climate data also supports long-term sustainability efforts, from watershed restoration to maintaining resilient agricultural practices that sustain both the ranch and the broader community.

As climate variability continues to impact Hawai'i, the Mesonet provides essential data to mitigate drought, flooding, and wildfire risks. Continued investment in this network ensures that Kualoa Ranch and similar organizations can operate safely and sustainably while adapting to changing weather patterns.

Funding for the Hawai'i Mesonet is an investment in the long-term resilience of Hawai'i's land, economy, and communities. Kualoa Ranch strongly supports continued funding through bill HB300, program number LNR404, for the Hawai'i Mesonet, a vital resource that enhances environmental conservation, agriculture, and public safety across the state.

Mahalo for considering this testimony.

*Sincerely,
Taylor Kellerman
Director of Diversified Agriculture and Land Stewardship
Kualoa Ranch*



WE LOVE WHAT WE DO

Committee on Finance
Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

Wednesday, March 5, 2025
9:00 AM
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE
Conference Room 308
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

SUPPORT HB300 RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET

Honorable Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

Mahalo for the opportunity to submit testimony in **support of the budget appropriation for maintaining the QUEST rates for applied behavior analysis (ABA)** submitted in the Executive Budget for DHS as part of HB300.

BAYADA is a not-for-profit health care company committed to serving our community. We provide services across the state, with behavioral health services for QUEST members on Oahu and Maui.

As a behavioral health service provider, we have struggled to meet the needs of children with autism on Med-QUEST due to the increased costs of operating a business without increased rates for our services. QUEST rates for the coverage of intensive behavioral therapy (IBT) for treatment of children under 21 years of age with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), also referred to as ABA, were set in 2015 and had not increased, despite the increased costs of living and increased costs for employers over the last 8 years. Wages have gone up nearly 30% since 2015 in Hawai'i, forcing businesses to shoulder the cost without proportionate rate increases, making it harder to attract candidates and businesses to the field of supporting individuals with autism and their families.

We appreciate the efforts taken by this committee in 2024 to include funding for increased rates for ABA QUEST funded services. These funds were nonrecurring, only providing an increase for 2025, therefore it is imperative we pass additional legislation in this 2025 session to maintain these rates.

ABA services are healthcare services for children mandated by Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT) under Medicaid and are specific to children under 21, which will likely help in maintaining this program regardless of potential federal cuts. At this point, healthcare related payments, and specifically those



WE LOVE WHAT WE DO

for children, are not in the category of funds being targeted by the federal administration.

Without the increased rates, we are not able to adequately serve the children with autism and their families who need us. As an organization, our values are compassion, excellence, and reliability; however, due to difficulties in attracting and retaining staff we find ourselves troubled that we cannot consistently deliver these values to our clients. Currently, we must maintain a waitlist for clients to access services because there is more demand than we are able to meet with our current providers. At our Oahu location, 40% of those on our waitlist are QUEST members. At our Maui location, 66% are QUEST members. We closed our Big Island and Kauai insurance-based services, despite ongoing community need, due to losses based on unsustainable rates in 2018. These waitlists are only representative of our organization and are similar across providers.

The increased rates approved in last year's legislative session were published by Med-QUEST for use beginning 01/01/2025 but then required each provider work with the managed care organization (MCO) administering the QUEST benefit to members to work out these new rates within their provider contracts. At this point, we have just started services under the increased rates for two of the health plans (three remaining) and therefore cannot yet report on data from the anticipated positive impact to staff hiring and retention and increased access to services for families on our waitlists.

We respectfully request the Committee maintain funds for QUEST ABA rates in DHS's budget as part of this bill.

Mahalo,

Kristen Koba-Burdtt, BCBA, LBA, CDP
BAYADA Behavioral Health



Testimony Before the House Committee on Finance

By David Bissell
President and Chief Executive Officer
Kaua'i Island Utility Cooperative
4463 Pahe'e Street, Suite 1, Lihu'e, Hawai'i, 96766-2000

Wednesday, March 5, 2025; 9:00 am
Conference Room #308 & Videoconference

House Bill No. 300 - RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET

To the Honorable Chair Kyle T. Yamashita, Vice Chair Jenna Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

Kaua'i Island Utility Cooperative (KIUC) is a not-for-profit utility providing electrical service to more than 34,000 commercial and residential members.

KIUC strongly supports continued funding through HB 300, program number LNR404, SEQ # 104-001 (Executive Request: Add Funds for Water Resources LNR404/GC), for the Hawai'i Mesonet, a network of advanced weather stations providing real-time data essential for wildfire prevention, infrastructure protection, and public safety.

As Kaua'i's electric cooperative, KIUC faces growing wildfire risks due to dry, windy conditions exacerbated by climate change. Reliable weather data is critical for assessing fire danger, managing vegetation near power lines, and making informed decisions about de-energizing lines when necessary. The 2012 Kōke'e wildfire, which burned over 3,000 acres, and recent brush fires in West Kaua'i highlight the urgent need for better localized fire weather data. Hawai'i Mesonet stations help track wind speed, humidity, and fuel moisture—key factors in wildfire behavior and prevention.

Severe rainfall events also threaten our infrastructure. The historic April 2018 floods, which dropped nearly 50 inches of rain in 24 hours, demonstrated the need for accurate precipitation and streamflow monitoring to protect substations, power poles, and hydroelectric facilities.

The Hawai'i Mesonet directly supports KIUC's mission by enhancing wildfire prevention and response in a number of ways:

- Enhancing Wildfire Prevention and Response: Real-time fire weather data helps KIUC assess risks and adjust power operations, reducing the need for precautionary shutoffs;
- Protecting Critical Infrastructure – Advanced weather monitoring allows KIUC to anticipate and mitigate flooding impacts on substations and power lines; and
- Supporting Renewable Energy Planning – Data on wind speeds, cloud cover, and precipitation informs efficient integration of Kaua'i's renewable energy resources.

Kaua'i Island Utility Cooperative

HB 300

Page 2

As Kaua'i moves toward a more resilient and sustainable energy future, accurate weather data is essential to safeguarding our grid. We urge the Legislature to support continued funding for this vital program.

Mahalo for your consideration.

March 4, 2025

Testimony in Support of HB 300, Relating to the State Budget

House Committee on Finance
Wednesday, March 5, 2025
9:00 am
Conference Room 308

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members:

Hawaii Dental Service (HDS) **strongly supports** HB 300, Relating to the State Budget, specifically to re-establish the mandated State Oral Health Program which was cut in 2009.

Hawaii is one of eight states that does not maintain dedicated public dental health staff responsible for assessing and monitoring the population's oral health status, community needs, and infrastructure; oral health education; and working to reduce barriers to dental care as required by HRS §321-61 - 63. This statute states that the Hawaii State Department of Health must study and appraise the State's dental health needs and resources and shall foster the development and expansion of dental health services to the people of the State.

Hawaii's last statewide oral health assessment was conducted a decade ago in 2015, with Head Start data showing the highest rates of childhood tooth decay in the nation. It is imperative that we continue to assess the state of oral health in Hawaii so that we can develop effective programs to help improve oral health outcomes, especially for our keiki.

Preventable dental issues continue to drive high emergency room visits, and only half of Medicaid-enrolled children receive preventive care. Investing in oral health will improve access, reduce costs, and create lasting change.

Dedicated oral health staff and resources at the Department of Health will help address the longstanding gaps in access to dental care and education and would provide the necessary expertise to drive targeted solutions, prioritize oral health, and improve outcomes for all Hawai'i residents.

HDS and the HDS Foundation urge your support for funding to restore the State Oral Health Program and help Hawaii residents achieve healthier smiles.

Sincerely,



Dr. Diane S. L. Paloma
President and CEO
Hawaii Dental Service



S E A C
Special Education Advisory Council
1010 Richards Street Honolulu, HI 96813
Phone: (808) 586-8126 Fax: (808) 586-8129
email: spin@doh.hawaii.gov

March 5, 2025

**Special Education
Advisory Council**

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Ms. Susan Wood, *Vice Chair*

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Mr. Will Carlson
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Mr. Steven Vannatta
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Ms. Jasmine Williams

Ms. Helen Kaniho, *liaison to
the Superintendent*
Ms. Wendy Nakasone-Kalani,
*liaison to the military
community*

Amanda Kaahanui, Staff
Susan Rocco, Staff

Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Committee on Finance
Board of Education
Hawaii State Capitol
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: HB 300 - RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET

Dear Chair Yamashita and members of the Committee,

The Special Education Advisory Council (SEAC), Hawaii's State Advisory Panel under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, supports HB 300 relating to EDN 150 - funding for Special Education. This bill appropriates funds for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027.

SEAC received a budget briefing on February 14th by the Department's Budget Branch and agreed with the priorities of the Office of Student Support Services for additional funding in the following areas:

- \$10 million each year for **contracted skilled nursing services**,
- \$1.8 million in FY 27 for **20 licensed Mental Health Interventionists** to support students at risk of suicide and needing intensive educational settings, and
- \$1.7 million for **surveys and electronic platforms** to capture data critical to managing student mental health.

While general education has seen a gradual decline in enrollment for K-12 students since the beginning of the pandemic, the special education population has remained stable. These students are struggling to make up learning losses related to distance learning necessitated by the pandemic and often are experiencing higher rates of anxiety than their non disabled peers. We ask your Committee to appropriate the necessary funds to enable them to experience academic and socio-emotional growth.

Respectfully,

Martha Guinan, Chair



Dear Chair Yamashita and Finance Committee Members,

The Reimagining Public Safety in Hawai'i Coalition opposes provisions in the current budget bill that would appropriate \$30 MILLION for planning relating to the proposed new jail to replace OCCC, \$10 MILLION for a 10-year Department of Corrections Statewide Master Plan, and MILLIONS more for jail and prison expansion and maintenance.

Hawai'i is at a crossroads. Lawmakers must make a critical decision about public safety and fiscal responsibility: spend \$1 billion on a new jail to replace O'ahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC) *or* implement more cost-effective solutions that address the real issues at the heart of the crisis we see on our streets.

Our criminal justice issues are primarily driven by an affordable housing and public health crisis. Currently, at least 40% of people in Hawaii's jails are homeless and many more are suffering from mental illness and substance addiction. Around 60% of the jail population are held pretrial, many because they cannot afford bail set as low as \$50.

This is also an issue of racial justice—30% of the OCCC population is Native Hawaiian. Failures to make reform are disproportionately borne by Native Hawaiians.

Department of Corrections' (DCR) top officials have bluntly stated that our overcrowding problem is primarily driven by the fact that most people sitting in jail right now shouldn't be there. They also say that locking up people with mental illness is the least effective, most expensive option.

Even our Governor has acknowledged we cannot arrest and jail our way out of these problems.

The Solution to Overcrowding is Investing in Diversion Infrastructure, not a Bigger Jail

In recent years, Hawaii's key justice system actors, including police, prosecutors, public defenders, judges, and service providers have been convening to jointly identify ways to reduce incarceration. There's clear consensus: diversion to housing and services will significantly reduce the jail population and recidivism, not to mention save millions in taxpayer dollars.

Unfortunately, this robust mandate is currently falling far short due to severe underfunding of diversion infrastructure in Hawai'i. "Divert to where?" is a common refrain by law enforcement and judges. Hawai'i County has no residential treatment center, residents have to fly to O'ahu.

Instead of an unnecessary new \$1 billion super jail, the state must prioritize investing in a historic expansion of community based mental health treatment and a range of supportive housing—group homes, clean and sober beds, and permanent supportive housing.

We also need big investments in the diversion workforce. For example, Hawai'i island has just one staff member conducting daily cell block assessments for diversion, leaving Kona completely neglected.

Invest in What is Proven to Work and is Fiscally Responsible

It costs \$112,000 per year to incarcerate one adult in Hawai'i. Compare this to \$30,000 a year to provide someone with supportive housing with wrap around services including mental health.

By investing in services like supportive housing, we can improve rehabilitation. According to local non-profit Partners in Care, the recidivism rate is only 13% for people who receive supportive housing versus 50% for those that do not.

Simply put, the state cannot afford both a \$1 billion jail and adequate diversion infrastructure. The notion that jails will somehow become centers of rehabilitation while systematic diversion remains unfunded is fundamentally flawed.

More affordable alternatives exist. Fulton County in Georgia recently abandoned plans for a similar \$1.7 billion jail project, choosing instead to renovate their existing facility for \$300 million. Hawai'i could pursue a similar path, either renovating OCCC by building a smaller facility at its current site or a Community Diversion Center that will help people actually solve the problems that bring them to court.

Can we trust DCR to create a "rehabilitative" super jail?

The Hawai'i Correctional System Oversight Commission recently sent a letter to Governor Green calling for a pause in jail planning, citing serious concerns about DCR's record of ignoring their recommendations to address deficient rehabilitative programming and healthcare. The Commission stated that a new facility alone will not fix these systemic issues.

We should not entrust almost a billion dollars of taxpayer money to a Department that refuses to accept oversight, and has already spent millions planning a jail unsuited for rehabilitation.

Care First, Jails Last

Pausing the DCR's current plan doesn't mean we stop progress—it means refocusing on what will actually help: reducing the jail population through bail reform and investing in diversion.

We must invest in evidence-backed solutions rather than repeat failed approaches that are ineffective and reduce our ability to enact meaningful reforms moving into the future. Now is the time to turn the page to a care first, jails last approach to public safety.



**Parents And
Children Together**

**BUILDING THE RELATIONSHIPS
THAT MATTER MOST**

ParentsAndChildrenTogether.org

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 300 RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET

TO: Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Takenouchi, & Members,
House Committee on Finance
FROM: Ryan Kusumoto, President & CEO
DATE: March 5, 2025 at 9:00 AM

Parents and Children Together (PACT) supports HB 300 Relating to the State Budget.

We submit this testimony as a member of the Hawai'i True Cost Coalition – over 70 community-based non-profit organizations fighting to sustain essential social services for our communities and as an organization concerned about our community, especially those struggling with systemic inequities.

Service providers work under the most challenging circumstances and must have specific skills to both engage individuals and navigate complex systems. They must be supported by high-quality organizations that are sustainable and state funding is an important part of that. State contracts that do not increase over time as operating costs increase make this important work unsustainable. Now is the time to invest in services that help people in vulnerable situations attain safety, economic security and good health. The social safety net needs your robust support.

Founded in 1968, PACT is a statewide community-based organization providing a wide array of innovative and educational social services to families in need. Assisting more than 15,000 people across the state annually, we help identify, address, and successfully resolve challenges through our 20 programs. Among our services are early education programs, domestic violence prevention and intervention programs, child abuse prevention and intervention programs, childhood sexual abuse supportive group services, child and adolescent behavioral health programs, sex trafficking intervention, poverty prevention and community building programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Please contact me at (808) 847-3285 or rkusumoto@pacthawaii.org if you have any questions.



HAWAII LABORERS-EMPLOYERS COOPERATION AND EDUCATION TRUST

650 Iwilei Road, Suite 285 · Honolulu, HI 96817 · Phone: 808-845-3238 · Fax: 808-845-8300

March 4, 2025

To: **State House Committee on Finance (FIN)**

Re: **Testimony on HB300, Relating to the State Budget**

For FIN hearing on Wednesday, March 5, 2025 at 9:00 am in Conference Room 308

Aloha Honorable **Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi**, and House Finance Committee Members,

The **Hawaii Laborers & Employers Cooperation and Education Trust Fund** (Hawaii LECET) is a labor + management partnership established in 1992 between the 5,000 statewide members of the Hawaii Laborers Union and over 250 construction contractor members of the *General Contractors Association* and the *Building Industry Association*. The Laborers International is the largest construction trade union in North America, and Hawaii LECET is part of a network of 38 labor-management LECET Funds across the country.

Hawaii LECET supports HB300, especially in areas prioritizing full funding for the rebuilding and recovery of Lahaina and in particular for Lahaina Elementary School.

The rebuilding of Maui's infrastructure for its residents and its children are desperately needed and must not be forgotten. We urge you to remember their needs and honor their sacrifices, and to help the Maui community begin to heal from their devastating tragedy.

Thank you for this opportunity to offer our support for HB300.

Mahalo,

**Hawai'i Laborers & Employers
Cooperation and Education Trust Fund**



Care for 'Āina Now Coalition

March 5, 2025

House Committee on Finance
Rep. Kyle Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee

Re: The Imperative of Allocating Adequate Funding to Protect Natural Resources
Support HB300, Relating to the State Budget

Aloha kākou,

On behalf of our coalition's leadership committee, we are writing in support of HB300, relating to the State Budget. We are voicing our strong support for funding for natural resource protection and restoration. The Care for 'Āina Now Coalition is on a mission to conserve our cultural and natural resources and invest in our 'āina to keep our community safe.

The health of Hawai'i's environment is inextricably linked to the health of our people, communities, and future generations. Our natural and cultural resources provide over \$6 billion in value to our economy each year, and stewardship of these resources have been underfunded for decades. It's been estimated that we currently face a conservation funding gap of \$560 million per year. Today, this underinvestment continues to be a liability and risk to public safety. The more time that passes without healing our environment, the more lives, places, and communities are at risk of being harmed.

Our primary focus is adequate, permanent funding for the Department of Land and Natural Resources and community organizations to support stewardship and restoration of our natural resources. There are simple ways our State can safeguard our 'āina and people including passing legislation that ensures allocation of funds for wildfire prevention and ecosystem resilience. We will continue to advocate for measures that generate new funding sources to complement the expenditures the legislature will approve in the budget.

This coalition, which works on the frontlines of natural and cultural resource management across the State, applauds the legislature for continuing to consider these solutions. We urge you to consider the crucial need for sustainable, broad-based investment to meet the immense challenges our environment faces, offset the impact left by nearly 10 million annual visitors, and invest in the long-term health of our communities. Hawai'i's natural resources are invaluable to the livelihoods of our local residents and integral drivers of our statewide economy as well as our visitor industry.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify on this important measure.



March 4, 2025

RE: Public Comment re: HB 300

Dear Chair Yamashita,

Essential Access Health (Essential Access) welcomes the opportunity to comment on HB 300, and the importance of investing in reproductive health and family planning services, consistent with Gov. Green's proposed budget.

Essential Access advances reproductive equity and champions quality sexual and reproductive health care for all. We take a multidisciplinary approach to expanding options and pathways for accessing high-quality, patient-centered care through distributing public funding, policy advocacy, research, youth and community empowerment, and training and capacity building for the health care workforce.

Essential Access has been a Title X federal family planning program grantee since the program was established in 1970, and re-introduced the Title X program to Hawai'i in collaboration with a diverse network of providers and community partners in 2022. Title X has been a foundational part of our health care safety net for more than fifty years, primarily serving people with low incomes with critical health services like birth control, STI prevention and treatment, adolescent services, pregnancy options counseling, and lifesaving cancer screenings.

The current Hawai'i Title X network is the most robust and geographically diverse statewide provider network in the state's history with the program and includes 13 health care agencies that receive Title X funding and 31 health centers that deliver services on Kaua'i, O'ahu, Lanai, Maui, and Hawai'i Island. The network consists of federally qualified health centers, Native Hawaiian Health Centers, rural health centers, the University of Hawai'i, and Planned Parenthood. The network serves ten thousand patients annually – though this number is likely under-representative, as health centers become accustomed to Title X reporting systems. Forty percent of patients identify as Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, and nearly half are teenagers and young adults.

We urgently ask you to support additional state investments in reproductive health and family planning services, consistent with Governor Green's proposed budget. The hostile regulations during the first Trump Administration caused Hawai'i to leave the Title X program. Since reintroducing Title X funds and services back to the islands in 2022, we have been able to build back the Hawai'i Title X provider network and expand access to essential health care. But, in the current Trump Administration we expect swift and severe cuts and changes to the program, with the possibility of funding to Title X or the program itself being eliminated altogether. State investments will be critical to keep Hawai'i's Title X network whole and sustain essential family planning and preventive services and culturally responsive outreach and education activities that are critical for linking community members to time sensitive care.

Even with the current level of Title X funding (\$2.1 million), there continue to be substantial unmet needs for equitable, affordable, and confidential sexual and reproductive health services in Hawai'i, particularly among teens, residents of Hawai'i with lower incomes, and individuals who live in rural regions. Access barriers contribute to health inequities, including significantly higher than average national rates of unintended pregnancy, teen birth rates, and maternal and infant mortality, particularly among Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander populations.

Hawai'i has a longstanding history of expanding access to health care, but additional action and funding is needed to ensure that everyone in Hawai'i can get the reproductive health care they need. With a new federal government hostile to all forms of sexual and reproductive health care, state funding is urgently needed to protect the family planning safety net.

Please contact me directly at Shovis@essentialaccess.org with any questions. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shannon Oliveri Hovis".

Shannon Oliveri Hovis
Vice President of Public Affairs
Essential Access Health



To: Hawai'i House Committee on Finance
Hearing Date/Time: Wednesday, March 5, 2025
Place: Hawai'i State Capitol, Rm. 308 and videoconference
Re: Testimony of Planned Parenthood Alliance Advocates – Hawai'i in support of funding for sexual and reproductive health care

Dear Chairs and Members of the Committee,

Planned Parenthood Alliance Advocates urges you to support sexual and reproductive health care in the budget and continue our state's legacy of leadership of protecting access to family planning services and abortion care. Patients and providers are relying on lawmakers to hold the line. **To maintain patients' access to safety net family planning services, we request the 2025-27 operating budget general funds includes \$3 million in sustainability funding to Planned Parenthood and \$4.4 million to backfill Title X should the Trump Administration reimplement the domestic gag rule (\$7.4 total over the biennium).** We also encourage the legislature to prepare for potential additional devastating cuts from the Trump Administration and Congress, including banning federal Medicaid funds for gender affirming care and for Planned Parenthood.

Safety net family providers are facing the perfect storm of rising health care and labor costs, workforce shortages, and increased patient volumes. Providers across the state are struggling to keep up, leading to clinic closures, layoffs, and reduction of services. Safety net providers continue to face financial losses that have only deepened since the fall of *Roe v. Wade*, and we anticipate the Trump Administration will make a dire situation worse.

PPAA is requesting \$3 million over two years to support PPGNHAIK's Oahu and Maui health centers with sustainability funding to help our health centers stay afloat. Planned Parenthood is the leading safety net family planning provider in Hawai'i, and our clinics are facing significant financial losses every year due to low reimbursement rates, inadequate family planning funding over the past decade, COVID and the related loss of savings, and inflation and rising costs across the board in the health care sector. Our patient mix also means we often are serving patients who are low income or underinsured and receive discounted or free care, which we often offset and subsidize. With current funding levels, we lose approximately \$250 for every patient who walks in our doors. This funding would allow us to maintain patients' access to care, competitive wages for our staff, health center maintenance, invest in our expanded telehealth program, and maintain other logistical support.

In the coming months, we also anticipate the lawmakers in Washington, D.C. will take dramatic action to gut access to sexual and reproductive health. These attacks include reimplementing the domestic gag rule and forcing Hawai'i providers out of the Title X family planning program; barring Planned Parenthood from serving Medicaid patients; banning federal Medicaid coverage of gender affirming care; and attempting to ban or severely restrict abortion nationwide. **These are existential threats to safety net family planning providers and patients, even here in Hawai'i.** Other providers would be unable to absorb the thousands of patients who rely on safety net providers for care, leading to increased unintended

pregnancies, higher rates of sexually transmitted infections, poorer health outcomes, and denied life-saving preventive care.

Anticipating the reimplementation of the Title X gag rule, **safety net family planning providers are also requesting \$4.4 over two years to backfill lost federal Title X funding.** Title X funds provide a broad range of discounted family planning services and some STI services to thousands of patients in our state under 250% of the Federal Poverty Level, with a sliding fee scale that slides down to zero. Title X is primarily for folks who fall into insurance gaps or are underinsured – this includes those who are ineligible for Medicaid but who cannot afford insurance or those who cannot use insurance for privacy reasons, like young people, military members, or survivors of intimate partner violence. Family planning clinics that rely on Title X funds are often the main source of health care for people of color, LGBTQ+ individuals, and people living in rural or geographically isolated areas.

Sexual and reproductive health care is one of the most powerful and cost-effective investments Hawai'i can make. [For every \\$1 invested in family planning, our state saves at least \\$7](#) on unintended pregnancy costs and long-term social service costs that can be routed to other critical services. Safety net family planning providers cannot continue to serve patients at present levels without this continued investment. And any lack of investment in the family planning safety net care only exacerbates the disparities experienced by Medicaid patients, who are disproportionately Black, Indigenous and Native, and Latinx due to centuries of racist health care policies.

Our state should invest in services that ultimately lower costs and protect our most historically marginalized communities. **Our ability to ensure Hawai'i's financial stability depends on making smart investments that support our communities and keep people healthy.** Reproductive freedom is a clear value of Hawai'i, and our state must continue to lead by maintaining funding to keep safety net providers serving patients.

Hawai'i True Cost Coalition

Date: March 5, 2025

Re: **Support**, HB300, Relating to the State Budget

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Hawai'i True Cost Coalition, we are writing in support of HB300, Relating to the State Budget.

The Hawai'i True Cost Coalition (TCC) represents over 70 nonprofit organizations serving more than 500,000 residents statewide. We advocate for sustainable government funding to cover the true costs of essential services provided by Hawai'i's community-based nonprofits (CBOs).

HB300 is crucial to maintaining services for vulnerable populations, including kupuna, children, individuals experiencing homelessness, and survivors of domestic violence. Without adequate funding, critical programs—such as health care, housing assistance, and legal aid—are at risk due to recent federal funding challenges.

This bill reinforces the state's commitment to Hawai'i's safety net by increasing funding for essential programs through the Department of Health, Department of Human Services, and Judiciary. These investments will support behavioral health services, food security initiatives, housing programs, legal aid, and much more.

Many CBO contracts have remained stagnant for over a decade, despite rising costs. Nonprofits have stretched their own limited resources to sustain these programs, but this is no longer sustainable. Increased state funding is necessary to ensure these services continue for those who rely on them.

HB300 is an investment in Hawai'i's people and future resilience. Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Adult Friends for Youth | Aloha Harvest | Aloha United Way (AUW) | AlohaCare | Arc of Kona | Big Brothers Big Sisters Hawaii | Blueprint for Change | Catholic Charities Hawaii | Child and Family Service | Community Alliance on Prisons | Domestic Violence Action Center | Easter Seals | Epic `Ohana | Family Promise of Hawai'i | Full Life | Girl Scouts of Hawaii | Going Home Hawaii | Goodwill Hawaii | Hale Kipa | Hale `Opio Kaua'i | Hawai'i International Film Festival | Hawai'i Alliance of Nonprofit Organizations (HANO) | Hawai'i Children's Action Network (HCAN) | Hawai'i Food Bank | Hawai'i Health and Harm Reduction Center (HHRC) | Hawai'i Meals On Wheels | Hawai'i Public Health Institute | Hawai'i Youth Services Network | Hawai'i State Coalition Against Domestic Violence | Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies | Hope Services Hawai'i | Imua Family Services | Institute for Human Services (IHS) | Kalamapi'i Play School | Kinai `Eha | Kumukahi Health and Wellness | Lanakila Pacific | Maui AIDS Foundation | Maui Economic Opportunity (MEO) | Maui Family Support Services | Mental Health Kokua | Mediation Center of the Pacific | Mindful Living Group | Nurturing Wahine Fund | Parents and Children Together (PACT) | Partners In Care (PIC) | Partners In Development Foundation (PIDF) | PATCH | Residential Youth Services and Empowerment (RYSE) | Responsive Caregivers of Hawai'i | Samaritan Counseling Center Hawaii | Share Your Mana | The Spirit Horse Ranch | U.S. Vets | Women Helping Women | YMCA of Honolulu

Date: March 5, 2025

To: Representative Kyle Yamashita, Chair
Representative Jenna Takenouchi Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Finance

From: Early Childhood Action Strategy

Re: House Bill 300, Relating to the State Budget

Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS) is a statewide cross-sector collaborative designed to improve the system of care for Hawai'i's youngest children and their families. ECAS partners work to align priorities for children prenatal to age eight, streamline services, maximize resources, and improve programs to support our youngest keiki.

We are writing to outline our support for specific funding requests in House Bill 300 that would expand early learning opportunities for local keiki. ECAS feels strongly that supporting local keiki by providing them with access to high-quality learning environments is a worthwhile investment in our community's future.

We would like to specifically note our support for the following items:

- Funds & Positions to open 50 additional Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) Public Prekindergarten classrooms over the next two years (EDN700)
- Funding for Family Child Interaction Learning (FCIL) Program contracts (EDN700)

Expansion of these programs is a critical step toward providing more local children and their families with high-quality early learning experiences that would better prepare them to succeed in elementary school, secondary school, and beyond.

For these reasons, ECAS strongly supports the inclusion of these items HB300.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



HIPHI Board

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Garret Sugai
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Hawaiian Research Office

HIPHI Initiatives

Coalition for a
Tobacco-Free Hawai'i

Community-Based Research &
Evaluation

Community Health
Worker Initiatives

COVID-19 Response

Environmental Health

Hawai'i Drug & Alcohol-Free Coalitions

Hawai'i Farm to School Network

Hawai'i Oral Health Coalition

Hawai'i Public Health Training Hui

Healthy Eating + Active Living

Kūpuna Collective/Healthy Aging &
Community Living

Public Health Workforce Development

Date: March 3, 2025

To: Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Finance

RE: Support for HB 300, Relating to the State Budget

Hrg: Wednesday, March 5, 2025, at 9:00 AM, Conference Room 308

Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI)¹ and the Healthy Eating, Active Living² (HEAL) coalition is in **support with amendments of HB 300**, which appropriates funds for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027.

Please increase funding for the number of SNAP processing positions within the Department of Human Services.

One in three households in Hawai'i face food insecurity.³ Federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits are a lifeline to many of these residents. Local families in need receive over \$600 million annually in SNAP benefits.⁴ Unfortunately, the state has made accessing these benefits incredibly difficult. The state needs to improve the enrollment process and ensure local SNAP-eligible residents can receive the federal benefits they need.

One Additional Worker Could Provide \$2 Million in Federal Benefits

Our SNAP office enrolls over 60,000 households annually, with less than 300 staff. That is more than 200 applications per staff member. Given the extreme backlog, adding one extra person to our SNAP department could be the difference between 200 families receiving SNAP benefits or not. At an average benefit per household of over \$9,600 annually, this worker could help provide these 200 families in need with \$2 million in total federal food assistance.

¹ Hawai'i Public Health Institute's mission is to advance health and wellness for the people and islands of Hawai'i. We do this through expanding our understanding of what creates health of people and place, fostering partnerships, and cultivating programs to improve policies, systems, and the environments where people live, learn, work, age, and play.

² The Healthy Eating + Active Living (HEAL) Coalition, formerly known as the Obesity Prevention Task Force, was created by the legislature in 2012 and is comprised of over 60 statewide organizations. The HEAL Coalition works to make recommendations to reshape Hawai'i's school, work, community, and health care environments, making healthier lifestyles obtainable for all Hawai'i residents.

³ The State of Food Insecurity in Hawai'i - Hawai'i Food Bank.

https://hawaiiifoodbank.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/HawaiiFoodbank_TheStateOfFoodInsecurityInHawaii_2023.pdf

⁴ Hawai'i Department of Human Services.

<https://humanservices.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/SFY-2024-SUMMARY-apr.pdf>

Difficulty Enrolling

Local Hawai'i residents face immense barriers when trying to enroll in SNAP. Wait times often exceed four hours, causing many applicants to abandon the process out of frustration.⁵ Physical office locations are frequently inaccessible, further compounding the issue. When residents call the Department of Human Services (DHS) at their scheduled time for the required interview, their calls often go unanswered, leaving them unable to complete the process. Days or weeks later, they receive a callback from an unrecognized number at an unscheduled time, making it difficult for many applicants to answer—especially if they are at work or attending to other responsibilities. As a result, their missed interview leads to a denial of their application, creating an unfair cycle that denies residents the support they need.

Currently, only 62% of eligible residents participate in the program, with participation among kūpuna even lower at just 35%.⁶ Systemic challenges, including incorrect application denials and missed interview opportunities, leave many families without the critical support they need.

SNAP Office is Understaffed Following Increased Demand

In fiscal year 2023-2024, the SNAP department processed 90,000 applications—a 50% increase from 60,000 in 2017-2018.⁷ Despite this dramatic rise in demand, staffing levels have remained stagnant at around 275 employees for several years. This lack of sufficient staffing has made the enrollment process so difficult. To adequately support residents, the state must increase staffing to match the escalating demand.

With demand already on the rise, fifty thousand additional households have become eligible for SNAP this month as the net income threshold was removed from the eligibility test.⁹ The need for more staff is urgent now—and will become even more critical as more families apply.

We must increase both the number of budgeted positions and the pay for these roles to ensure they are filled. Raising salaries will help attract and retain qualified staff, while expanding available positions across the board will allow for targeted recruitment in areas with low vacancy rates, ensuring equitable access to services statewide.

During the height of the pandemic our state sprung into action to improve the unemployment office staffing situation. With over 100,000 eligible individuals currently missing out on SNAP benefits, we must take bold, urgent action to streamline the application process and ensure that every qualified person can access the support they need.

⁵ KHON

<https://www.khon2.com/local-news/changes-in-procedure-short-staffing-causing-long-lines-at-state-benefits-offices/>

⁶ Census - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Eligibility & Access.

<https://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/interactive/snap-eligibility-access.html>

⁷ Department of Human Services Budget 2025-2027.

<https://budget.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/21-Department-of-Human-Services-FB25-27-PFP.7Lt.pdf>

⁸ Department of Human Services Budget 2019-2020.

<https://budget.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/20-Department-of-Human-Services-FB19-21-PFP.ef3.pdf>

⁹ UHERO - Hawai'i's Unnecessary Benefit Cliff.

<https://uhero.hawaii.edu/hawai%ca%bbis-unnecessary-benefit-cliff-how-one-small-policy-change-could-deliver-in-45m-per-year-in-federally-funded-snap-benefits/>



10:1 Return on Investment

Our low SNAP participation rate means far fewer Hawai'i residents are accessing critical federal benefits than they should. Since half of SNAP processing staff salaries are covered by federal funds, increasing staffing levels would require the state to contribute only half the investment.¹⁰

Adding an additional \$10 million for staff on top of the roughly \$20 million we spend now would bring in an additional \$10 million in funding from the federal government for those staff. If that can help raise the SNAP participation rate from 62% to just 75%, we could bring in over \$100 million in additional federal funding annually. A \$10 million investment now would give more than a 10:1 return on investment, with more than \$100 million coming back to the state.

By failing to hire enough staff to ensure a smooth and efficient application process, we are effectively leaving federal dollars on the table and missing an opportunity to better support our community.

Variable Vacancy Rates

Many staff locations face high vacancy rates, making it challenging to fill positions. However, some sites have lower-than-average vacancies, presenting an opportunity to quickly expand the workforce. By adding positions to these locations, we could bring in dozens of new employees to strengthen the department.

Please increase funding for SNAP staff positions and pay to ensure that federal SNAP benefits remain a reliable and accessible lifeline for all eligible residents in need.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Nate Hix'.

Nate Hix
Director of Policy and Advocacy

¹⁰ SNAP State Activity Report 2021.

<https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/snap-state-activity-report-fy21.pdf>



Our Mission

Increase Hawai'i's investments in its youngest keiki by collaborating with elected officials and serving as a trusted partner and reliable resource for information on issues related to Hawai'i's youngest keiki and families.



Steering Committee

City and County of Honolulu

Justina Acevedo-Cross
Greg Auberry
Chiyomi Chow
Kanoë Enos
JoAnn Farnsworth
Jordana Ferreira
Nadia Garcia
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Kaua'i County

Sarah Blane
Alice Luck

Hawai'i County

Sulma Gandhi
Kahi Moreman
Angela Thomas



Contact Info

700 Bishop Street, Suite 1701
Honolulu, Hawai'i 93813

info@committokeiki.org
CommitToKeiki.org

Date: March 5, 2025
To: Representative Kyle Yamashita, Chair
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Members of the House Committee on Finance
From: Commit to Keiki
RE: House Bill 300, Relating to the State Budget

Commit to Keiki is a statewide, non-partisan, public-private collaborative to ensure a brighter start for Hawai'i's youngest keiki. Led by a diverse Steering Committee, Commit to Keiki's mission is to increase Hawai'i's investments in its youngest keiki by collaborating with elected officials and serving as a trusted partner and reliable resource for information on issues related to early childhood.

Commit to Keiki strongly supports inclusion of the following item in House Bill 300:

Funding for Family Child Interaction Learning (FCIL) Program contracts (EDN700)

FCIL programs have a proven track record of providing children up to the age of five and their families with highly engaging learning environments that are literacy-rich, support a child's social and emotional development, strengthen parent/caregiver skills and improve school readiness. These programs are both efficient and impactful.

It should also be noted that FCIL programs utilize multi-generational, culturally responsive approaches that typically perform well in working-class communities in which parents often rely on extended family to assist in childcare. This is especially noteworthy in our statewide community as a sizeable portion of parents do not—or cannot—use center-based childcare options.

For these reasons, Commit to Keiki strongly supports the insertion of this item into the HB300.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide this testimony.



Hunt Development Group, LLC
737 Bishop Street, Suite 2750
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813
Office: 808-585-7900

Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

March 5, 2025; 9:00 AM
Conference Room 308 & Videoconference
415 South Beretania Street

RE: HB 300 – Relating to the State Budget – SUPPORT

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 300, which appropriates funds for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027.

Hunt Development Group is in support of CIP Item No. 25.00 under the Hawaii Community Development Authority that seeks \$1,000,000 to prepare a programmatic environmental impact statement to cover infrastructure projects, developments and master plan implementation in Kalaeloa Community Development District (KCDD).

In 2022 and 2023, the Legislature appropriated funds for electrical improvements along Saratoga Avenue. In order to continue improving infrastructure in Kalaeloa to support new development projects, renovation and improvements, critical infrastructure improvements are needed.

Hunt Development Group, in connection with its 535-acre portion of HCDA's 3,700-acre Kalaeloa Master Plan, has succeeded in working with Gentry Homes to bring the first 389 new for-sale homes for local families to Kalaeloa, as well as completed construction on the new, 98,000 square foot state-of-the-art VA ALOHA medical clinic.

These were made possible, in part, by Hunt Companies taking on the long-needed upgrades to the infrastructure and operations of the water utility in Kalaeloa, followed by launching more than \$35 million of roadway and utility infrastructure that provide benefit to the entire region.

There is much more to be done in terms of roadways, regional connections, utilities, and additional water and power infrastructure to make Kalaeloa the vibrant new addition for West Oahu families that is envisioned by HCDA's Master Plan, and this capital improvement appropriation to prepare a programmatic environmental impact statement is a vital initial step to that dream becoming reality.

We appreciate your efforts to help spur much needed infrastructure to support community development in Kalaeloa.



P.O. Box 253, Kunia, Hawai'i 96759
Phone: (808) 848-2074; Fax: (808) 848-1921
e-mail info@hfbf.org; www.hfbf.org

March 5, 2025

HEARING BEFORE THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

TESTIMONY ON HB 300
RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET

Conference Room 308 & Videoconference
9:00 AM

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawai'i Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawai'i's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate, and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

The Hawai'i Farm Bureau respectfully submits testimony in support of HB 300, with a request for funding allocations that will support Hawaii's agricultural industry.

Hawaii's agricultural industry faces increasing challenges, including high operational costs, labor shortages, and climate-related disruptions. Strategic investments in infrastructure, research, and economic support programs are essential to ensure local food production's viability, reduce import dependency, and enhance the state's overall food security.

HFB respectfully requests the inclusion of the following HFB funding priorities in the state budget:

AGR 122: \$19.8 million for the Biosecurity Program: Invasive species have become one of the most devastating problems impacting Hawai'i. Many invasive species are damaging Hawai'i's environment and economy. Hawai'i's farmers and ranchers face ongoing challenges from invasive pests such as the coconut rhinoceros beetle, little fire ant, coffee berry borer, two-lined spittlebug, macadamia felted coccid, and varroa mite. These pests cause significant damage to crops, increase production costs, and threaten the viability of local agriculture. Once established, invasive species are costly and difficult to control, making prevention and early intervention essential.

Proper funding for DOA is critical for protecting Hawai'i's environment and economy and the health and lifestyle of its people through the support of invasive species prevention,

control, research, outreach, and planning. Funding permanent biosecurity positions ensures that DOA has the necessary personnel to conduct critical inspections, enforce quarantine regulations, and implement pest management programs. A well-staffed biosecurity team improves the state's ability to detect and mitigate threats before they cause irreversible harm to Hawai'i's farms and ecosystems.

BED 170: \$2.5 million for the Waiahole Water System: The Waiahole Water System serves over 5,600 acres of agricultural land on Oahu, providing critical irrigation for diversified farming operations. This funding request seeks to pay off the bond debt service on the system and repair the aging adit 8 tunnel, which is essential to maintaining water delivery. Continued operation and maintenance of this system are necessary for long-term agricultural viability in Central and Leeward Oahu.

UH 100: \$5 million for Waimānalo Research Station: As part of a statewide network of agricultural experimental stations, the Waimānalo facility plays a key role in agricultural research and farmer education. It supports research on specialty crops, tropical fruits, sustainable farming techniques, and organic production. Unfortunately, many of the station's facilities are deteriorating and need repair. Without modernization, the station's ability to support Hawai'i's agricultural community will be severely limited. Upgrading critical infrastructure will enhance research opportunities, attract external funding, and improve outreach to local farmers and ranchers.

UH 100: \$6 million for Magoon Research Station: A demand exists to address the need for a comprehensive approach to controlled-environment agriculture (CEA) and building a state-of-the-art CEA research and demonstration facility. Controlled-environment agriculture (CEA) technologies—such as hydroponics, aquaponics, aeroponics, and vertical farming—offer efficient, sustainable, and climate-resilient solutions for food production in Hawaii. A dedicated research and demonstration facility will provide a hub for agricultural innovation, allowing scientists and farmers to test and refine new growing techniques, water conservation strategies, and energy-efficient production systems. Incorporating these funding requests into the state budget aligns with the Legislature's priorities of supporting local agriculture, strengthening food security, and fostering economic sustainability. Each of these investments will contribute to a more resilient and self-sufficient agricultural sector, ultimately benefiting Hawaii's economy, environment, and communities.

AGR 192: \$5 million for the Farm to Families Program: Hawai'i faces persistent food security challenges, with many families experiencing limited access to fresh, locally grown food. At the same time, local farmers and ranchers struggle with unpredictable markets and barriers to expanding food distribution. The Farm to Families program presents a win-win solution by linking local food production with communities in need, ensuring that Hawai'i's agricultural products are used to feed Hawai'i's people.

We appreciate the committee's consideration of these critical funding requests.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 10:08:05 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jim Alberts	Hawaiian Electric	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Committee on Finance
Hawai'i State Legislature
Date: March 4, 2025

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee,

Hawaiian Electric strongly supports continued funding through bill HB300, program number LNR404, for the Hawai'i Mesonet, a statewide network of advanced weather stations that provides high-resolution climate data that can improve wildfire prevention and response. In the wake of recent devastating wildfires across the islands, it is clear that Hawai'i urgently needs better fire weather monitoring to protect lives, communities, and critical infrastructure.

As recent events in Hawai'i and California have demonstrated, dry, windy conditions, exacerbated by prolonged drought and strong downslope winds can have deadly consequences. A lack of timely, localized weather data makes it difficult for emergency responders to anticipate the potential ignition and spread of wildfires. In these and other events, timely, site-specific wind speed, humidity, and temperature data could have helped first responders, utilities, and emergency managers make better-informed, life-saving decisions.

Hawai'i's fire risk is increasing as drought conditions intensify across the islands. While Hawaiian Electric is expanding its own weather monitoring network, we welcome and encourage the development of the Hawai'i Mesonet. As part of potential funding through bill HB300, program number LNR404, Hawaiian Electric encourages Hawai'i Mesonet to enhance the data transmission frequency of its weather stations from 15 minutes to 10 minutes, which would allow the data to become more timely. Together, the data provided are critically important for: **(1) Monitoring Fire Weather Conditions** – Mesonet stations provide continuous, publicly accessible updates on wind speeds, humidity, and fuel moisture levels; **(2) Guiding Wildfire Mitigation Strategies** – Utilities need accurate wind and weather forecasts to assess whether power lines should be de-energized in high-risk areas during extreme fire weather conditions; and **(3) Improving Emergency Response** – data allows firefighters to anticipate potential fire weather conditions and allocate resources effectively.

Hawaiian Electric is committed to minimizing wildfire risk and recognizes that better weather monitoring is essential to this effort. Investing in the Hawai'i Mesonet will provide utilities, first

responders, and communities with additional tools necessary to mitigate future fire disasters and build a more resilient Hawai'i.

We urge the Legislature to support funding for this critical program.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Jim Alberts
Chief Operations Officer, Hawaiian Electric



March 5, 2025
Conference Room 308

House Committee on Finance

To: Chair Kyle T. Yamashita
Vice Chair Jenna Takenouchi

From: Hilton Raethel
President and CEO
Healthcare Association of Hawaii

Re: **Support**
HB 300, Relating to the State Budget

The Healthcare Association of Hawaii (HAH), established in 1939, serves as the leading voice of healthcare on behalf of 170 member organizations who represent almost every aspect of the health care continuum in Hawaii. Members include acute care hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, home health agencies, hospices, assisted living facilities and durable medical equipment suppliers. In addition to providing access to appropriate, affordable, high-quality care to all of Hawaii's residents, our members contribute significantly to Hawaii's economy by employing over 30,000 people statewide.

We are writing today to strongly support continued investment in essential workforce and healthcare programs. In particular, we would like to highlight an additional two years of funding to continue proven healthcare workforce development programs for high school students and current nurses. This request is largely similar to funding that the legislature passed in Act 89, SLH 2024, which has already been deployed to support these innovative programs that are critical to addressing the persistent workforce shortages in healthcare. In our organization's most recent demand survey, we found that there are nearly 4,700 openings for non-physician, patient-facing positions in the state's hospitals, nursing homes, clinics, and other healthcare settings. The need for entry-level positions, especially certified nurse aides (CNAs), continues to grow as our population ages.

In 2023, the high school certificate programs supported 105 students working to get certified as CNAs, phlebotomists, medical assistants, and patient service representatives at 14 schools across the state. Students in the program saw a 98 percent completion rate with a 74 percent employment rate, a significant improvement from previous years due to the heavy employer involvement and wrap-around services. Over the same time period, the CNA to LPN glidepath supported approximately 40 individuals to continue working full-time while pursuing their education and licensure as LPNs over a year-long course that allows them to increase their

salaries by 50 percent at the end and provide higher-level support in our long-term care facilities.

Healthcare employers have invested heavily in these programs by providing clinicians to teach courses, investing in hands-on training opportunities for high school students, and offering stipends to participants, particularly in the glidepath program, to ensure they are compensated as if working full-time. Our organization has also provided significant staffing resources to recruit students, coordinate programs, and secure federal, state, and private funding to keep everything running smoothly. Importantly, for this program, there is a plan to fully fund the programs privately at the end of two years. This funding is needed to continue the momentum of the programs while ensuring that a permanent funding source is established through healthcare employers and other relevant stakeholders.

We also support the loan repayment program, which is crucial for attracting and retaining healthcare professionals in Hawaii. The high cost of living and significant educational debt are major barriers for healthcare workers who might otherwise choose to practice in the state. By continuing to fund loan repayment programs, the legislature can help incentivize professionals to work in underserved areas and ensure that critical healthcare needs are met statewide. Another essential provision in this bill is the proposal to make permanent the increase in reimbursements to professionals billing under Medicaid to 100% of the Medicare rate. Medicaid plays a critical role in providing health coverage for a significant portion of Hawaii's population, including half of the children in the state. Since the COVID-19 pandemic began in 2020, Medicaid enrollment has risen significantly, with nearly one-third of all residents now in the program, highlighting its importance in ensuring access to healthcare for those most in need.

However, many Medicaid recipients continue to face challenges in obtaining timely and adequate care, particularly from specialists. One of the primary barriers to care is the shortage of healthcare providers, especially in rural areas. In 2022, Hawaii faced a shortage of more than 750 full-time physicians and nearly 4,000 patient-facing healthcare professionals, with the shortage particularly pronounced among specialists. A key factor contributing to these gaps is the disparity in reimbursement rates between Medicaid and other payers, such as Medicare and private insurance. Lower Medicaid reimbursement rates have discouraged provider participation, limiting the number of specialists who accept Medicaid patients. This lack of participation results in restricted access to specialized services, delays in care, and worsening health outcomes for Medicaid recipients.

The legislature's 2023 decision to increase Medicaid reimbursement rates to 100% of Medicare rates has already made a significant impact, helping to cover the costs of care for providers, especially in rural areas, and ensuring that more residents receive timely and needed care. This step also brought nearly \$85 million in federal funds to support healthcare access in the state. Making this increase permanent is critical to addressing healthcare inequities, encouraging provider participation, and sustaining access to care for Medicaid patients.

Additionally, we strongly support making permanent the ceiling for the nursing and hospital sustainability programs. These programs have been instrumental in stabilizing funding for hospitals and nursing facilities, which are critical to delivering care to communities across Hawaii. By maintaining these programs, the state demonstrates its commitment to safeguarding the healthcare infrastructure that so many residents depend on. While this provision is brief in its language, its impact is substantial, ensuring that these facilities can continue to operate effectively and meet the growing demands of patient care.

It is also important to acknowledge that potential changes to the provider tax program could lead to reductions in funding for nursing facilities in particular. These facilities provide essential care for some of Hawaii's most vulnerable residents, and any decrease in funding would have significant consequences for access to long-term care. Ensuring stable funding for nursing facilities must remain a priority to avoid service disruptions and protect the quality of care for elderly and disabled individuals. We are working with our members and our national affiliates to track this issue and can provide updates to this committee if needed.

In summary, these provisions are not merely budgetary decisions—they represent strategic investments in the health and well-being of our residents. Making Medicaid reimbursement increases permanent, supporting the nursing and hospital sustainability programs, and prioritizing workforce initiatives are all essential to strengthening Hawaii's healthcare system. We respectfully urge you to support these measures and pass the budget bill with these critical components intact. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony, and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 11:41:03 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aaron Ruddick	Hep Free Hawaii	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hep Free Hawaii requests that the House Committee on Finance add the hepatitis funding request reflected in SB1431 SD1 to the State Budget. The current hepatitis funding budget request was drafted and supported by Hawaii Department of Health for hepatitis elimination efforts in Hawaii.



Community hospitals affiliated with KAISER PERMANENTE.

March 5, 2025

Representative Kyle Yamashita, Chair
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Members of the House Finance Committee

RE: HB 300 RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET
Hearing Date – March 5, 2025, at 9 a.m.

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to submit testimony in support our budget appropriation requests set forth in HB 300 for the 2026 and 2027 fiscal years. Act 103, SLH 2015, codified as HRS Chapter 323F, Part IV ("Act 103") provides for operating and capital subsidies for Maui Health System ("MHS") in connection with its operation of the hospitals. Under HRS §323F-58 and the terms of the Transfer Agreement signed January 14, 2016 between MHS and Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation, the State of Hawai'i, and the Maui Region of Hawai'i Health Systems Corporation (the "Transfer Agreement"), MHS may request operating support payments annually based upon the amounts needed to cover any operating losses of the Hospitals plus a 2% margin, but the amount requested in any year may not exceed the amount appropriated to subsidize the operating costs of the Maui Regional System for the 2014 fiscal year, which was \$38 million. Under HRS §323F-59 MHS may also request support payments for its capital expenditures during the first ten (10) years of MHS' operations of the hospitals in an amount not less than \$6 million.

As you may be aware, I officially joined MHS as the Chief Executive Officer on January 1, 2024. I have worked closely with our team over the last year to understand the terms of the Transfer Agreement and the current financial position of Maui Health. I am honored to be here and serving the Maui and Lana'i communities.

We are grateful for the support provided by the Governor and the State Legislature in sustaining the health care system on Maui and Lana'i. Since our public/private partnership began, we have reduced our total state funding by over \$125 million.

Unforeseen challenges, including the global pandemic, the devastating wildfires on Maui and two labor strikes, have impacted the speed of our progress. While our pace has been slowed, the goal remains to provide high quality, reliable and accessible health care on Maui and Lana'i without taxpayer support.

Each year we care for over 50,000 patients in our emergency departments across central Maui, upcountry Kula, and Lana'i. In addition, Maui Health is the sole provider of inpatient psychiatric care on the island and absorbs the cost of those services. Despite progress, we face ongoing economic challenges and seek your continued support as we continue to move towards economic self-reliance and sustainability.

Our commitment extends to caring for over 100 kupuna in long-term care and skilled nursing in Kula and Lana'i, managing both hospitals at near full capacity. Our team continues to work with our community partners to reduce the number of kupuna waiting for access to long-term care or skilled nursing beds but continue to have over 25 patients living in the hospital, utilizing an acute care bed when they need long term care. On Maui, adequate long term care beds are available but remain empty, reportedly because there are not staff available to provide care. We absorb approximately \$4 million in costs while awaiting long-term care availability.

Extended lengths of stay for individuals without a safe discharge plan increase the cost of care in Maui by \$7 million per year. These patients include those who are houseless, have co-occurring substance use disorders, under treated mental illness, those needing an inpatient hospice bed, short term rehabilitation or those who simply need access to life saving antibiotic infusions that are unavailable in remote eastern Maui.

Looking ahead to State Fiscal Year 2026, hospital reimbursement from Medicare, Medicaid and Commercial Insurance companies is increasing by less than 3% while the cost of labor, medical supplies and drugs are forecasted to continue to outpace reimbursement. These facts require that we become more efficient to continue to progress toward our goal.

While these challenges are substantial, we believe they are solvable with sustained effort, funding, and collaboration with other agencies. Maui Health is committed to doing our part in this ongoing work to solidify health care services for our community. Your continued support is appreciated as we navigate these challenges and strive for a sustainable and self-reliant health care model.

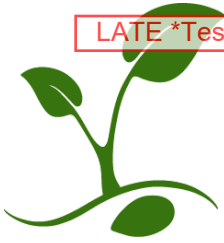
Given the information noted above, Maui Health respectfully requests the state's assistance in continuing to provide care to the people of Maui and Lana'i by providing an operating subsidy of \$12 million for Fiscal Year 2026 and \$6 million for Fiscal Year 2027. We appreciate your consideration and will be available to answer questions at your request.

In kindness and appreciation,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lynn Fulton". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Lynn Fulton

Chief Executive Officer



HAWAII APPLESEED

CENTER FOR LAW & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Testimony of the Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice

Comments for HB300 - Relating to the State Budget

House Committee on Finance

Wednesday, March 5, 2025 at 9:00AM Conf. Rm. 308 and via Videoconference

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the committee:

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide **comments on HB300**, relating to the State Budget, establishing funding allocations for the operating and capital improvement budgets.

As a research and advocacy organization focused on economic justice, affordable housing, transportation equity, and food security, Hawai'i Appleseed understands that robust funding for state sponsored services and projects form the foundation of economic stability for our community. As our communities face significant challenges due to anticipated federal funding reductions, state-level financial support has become increasingly vital to protect our most vulnerable residents. Our research has consistently demonstrated that key programs that provide basic needs offer individuals and families a pathway to build economic self-sufficiency and increased community resilience.

The impending federal funding cuts across various sectors are expected to adversely impact essential programs serving low to moderate income households. These reductions will create critical gaps in services that have provided stability and opportunities for advancement to thousands of families across our state.

Affordable Housing

Although it is difficult to estimate the exact fiscal impacts and cuts in funding we are expected to see under the current administration, we can anticipate a significant loss in federal financial support for affordable housing that will have devastating impacts in Hawaii.¹

Payment assistance through housing vouchers is a critical support for households in our communities. As the new Congress works to finalize 2025 appropriations bills, proposed budgets would effectively freeze funding at 2024 levels.

Housing vouchers are tied to rental costs and require annual, inflation-related funding increases to maintain service levels. Consequently, flat funding acts as a de facto cut, reducing the number of people served. With the proposed appropriations, nearly 4,000 Hawaii residents would **lose** their housing assistance through cuts to Senior housing vouchers and Housing choice vouchers. This estimate does not

¹<https://www.cbpp.org/research/state-budget-and-tax/president-trump-congressional-republican-proposals-would-shift-large>



HAWAII APPLESEED

CENTER FOR LAW & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Testimony of the Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice

Comments for HB300 - Relating to the State Budget

House Committee on Finance

Wednesday, March 5, 2025 at 9:00AM Conf. Rm. 308 and via Videoconference

account for additional residents at risk of losing housing by not *expanding* the program or those at risk due to potential cuts to project-based vouchers currently being discussed.²

The current administration's directives also include mandating 50% reduction in HUD workforce.³ Terminating HUD staff will significantly impede the state's ability to access approved federal investments needed to address our housing challenges, with additional funding cuts anticipated for operating and repairing public housing and homelessness assistance programs.⁴ There is also a risk that the administration will return to past proposals of cutting funds to critical affordable housing development programs, such as the HOME program, Community Development Block Grant, and Choice Neighborhoods initiative.⁵

With nearly 4,000 Hawaii residents potentially losing housing assistance, the state faces a potential significant increase in our existing housing crisis, widespread housing instability across communities, and a substantial risk of escalating homelessness. The economic implications of this are profound. The state's current rate of 2500 annual evictions lead to \$30 million in public costs. Each instance of temporary homelessness due to evictions incurs substantial state expenses, encompassing emergency shelter costs, increased medical service utilization, and potential impacts on juvenile correction programs. Preventative measures—such as developing affordable housing and expanding rent assistance—are demonstrably more cost-effective. Every \$1 spent on rent assistance saves the public \$6 on homeless services.⁶

Despite the grim federal funding outlook, we commend the legislature for supporting substantial housing investments in the state budget. Priority areas should include:

1. Developing income-restricted affordable housing through:
 - Rental Housing Revolving Fund (RHRF)
 - RHRF Tier 2 program
2. Increasing housing supply for moderate-income households through:

²<https://www.cbpp.org/research/housing/to-better-meet-record-levels-of-need-keep-families-housed-congress-must-increase>

³<https://apnews.com/article/doge-hud-trump-turner-affordable-housing-musk-0176c8539fa9b5959198c351c97b8652>

⁴<https://nlihc.org/resource/senate-democrats-demand-answers-huds-doge-task-force-and-potential-housing-cuts>

⁵<https://www.brookings.edu/articles/trump-administration-budgets-and-programs-for-people-of-limited-means/>

⁶https://static1.squarespace.com/static/601374ae84e51e430a1829d8/t/65b1a4d6430f7676ae24ea08/1706140892699/Keeping+Hawaii+Housed_FINAL.pdf



HAWAII APPLESEED

CENTER FOR LAW & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Testimony of the Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
Comments for HB300 - Relating to the State Budget
 House Committee on Finance
 Wednesday, March 5, 2025 at 9:00AM Conf. Rm. 308 and via Videoconference

- Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) infrastructure planning
 - Infrastructure funding via the Development and Utilities Replacement Fund (DURF)
3. Expanding rental assistance to maintain housing stability

We strongly support the allocations to these critical housing initiatives.

Capitol Project #	Item	FY26	FY27
BCIP3A	Iwilei-Kapalama Community Development District, O'ahu - Design and construction of infrastructure projects to support development in Iwilei-Kapalama	\$12,000,000	\$50,000,000
HFDC09	Cash Infusion for Rental Housing Revolving Fund	\$50,000,000	\$50,000,000
HFDC14	Cash Infusion for Rental Housing Revolving Fund Tier II	\$75,000,000	\$75,000,000
HFDC05	Dwelling Unit Revolving Fund Infusion	\$20,000,000	\$20,000,000
BED144	State Transit-Oriented Development Planning, Statewide	\$2,000,000	
SFA216	Education Workforce Housing - plans and design for teacher housing	\$12,000,000	\$8,000,000
Program ID	Item		
HMS 211/220/222/224	Housing/Rental Assistance		

We recognize that funding constraints are significant, but reducing investment at this time of uncertainty is not the appropriate solution. The proposed infusions to the Rental Housing Revolving Fund (RHRF) and Tier 2 programs—totaling \$125 million for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027—represent a substantial decrease from previous years' allocations. We strongly urge the committee to maintain funding levels consistent with prior years, specifically recommending a total appropriation of \$200 million to ensure continued support for critical housing initiatives.

Transportation

A major share of the state's annual CIP budget is allocated to transportation infrastructure through the Hawai'i Department of Transportation (HDOT). For example, in FY25, the transportation CIP budget was around 59 percent of the total state CIP budget, representing nearly \$2.6 billion of \$4.4 billion in total



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spending.⁷ The largest funding source for state transportation projects (included in the state's CIP budgets from FY19 to FY24) was federal funding.⁸ From federal fiscal year (FFY) 22 to FFY 25, there were 241 transportation projects to receive federal funding in Hawai'i.⁹

As such, changes in federal transportation policy could have major impacts to the construction and maintenance of transportation infrastructure in Hawai'i. While implementation details remain unclear, recent executive orders signal that the USDOT may cut funding (including obligated funding) for public transit, safety, electrification and other climate resilience projects. Based on recent analysis from the Transportation for America, \$131,963,319 of federal transportation funds could be at risk of being cancelled in Hawai'i due to new memos implementing President Trump's executive orders.¹⁰

While the funding of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure is always important, it is even more pertinent now given the strong likelihood that the state will lose discretionary federal funding to support active transportation and safety projects. As such, we urge the state legislature to increase funding for the state's safe route to school special (SRTS) program fund, which is one of the few state funding sources dedicated specifically to pedestrian and bike infrastructure. While we are happy to see a FY26 request for \$13,048,180 for the SRTS program in the Governor's Budget Request – this only covers unused program funds from previous fiscal years. Ideally we would like to see additional monies dedicated to the SRTS program to maximize resources for pedestrian safety projects near schools.

Economic Justice

The proposed budget resolution from Republicans in Congress includes massive cuts to Medicaid: it calls for \$880 billion in Medicaid cuts through 2034. In comparison, Hawai'i spent around \$3 billion on Medicaid in fiscal year 2023, and 73 percent of that was covered by federal funds. As a result, a significant reduction in this federal funding would have immediate, life-threatening consequences for the

⁷ Seitz, A., "Rethinking roads: Shifting budget priorities to expand mobility options & reduce vehicle travel," Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice, December, 2025.

https://static1.squarespace.com/static/601374ae84e51e430a1829d8/t/6750d500e0d1b478185cf1ae/1733350677880/Rethinking+Roads_FINAL.pdf.

⁸ Seitz, 2025.

⁹ HDOT, "Statewide Transportation Improvement Program, FFY 2022 through FFY 2025," Revision #22, Amendment Approved, Revision Effective Date: May 28, 2024.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mA4P90Y7m5wXvxDIwQY65J3Av8bSAsLQ/view>.

¹⁰ Salerno, C., "Unflooding the zone: What do the Trump administration's latest actions signal for transportation?" Transportation for America, February 5, 2025.

<https://t4america.org/2025/02/05/unflooding-the-zone-what-do-the-trump-administrations-latest-actions-signal-for-transportation/>



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403,000 Hawai'i residents—almost a third of the state's population—who are enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP.

Although we do not know exactly how much of the state's Medicaid funding would be at risk, it is clear that Hawai'i would have to raise substantial revenue to compensate for the loss in federal funding. Otherwise, Hawai'i may be forced to radically reduce its spending on Medicaid. At the extreme end, if Hawai'i decided to drop its Medicaid expansion entirely, 58,000 local recipients could lose their insurance coverage.¹¹ For the sake of the thousands who depend on government-subsidized health coverage in Hawai'i, we urge the legislature to pass the funds that have already been dedicated to Medicaid/Med-Quest in House Bill 300. In the event that more funds are required to maintain the program at its current level, the state has a number of revenue options at its disposal.

Food Equity

The proposed federal cuts are as high as \$230 billion for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which is one of the most critical public benefit programs in the nation.¹² These cuts could cause all 160,000 Hawai'i users to lose some or all benefits, increasing food insecurity among our most vulnerable populations.¹³ At the state level, because of the recent rule change to eliminate net income limits for eligibility, there is expected to be an extra 14,000 households eligible for SNAP benefits later this year.¹⁴ With large increases in SNAP applications upcoming, it is more urgent than ever to strengthen our social safety nets.

In states across the nation, schools are already bracing for proposed cuts and restrictions, including one that would take away free meals from 52 participating Hawai'i schools and over 27,000 students.¹⁵ While

¹¹ M. Buettgens, "Reducing Federal Support for Medicaid Expansion Would Shift Costs to States and Likely Result in Coverage Losses," Urban Institute, February 2025.

https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/2025-02/Reducing_Federal_Support_for_Medicaid_Expansion_Would_Shift_Costs_to_States_and_Likely_Result_in_Coverage_Losses_0.pdf

¹² U.S. Department of Agriculture, "SNAP Data Tables: National and/or State Level Monthly and/or Annual Data," 2024. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap>

¹³ <https://www.cbpp.org/research/food-assistance/millions-of-low-income-households-would-lose-food-aid-under-proposed-house>

¹⁴ D. Moore & N. Hix, "Hawai'i's Unnecessary Benefit Cliff: How One Small Policy Change Could Deliver Tens of Millions in Federally-Funded SNAP Benefits," University of Hawai'i Economic Research Organization (UHERO), <https://uhero.hawaii.edu/hawaii%CA%BBis-unnecessary-benefit-cliff-how-one-small-policy-change-could-deliver-in-45m-per-year-in-federally-funded-snap-benefits/#:~:text=UHERO's%20analysis%20suggests%20that%20eliminating,course%20of%20that%20same%20year.>

¹⁵ <https://frac.org/blog/new-proposal-dramatically-reduces-number-of-schools-eligible-for-community-eligibility-provision>



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we are still unsure of how exactly CEP and Title I funding will look for our schools, it is essential that our state prioritize our keiki being fed.

Collectively, these proposed budget cuts could lead to increased hardship for millions of Americans, particularly those in low- to moderate-income brackets. The reductions in housing assistance, healthcare coverage, and food support are expected to exacerbate existing economic inequities and hinder access to essential services

Hawai'i Appleseed urges the state legislature to secure the future of vital services that promote economic justice and opportunity for all of Hawai'i's people.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

BUILDBETTER.LIVEBETTER.®

March 5, 2025

Committee: House Committee on Finance
Bill Number: HB300, Relating to The State Budget
Hearing Date and Time: March 5, 2025, 9:00am
Re: Testimony of HPM Building Supply in Support

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members:

I would like to submit this testimony in support of HB300, Relating to the State Budget. Specifically, I support the following budget items:

1. \$1,000,000 for FY 26 for the Department of Human Resources Development (DHRD) to conduct a civil service position classification and compensation study;
2. Adds \$338,150 for FY 26 and \$1,343,400 for FY 27 for consultant services to maintain Tax System Modernization (TSM) projects; and
3. Adds 6.00 permanent positions and \$294,796 for FY 26 and 7.00 permanent positions and \$664,592 for FY 27 for the Department of Taxation (DOTAX) to establish a Tax System Modernization Office and integrate the Internal Revenue Services' Direct File Project with TSM.

HPM Building Supply is a 100% employee-owned company serving Hawaii's home improvement market and building industry for over 100 years since 1921. With 18 locations across Hawai'i and Washington State, HPM offers various services and products, including retail stores, building supply and lumber yards, home design centers, drafting and design services, and manufacturing facilities. HPM is dedicated to enhancing homes, improving lives, and transforming communities.

Ensuring our state remains affordable for working families requires bold action to strengthen economic security. Today, thousands of state government jobs remain vacant, leading to reduced services and economic instability for our communities. By investing in a study to modernize our civil servant position classification and compensation can improve recruitment and retention efforts, which will help connect residents with stable, middle-class careers that offer competitive wages, benefits, and long-term financial security. Filling these positions will also improve essential services that working families rely on, from education to public safety.

Additionally, implementing a state-level Direct File system would ease the financial burden of tax preparation, allowing families to file their taxes for free instead of paying costly private services. This initiative would put more money back into the pockets of hardworking residents—money that can go toward rent, groceries, and childcare instead of tax prep fees. Together, these programs will create pathways to economic stability.

Sincerely,

Jason Fujimoto
Chairman & CEO





Statement of
Meli James and Brittany Heyd
Cofounders
Mana Up

HB300, Relating to The State Budget

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members,

We support HB 300, The State Budget Bill. In particular, we support funding:

1. A civil service position classification and compensation study;
2. Consultant services to maintain Tax System Modernization (TSM) projects; and
3. Positions to establish a Tax System Modernization Office and integrate the Internal Revenue Services' Direct File Project with TSM.

Mana Up is a statewide initiative that helps provide entrepreneurs in Hawai'i with the resources and tools to grow their business and scale globally. As these entrepreneurs continue to grow, they also help contribute to our expanding our local economy. As part of our mission, we aim to sustain the local economy through economic diversification, local job creation, community giveback, investment, and a regenerative culture of entrepreneurship – providing a better future for generations to come here in Hawai'i.

These items provide critical funding to help reduce vacancies in state government jobs and implements the IRS Direct File program at the state level. Filling vacancies in state employment will improve essential public services, while Direct File will eliminate filing fees and maximize tax refunds for families who need them most.

At a time when families are struggling with rising costs, these items offer both immediate and long-term relief. A well-staffed state workforce means more efficient public services, from healthcare to housing assistance, reducing bureaucratic delays that can create financial hardship. Meanwhile, implementing the Direct File program ensures that every dollar earned by working families stays in their pockets, rather than being spent on tax preparation fees. Investing in these programs makes economic sense and strengthens the financial security of families across our state.

Sincerely,

Meli James | Cofounder, Mana Up
Brittany Heyd | Cofounder, Mana Up

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF FUNDING THROUGH BILL HB300, CWRM BUDGET REQUEST (Program ID. No. LNR404) FOR THE HAWAI'I MESONET

Submitted by: Akaka Foundation - Kaiāulu Pu'uwa'awa'a

Date: February 24th, 2025

Chair: Rebekah Ohara

Members of the Committee: Dr. Christian Giardina, Hanah Kihalani Springer, Ku'ulei Keakealani, Tamara Ticktin, Edith Atkins, Kaleohone Roback, Kainana Francisco, Ulu Ching

The Akaka Foundation supports the Kaiāulu Pu'uwa'awa'a supports continued funding for the Hawai'i Mesonet—a statewide network of weather stations that delivers real-time data critical for resource management, conservation planning, and community resilience in the face of climate change. Our initiative is dedicated to restoring 84 acres in Pu'uwa'awa'a by transforming pastureland into native forests, improving access to culturally important plant species, enhancing biocultural education for K-12 students, and improving community wellbeing.

The Mesonet station established at Pu'uwa'awa'a directly supports our community-based reforestation and education efforts. In addition, the station will be used to host fire cameras to monitor high fire risk areas in North Kona—ensuring that timely, actionable data is available to protect lives, property, and our natural resources.

We respectfully urge your support for continued investment in the Hawai'i Mesonet through the upcoming executive budget bill, ensuring that real-time, high-resolution climate monitoring remains available to guide informed decision-making and benefit communities statewide.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

Sincerely,

Ashley-Ann Kaleionehu "Nehu" Shaw

Forest Restoration Field Coordinator

Akaka Foundation - Kaiāulu Pu'uwa'awa'a

Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks! is a nonpartisan 501c4 nonprofit committed to advocating for children and their families. Our core issues are safety, health, and education.

To: Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

From: Chevelle Davis, MPH - Director of Early Childhood & Health Policy
Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!

Subject: Measure H.B. No. 300 – Relating to the State Budget

Hearing: Wednesday, March 5, 2025, at 9:00 AM, Conference Room 308

POSITION: SUPPORT WITH COMMENTS

Aloha e Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the committee,

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks!, I am writing to express strong support for critical investments in early learning opportunities for Hawai'i's keiki. Expanding access to high-quality early learning is one of the most effective ways to improve educational equity, support underserved families, and build a foundation for lifelong success. A comprehensive approach that includes both classroom expansion and programmatic funding is necessary to fulfill the state's commitment to universal early learning.

To achieve this, we urge your support for the following essential funding priorities:

- **Funding and positions to establish 50 additional Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL) Public Prekindergarten classrooms over the next two years (EDN700):**
 - Expands access to high-quality early learning, prioritizing enrollment for underserved keiki
 - Strengthens efforts to achieve universal early learning for three- and four-year-olds
 - Enhances Kindergarten readiness and long-term academic success
- **Funding for Family Child Interaction Learning (FCIL) Program contracts (EDN 700):**
 - Broadens early learning opportunities to meet the diverse needs of working families
 - Emphasizes a multi-generational, culturally responsive approach to early learning
 - Empowers families to play an active role in their children's cognitive, social, and emotional development
 - Provides essential parent education alongside early learning experiences

- **Additional funding for the Hawai'i School Facilities Authority (SFA) to continue Prekindergarten classroom development and construction:**
 - Address the urgent need for affordable, high-quality early learning opportunities for more than 8,000 underserved keiki
 - Builds on the SFA's recent progress in completing 56 prekindergarten classrooms, creating over 1,000 new preschool seats
 - Ensures that the expansion of prekindergarten seats continues without delay by closing a \$60 million funding gap
 - Prevents at least a two-year delay in seven major preschool projects that would impact more than 600 keiki

These interconnected investments will expand access to early learning opportunities across Hawai'i, ensuring that keiki enter school prepared to succeed. Without continued funding, we risk delaying critical progress toward universal preschool access, leaving thousands of our keiki without the necessary foundational education.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to include this funding in the House Draft of the budget. Mahalo for the opportunity to provide testimony and for your consideration in supporting early learning opportunities for Hawai'i's keiki and families.



Hawai'i

Committee: Finance
Hearing Date/Time: Wednesday, March 5, 2025 at 9:00am
Place: Conference Room 308 & Via Videoconference
Re: **Testimony of the ACLU of Hawai'i offering COMMENTS on HB300 Relating to the State Budget**

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Members of the Committee:
The ACLU of Hawai'i **offers comments on HB300**, which appropriates funds for the operating and capital improvement budget of the Executive Branch for the biennium.

The ACLU of Hawai'i believes the budget reflects our collective values and priorities. As such, we **strongly oppose provisions included in the bill funding the planning, development, and construction of a new jail facility in Halawa**. The price tag for this new jail is currently estimated at over \$1 billion.

HB300 proposes to grossly expand the current carceral system at a time when the state may be facing significant funding shortfalls because of the new federal administration. It is short-sighted to continue funding a project that is unnecessary.

Currently, nearly 70% of the population at the Oahu Community Correctional Center (OCCC) is "pre-trial." This means, simply, that they have not been convicted yet of any crime. What's more, a report recently published by the Prison Policy Initiative (PPI), highlighted that **"[p]eople incarcerated at OCCC are overwhelmingly there for low-level, non-violent charges, including technical violations of probation conditions, and there are a wealth of opportunities to decrease Hawaii's jail population to the point where new jail construction may not be necessary."**¹

The State currently spends more than \$90,000 per year for each and every incarcerated adult, while spending less than \$10,000 per year on to educate a keiki in our public schools. This imbalance does not reflect our values nor our priorities.

Among the appropriations to which we strongly object is \$30 million to the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) for "[p]lans, land aquisition, design, and construction for the project management support and financial participation by the State of Hawaii to fund and construct the new [OCCC]..." While DCR continues to oppose any meaningful reforms to reduce the jail population, we believe this cost is both premature and unnecessary.

Further, the bill appropriates an additional \$10 million to DCR for numerous planning projects, including a new 10-year master plan. We believe all funds for a new OCCC

¹ Prison Policy Initiative Report on OCCC Jail Expansion Plans and Population Forecast Report: https://static.prisonpolicy.org/scans/PPI_OCCC_Memo.pdf

should not be appropriated, at a minimum, until DCR has completed its 10-year master plan. The “current” plan was completed more than 20 years ago.

It is also unclear why these various planning projects have a \$10 million price tag, which is just one reason why we are calling for a forensic audit of DCR and the Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS). **DCR has already expended more than \$20 million on the new jail project with nothing to show for it**, expect receipts from consultants and public-relations firms.

Criminal justice reforms have proven successful in other states by significantly reducing the pretrial population by 30-50% and the total number of incarcerated people, without compromising public safety and while saving taxpayer dollars. Eliminating our cash bail system or reforming it – is one way of diverting people from incarceration by 20-50%, as demonstrated in other states.

Before the State spends another penny on planning and constructing an expanded bed capacity jail, we must pause. The State should carefully review Prison Policy Initiative’s latest report with specific recommendations to OCCC and await the findings of the 10-year master before issuing an RFI and RFP. We must take more aggressive steps toward real criminal justice reforms, including bail reform. And we must adjust our spending to prioritize truly affordable housing solutions, health care, mental health treatment, education, youth afterschool programs and work force development.

We urge the committee to amend HB300 to reflect our collective values and build safe, healthy, thriving, and equitable communities.

Sincerely,

Carrie Ann Shirota

Carrie Ann Shirota

Policy Director

cshirota@acluhawaii.org

The mission of the ACLU of Hawai‘i is to protect the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the U.S. and State Constitutions. The ACLU of Hawai‘i fulfills this through legislative, litigation, and public education programs statewide. The ACLU of Hawai‘i is a non-partisan and private non-profit organization that provides its services at no cost to the public and does not accept government funds. The ACLU of Hawai‘i has been serving Hawai‘i for over 50 years.

American Civil Liberties Union of Hawai‘i
P.O. Box 3410
Honolulu, Hawai‘i 96801
T: 808.522.5900
F: 808.522.5909
E: office@aclu

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 11:51:41 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christina Libby	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Members of the Committee,

My name is Christina Libby, I am a business owner, mother, and Board Certified Behavior Analyst. I am writing to express my strong support for HB300, which would ensure the permanency of increased QUEST rates for Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) services for children with autism. These rate increases have been vital in ensuring that children receive the crucial healthcare treatment they need.

The increased rates have made it possible to retain qualified providers, expand access to essential ABA services, and reduce waitlists for children who rely on these therapies for meaningful progress. Without these rates, families face increased barriers to care, and providers struggle to sustain services. If HB300 is not passed, the rates will revert in 2026, creating significant disruptions in care for some of our most vulnerable children.

I respectfully urge your continued support with the Finance Committee to ensure that the funds allocated for making these rate increases permanent remain in the budget bill. This is our one opportunity to secure the future of ABA services for children in need, and I hope we can see this through to the finish line together. Thank you for your time and commitment to this critical issue.

Respectfully,

Christina Libby, M.S., BCBA, LBA

Founder and Owner, Mau Loa Learning LLC

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 12:29:41 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christy Torres	Autism Behavior Consulting Group	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I stand in support of HB 300 to maintain the funds allocated for the MEDQUEST ABA rate increases submitted as part of the Governor's budget. Please fund these much needed increases permanently so we can continue to help more kids with autism in Hawaii.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 12:38:29 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rachel Koenig	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support maintaining QUEST ABA rate increases in the budget to help children with autism.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 12:41:03 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Caitlin Prieto	Autism Behavior Consulting Group, Inc.	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I stand in support of HB 300 to maintain the funds allocated for the MEDQUEST ABA rate increases submitted as part of the Governor's budget. Please fund these much needed increases permanently so we can continue to help more kids with autism in Hawaii.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 12:41:26 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lauren Hanabusa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support HB300 to maintain the funds allocated for MedQuest ABA rate increases. Please fund these much needed and overdue increases so both state and private companies can continue to help all families in need.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 12:44:13 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emily Henderson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support maintaining QUEST ABA rate increases in the budget to help children with autism.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 12:44:50 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patti-Anne Takakura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support maintaining QUEST ABA rate increases in the budget to help children with autism.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 12:47:04 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dallas Star	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please maintain the current 2025 provided Medicaid rates to support children with autism. This action does not increase the budget from year to year and reaps the benefits of the rate study that was completed in 2024. It helps increase wages for local employees while supporting a vulnerable population. This is a win win with no increased financial impact from 2025 to 2026 and beyond.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 12:49:35 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael Fredeluces	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support maintaining QUEST ABA rate increases in the budget to help children with autism

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 12:53:41 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rachel Miller	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a provider of ABA services here in Hawaii, I am submitting written testimony in strong support of maintaining QUEST ABA rate increases in the budget to help children with autism. While the rate increases for 2025 provide significant support for provider organizations to continue to providing medically necessary ABA services, it would only be a temporary relief if rates decrease back to previous rates in 2026.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 12:55:24 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joelle Dewater	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support the maintaining QUEST ABA rate increases in the budget to help children with autism

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 12:56:29 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eliza Lipp	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support maintaining QUEST ABA rate increases in the budget to help children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 12:58:36 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jessica Noochan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

- *I support increased access to ABA services for children with autism. Please keep the funds allocated for QUEST ABA services in the budget.*
- *I support making the QUEST ABA rates permanent.*

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 1:02:04 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
catherine wilson	ABA Positive Support Services	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support increased access to ABA services for children with autism. Please keep the funds allocated for QUEST ABA services in the budget.

I support making the QUEST ABA rates permanent.

Thank you

Catherine Wilson

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 1:11:58 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chelsea Gornichec	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To whom it may concerns,

Please support maintaining QUEST ABA rate increases in the budget to help children with autism.

Mahalo,

Chelsea Gornichec

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 1:20:14 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Courteney Tse	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support increased access to ABA services for children with autism. Please keep the funds allocated for QUEST ABA services in the budget.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 1:45:05 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eric Geimer	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, practicing ABA in the Aloha State is a privilege made possible by the rates presently afforded to providers. Even with rates as they are, retention is already difficult for certain roles, such as with RBTs. Ensuring rates do not decline will at least ensure that ABA services needed as they are by so many in our state remain extant, and do not go extinct. Thank you to all who are able to consider voting in favor of allocating funds for Quest ABA services such that these temporary rates become permanent, so that children with autism diagnoses may keep the medical services that they deserve.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 2:03:34 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Maile Martin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support maintaining QUEST ABA rate increases in the budget to help children with autism

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 2:05:29 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Anastasia Keller-Collins	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

On behalf of all of us who are doing our very best to help individuals and families in desperate need of assistance, please support this bill. Providing support and resources now to assist individuals in being as independent as possible will benefit us all in the long term.

Thank you,

Dr. Keller-Collins

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 2:12:24 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kaitlin Preciado	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

I am writing to express my strong support for the inclusion of funds in HB300 to maintain the QUEST Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) rate increases. These rates are critical to ensuring children with autism in Hawai‘i continue to receive the quality care and therapeutic services they need to thrive.

ABA services play a vital role in helping children with autism develop essential communication, social, and adaptive skills. Maintaining adequate reimbursement rates allows providers to sustain high-quality programs, retain qualified professionals, and ensure that services are accessible to families who rely on QUEST coverage. Without this funding, families across Hawai‘i could face service reductions, long waitlists, or complete loss of access to care — further widening the gap in essential services for some of our most vulnerable keiki.

I urge you to support this funding to protect access to life-changing services for children with autism in Hawai‘i and to ensure that providers can continue to meet the needs of our communities.

Mahalo for your time and consideration, and for your commitment to supporting the well-being of children and families across our state.

Respectfully,

Kaitlin Preciado

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 2:19:32 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rebecca Medeiros	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support increased access to ABA services for children with autism. Please keep the funds allocated for QUEST ABA services in the budget.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 2:22:08 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristian Guynes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support maintaining QUEST ABA rate increases in the budget to help children with autism.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 2:24:01 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Josliene Miller	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support maintaining QUEST ABA rate increases in the budget to help children with autism. It is critical to the services they receive.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 2:26:21 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leslie Allison Schurtz	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

QUEST ABA rate increases need to be increased for good to support all of the children with autism in need of quality ABA Therapy.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 2:47:39 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kalani	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I think the money will be well spent. SpEd has been always the first one to get the budget cuts. Rbts, bcbas and all the staff would get paid more which would result in better aba services

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 2:49:29 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Victoria Price	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SPED gets budget cuts first in the the DOE, and there should be more money in the SPED budget. Also, RBT's, BCBA's, and EA's should be compensated better as it is an extremely difficult field to work in.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 3:13:04 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Paige Young	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I stand in support of HB 300 to maintain the funds allocated for the MEDQUEST ABA rate increases submitted as part of the Governor's budget. Please fund these much needed increases permanently so we can continue to help more kids with autism in Hawai'i.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 3:15:44 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristin Le	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support increased access to ABA services for children with autism. Please keep the funds allocated for QUEST ABA services in the budget.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 3:23:15 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Siyuan Wang	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support increased access to ABA services for children with autism. Please keep the funds allocated for QUEST ABA services in the budget.

Date: March 3, 2025

TO: House Committee on Finance

Honorable Chairperson, Kyle Yamashita

Honorable Vice Chair, Jenna Takenouchi

Members of the Finance Committee

FROM: Ann S. Yabusaki, Ph.D.

RE: HB300

I am writing to advocate for an increased budget for the Developmental Disabilities Council to at least \$1M. They work to find and create support for individuals and families affected by developmental disabilities.

I work with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FAS), neurodevelopmental disabilities associated with prenatal alcohol exposure. There are few if any services for people and their families impacted by FASD.

Working with the Council to address the needs, including awareness of the prevalence of these disorders, has been a blessing. As a volunteer and psychologist finding the proper support has been difficult. Many of my clients drop out of school or are expelled, must enter residential programs off-island because of the lack of resources, and those who are incarcerated lack the support to remain out of the criminal justice system.

I strongly urge you to increase substantial support for the DD Council (HTH 905, p. 414) and for individuals with developmental disabilities (HTH 501, p. 378).

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 3:35:53 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leilani Artaho	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support maintaining QUEST ABA rate increases in the budget to help children with autism.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 3:38:40 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sara Alejo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support access to ABA services for children with autism. ABA can provide many useful services that can profoundly help children with autism and their families.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 3:59:15 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
McKenna Conner	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I stand in support of HB 300 to maintain the funds allocated for the MEDQUEST ABA rate increases submitted as part of the Governor's budget. Please fund these much needed increases permanently so we can continue to help more kids with autism in Hawaii.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 4:10:01 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Erin Walters	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support maintaining QUEST ABA rate increases in the budget to help children with autism.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 4:10:39 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janell Kaneshiro	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB 300 to maintain the funds allocated for the MEDQUEST ABA rate increases submitted as part of the Governor's budget. Please fund these much needed increases permanently so we can continue to help more kids with autism in Hawaii.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 4:15:25 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cheryl Tse	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I stand in support of HB 300 to maintain the funds allocated for the MEDQUEST ABA rate increases submitted as part of the Governor's budget. Please fund these much needed increases permanently so we can continue to help more kids with autism in Hawaii.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 4:16:19 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jacey Fernandez	Behavior Analysis No Ka Oi	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support increased access to ABA services for children with autism. Please keep the funds allocated for QUEST ABA services in the budget. To add, I support making the QUEST ABA rates permanent.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 4:16:59 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rachel Tai	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support increased access to ABA services for children and young adults with autism. ABA services allows these children and their families access to potentially life-changing services that can help them achieve an overall improved quality of life and independence. The skills gained in ABA also aims to decrease dependence of others, thus allowing these individuals increase self-agency. Please keep the funds allocated for QUEST ABA services in the budget.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 4:28:21 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
lydia ching	ABC GROUP	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I stand in support of HB 300 to maintain the funds allocated for the MEDQUEST ABA rate increases submitted as part of the Governor's budget. Please fund these much needed increases permanently so we can continue to help more kids with autism in Hawaii."

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 4:36:46 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cheyenne F Chavez	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

- *I support increased access to ABA services for children with autism. Please keep the funds allocated for QUEST ABA services in the budget.*
- *I support making the QUEST ABA rates permanent.*

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 4:46:37 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kayla Marie	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly oppose this measure.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 4:47:54 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert I Nehmad	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

“Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members:

*My name is Robert Nehmad and I live in Honolulu. I’m testifying in opposition to provisions in **HB300** that expand mass incarceration and the building of a new \$1 billion super jail.*

Budgets reveal what and who we care about. The proposed budget includes an appropriation for the building of a new OCCC, but we don’t need a new, \$1 billion jail. Instead, we need to fund youth and education programs, affordable housing, job training, family strengthening and violence interruption programs, community-based health, treatment and reintegration programs rooted in evidence-based practices, and restorative justice to help us build communities that are safe, healthy, and equitable.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.”

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 4:54:35 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Eileen Keane Hurtt	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members:

My name is Eileen Keane Hurtt and I live in Kailua. I'm a high school teacher, have two school-age children, and have been living on Oahu since 2008. I'm testifying in opposition to provisions in **HB300** that expand mass incarceration and the building of a new \$1 billion super jail.

I am absolutely against HB300. Budgets reveal what and who we care about. For example, instead of focusing on helping people get off the streets, we put barriers on benches and medieval-looking stones or spikes in places where the weary may try to rest. What does this illuminate about our community? The proposed budget includes an appropriation for the building of a new OCCC, but we don't need a new, \$1 billion jail. Instead, we need to fund youth and education programs, affordable housing, job training, family strengthening and violence interruption programs, community-based health, treatment and reintegration programs rooted in evidence-based practices, and restorative justice to help us build communities that are safe, healthy, and equitable. Instead of the \$1 billion jail, we should focus on programs within the existing correctional facilities and in our communities to reduce crime, provide job skills, encourage community service, educate against drug use, and education programs for those who are incarcerated.

Please consider putting out monies toward youth education programs that keep people out of jail in the first place, and programs that help those who are incarcerated gain skills (job and social) and tools (mental health, recovery, etc.) to rejoin society as healthy, contributing members. Let's put our tax dollars into programs/projects that help communities thrive.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Eileen Keane Hurtt

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 4:57:05 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patricia Blair	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We need public health based approach for public safety. Not a new jail.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 4:57:39 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
kendra bean	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support increased access to ABA services for children with autism. Please keep the funds allocated for QUEST ABA services in the budget!!!

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 5:00:24 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Luanna Peterson	Reimagining Public Safety	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Luanna Peterson and I live in Niu Valley. I am testifying in strong opposition to the provisions in HB300 that expand mass incarceration and allocate funding for the construction of a \$1 billion super jail.

I come to this issue not only as a community organizer, educator, and advocate for justice, but also as someone who has personally experienced the harms of our incarceration system. I come from a family where every male relative has been brutalized by police, incarcerated, or struggled with addiction and trauma—not because they were inherently dangerous, but because they were caught in a system designed to criminalize poverty, mental health struggles, and survival. I, too, was incarcerated as a youth. And I know firsthand that locking people away does not make us safer—investing in our communities does.

Budgets reveal what and who we care about. Instead of spending \$1 billion on a new OCCC, we need to invest in youth and education programs, permanent supportive housing, job training, family strengthening initiatives, community-based healthcare, treatment and reintegration programs, and restorative justice approaches—all of which have been proven to reduce harm and create real safety. We cannot continue to pour money into cages while refusing to address the root causes of incarceration.

I urge you to reject this appropriation and instead prioritize evidence-based, community-driven solutions that foster true safety, healing, and equity for Hawai'i's people.

Mahalo for your time and consideration,

Luanna Peterson

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 5:05:31 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
ANDREW ISODA	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members:

*My name is Andrew Isoda and I live in Lahaina. I'm testifying in opposition to provisions in **HB300** that expand mass incarceration and the building of a new \$1 billion super jail.*

Budgets reveal what and who we care about. The proposed budget includes an appropriation for the building of a new OCCC, but we don't need a new, \$1 billion jail. Instead, we need to fund youth and education programs, affordable housing, job training, family strengthening and violence interruption programs, community-based health, treatment and reintegration programs rooted in evidence-based practices, and restorative justice to help us build communities that are safe, healthy, and equitable.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Andrew Isoda

Lahaina, Mau'i

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 5:06:23 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tori Sims	Ho'omau Autism Services LLC	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello,

I support HB300. Passing this bill will ensure that our staff are fairly and appropriately compensated to continue serving the local community who are impacted by Autism.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 5:11:15 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carla Allison	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members:

My name is Carla Allison and I live in Honolulu.. I'm testifying in opposition to provisions in **HB300** that expand mass incarceration and the building of a new \$1 billion super jail.

Budgets reveal what and who we care about. The proposed budget includes an appropriation for the building of a new OCCC, but we don't need a new, \$1 billion jail. Instead, we need to fund youth and education programs, affordable housing, job training, family strengthening and violence interruption programs, community-based health, treatment and reintegration programs rooted in evidence-based practices, and restorative justice to help us build communities that are safe, healthy, and equitable.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 5:12:22 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lewis Glenn	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members:

My name is Lewis Glenn and I live in Kailua Town. I'm testifying in opposition to provisions in **HB300** that expand mass incarceration and the building of a new \$1 billion super jail.

Budgets reveal what and who we care about. Do we care more for a new billion-dollar jail than we do for the people of our great state? Is a billion-dollar jail the easy "fix" for our neglect for our neighbors? Does the jail address root causes of crime, or merely put the unfortunate and underserved away from sight so that we can get on with "business as usual"? The proposed budget includes an appropriation for the building of a new OCCC, but we don't need a new, \$1 billion jail. Instead, we need to fund youth and education programs, affordable housing, job training, family strengthening and violence interruption programs, community-based health, treatment and reintegration programs rooted in evidence-based practices, and restorative justice to help us build communities that are safe, healthy, and equitable.

Please, let's get this right. Hawaii is smarter and more compassionate than this.

Mahalo for your time and consideration."

Lewis Glenn

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 5:31:29 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Aimee Cueva	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support increased rates for ABA services to help more children access medically necessary care.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 5:37:05 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Zhanna Pogosyan	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support increased access to ABA services to children with autism. Please keep the funds for QUEST ABA services in the budget.

I also support making the QUEST ABA rates permanent. Thank you!

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 5:46:59 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Desiree	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

- *I support increased access to ABA services for children with autism. Please keep the funds allocated for QUEST ABA services in the budget.*
- *I support making the QUEST ABA rates permanent.*

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 6:08:39 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pamela Elders	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita,

Vice Chair Takenouchi, and

Committee Members:

*My name is Pam Elders . I live in Laupahoehoe on Hawaii Island. I'm writing to express my opposition to provisions in **HB300** that expand mass incarceration and the building of a new \$1 billion super jail.*

The proposed budget includes an appropriation for the building of a new OCCC, however, it is my firm belief that a new, \$1 billion jail is not needed. Instead, we need to invest in youth and education programs, affordable housing, job training, family strengthening and violence interruption programs, community-based health, treatment and reintegration programs rooted in evidence-based practices, and restorative justice to help us build communities that are safe, healthy, and equitable.

My career in education has shown me that prevention is the best investment for long-term sustainability.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.”

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 6:15:22 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Leia Hernandez	Behavior Analysis No Ka Oi	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support increased access to ABA services for children with autism. Please keep the funds allocated for QUEST ABA services in the budget.

I support making the QUEST ABA rates permanent.

3.3.2025

To: Committee on Finance

Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair, Representative Lisa Takenouchi, Vice Chair and Committee Members:

Support of Bill HB1431 HD1 (HSCR793): Relating to Oral Health/Oral Health Task Force

I am writing in **support of HB300 which includes requested funds to re-establish the state's DOH Oral Health Program**. As an oral health professional, I support all efforts that can support and improve the oral health of community members. This bill can serve to augment and complement **support of HB1431 HD1 (HSCR793)** establishing an Oral Health Task Force.

I am grateful and was very supportive of the 2022 effort to reinstate Medicaid Adult Dental Health benefits in Hawaii. As Hawaii continues to grow in supporting access for dental care, we have also learned there is much more to be done. Hawaii will benefit with a coordinated approach to the complex issues surrounding unmet oral health needs in Hawaii.

Mahalo

Anne Hvizdak, BSDH, CDHC
Hawaii Oral Health Coalition Steering Committee Member
Hawaii Dental Hygienists' Association Member
Kauai Oral Health Coalition
669 Aewa St. #375
Eleele, HI (Kauai) 96705
Hvizdak11@gmail.com

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 7:06:27 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Katlyn Vogl	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members:

My name is Katlyn Vogl and I live in Honolulu, Hawai‘i. I’m testifying in opposition to provisions in HB300 that expand mass incarceration and the building of a new \$1 billion super jail.

Where we decide to allocate money is evidence of our morals as a community. The proposed budget includes an appropriation for the building of a new OCCC, but we don’t need a new, \$1 billion jail. There are so many programs that need that money so much more. The last thing we need to do is expand the prison industrial complex, which operates on racist values, and disproportionately incarcerates Kānaka Maoli. Instead, we need to fund youth and education programs, affordable housing, job training, family strengthening and violence interruption programs, community-based health, treatment and reintegration programs rooted in indigenous and evidence-based practices, and restorative justice to help us build communities that are safe, healthy, and equitable.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 7:20:34 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Dianne Deauna	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members:

My name is Dianne Deauna and I live in Mānoa. I'm testifying in opposition to provisions in **HB300** that expand mass incarceration and the building of a new \$1 billion super jail.

Budgets reveal what and who we care about. The proposed budget includes an appropriation for the building of a new O'ahu Community Correctional Center, but we don't need a new \$1 billion jail.

Hawai'i is not safe when many people struggle to meet their basic needs—many face homelessness, low wages coupled with a high cost of living, and a lack of access to the diversion infrastructure and critical mental health services they need. Hawai'i is not safe when billion-dollar jail expansion projects are prioritized over access to healthy foods, decent jobs, and safe and stable housing.

This current version of the State budget bill would appropriate **\$30 MILLION** for planning relating to the proposed new jail to replace OCCC, **\$10 MILLION** for a 10-year Department of Corrections Statewide Master Plan, and **MILLIONS more** for jail and prison expansion and maintenance. What's more, the **State is pushing for a Public-Private-Partnership (P3) to finance, design, construct, and maintain the new jail. This will make taxpayers poorer, not safer!**

Instead, we need to fund youth and education programs, affordable housing, job training, family strengthening and violence interruption programs, community-based health, treatment and reintegration programs rooted in evidence-based practices, and restorative justice to help us build communities that are safe, healthy, and equitable.

I fully support ACLU Hawai'i's opposition to this bill, in the name of reimagining public safety.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 7:29:09 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Crystal Thomas	Balanced ABA	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support making the QUEST ABA rates permanent. Making these rate increases permanent increases access to ABA services for children with autism. Please keep the funds allocated for QUEST ABA services in the budget. Previous rates had not been increased in more than a decade. Increasing the rates and making them permanent helps providers to employ qualified individuals to provide these much needed services and provides well paying jobs to Hawaii residents.

Mahalo,

Crystal Thomas, MS, BCBA, LBA

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 8:32:45 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elizabeth Winternitz	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members:

My name is Elizabeth Winternitz, and I live in Kula, Maui. I'm testifying in deep opposition to provisions in HB300 that would commit significant resources towards constructing a new \$1 billion jail.

Nearly a decade ago, House Concurrent Resolution No. 85, H.D.2, S.D.1 (2016) requested the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court make recommendations to the legislature on ways to improve Hawaii's correctional system. The primary recommendation in response to that request was: "[T]hat Hawaii immediately begin to transition from a punitive to a rehabilitative correctional system. Evidence from other states and countries confirms that the rehabilitative approach is the only sustainable way to make our community safe mass incarceration does not work." (Final Report of the House Concurrent Resolution 85 Task Force on Prison Reform to the Hawaii Legislature Regular Session, 2019)

The intervening decade has proven the prescience of this recommendation; yet, as written, HB 300 continues to support significant expenditures to expand mass incarceration.

I respectfully request members of the Committee reject any version of a State budget that fails so grievously to align with Hawai'i State values of mutual caring, and respect for our common existence.

Please invest our tax dollars in programs like youth and education programs, affordable housing, job training, family strengthening and violence interruption programs, community-based health, treatment and reintegration programs rooted in evidence-based practices, and restorative justice to help us build communities that are safe, healthy, and equitable.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Elizabeth Winternitz, Kula

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 8:45:06 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Colleen Rost-Banik	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members:

My name is Colleen Rost-Banik and I live in Honolulu. I'm also a Sociology Instructor at the University of Hawaii, Manoa. I'm testifying in opposition to provisions in **HB300** that expand mass incarceration by building a new \$1 billion super jail.

I have taught in the Women's Community Correctional Center for the past seven years and have heard many stories about OCCC. Even though OCCC is overcrowded, as you know, the entire female population formerly housed at OCCC, has now moved to WCCC. Further, roughly 30% of people at OCCC were houseless upon entry. Significant numbers of people at OCCC are also struggling with mental health issues and substance addiction.

Suffice it to say that not only does OCCC not need to house nearly as many people as are currently there, but moreso, it definitely does not need ot house as many people as the expansion has planned for. Rather, we need to fund youth and education programs, affordable housing, job training, family strengthening and violence interruption programs, community-based health, treatment and reintegration programs rooted in evidence-based practices, and restorative justice to help us build communities that are safe, healthy, and equitable. We don't need to fund \$1 billion jail.

Budgets reflect our values and priorities. Please join me in prioritizing people's basic needs, not in expanding incarceration.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.
Colleen Rost-Banik, PhD

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 8:52:04 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Deborah Ho'ohuli	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support increased access to ABA services for children with autism and urge continued funding for QUEST ABA services in the budget.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 9:29:03 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Greg Puppione	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members:

*My name is Greg and I live in Honolulu. I'm testifying in opposition to provisions in **HB300** that expand mass incarceration and the building of a new \$1 billion super jail.*

Budgets reveal what and who we care about. The proposed budget includes an appropriation for the building of a new OCCC, but we don't need a new, \$1 billion jail. Instead, we need to fund youth and education programs, affordable housing, job training, family strengthening and violence interruption programs, community-based health, treatment and reintegration programs rooted in evidence-based practices, and restorative justice to help us build communities that are safe, healthy, and equitable.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 9:32:48 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shayna	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support increased access to ABA services for children with autism. Please keep the funds allocated for QUEST ABA services in the budget.

I support making the QUEST ABA rates permanent.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 9:51:25 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Amanda Bolgren	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

To whom it may concern,

I support increased access to ABA services for children with autism. Please keep the funds allocated for QUEST ABA services in the budget. This will secure consistent providers which will help continuity of care.

Thanks

Amanda Bolgren

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 9:58:43 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sho Araiba	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support increased access to ABA services for children with autism. Please keep the funds allocated for QUEST ABA services in the budget.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/3/2025 11:41:38 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Hannah Montana	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Representative Yamashita and members of the House Finance Committee,

I am a resident in the State of Hawaii and I am writing to your to provide my written testimony in support of HB300 that outlines the allocation of funds for the upcoming years.

I think that the bill is critical in the funding of our future and decides the future of key state programs, infrastructure, and essential public services. I strongly support this bill because it ensures that there is a continued investment in the people of Hawaii with these budgets being allocated into educational programs, healthcare, affordable housing and more. It is vital that we maintain an adequate budget for these programs because it helps to keep "Hawaiian Lands in Hawaiian Hands," not only now but it influences future generations too. If we want to better our communities it is essential to invest in them and give them resources and tools they need to succeed. It is key to maintain a budget that benefits the residents of Hawaii to cultivate a better Hawaii.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony on HB300, and I respectfully urge that this bill be passed not only to benefit the now but also the future of Hawaii.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 4:21:11 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Christy Shaver	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members,

My name is Christy, and I live in Maui. I'm testifying in opposition to provisions in HB300 that expand mass incarceration and allocate funding for the construction of a \$1 billion super jail.

Budgets reveal our priorities—what and who we truly care about. The proposed budget includes an appropriation for a new OCCC, but Hawai'i does not need another costly jail. Instead, we need to invest in the well-being of our communities by prioritizing funding for youth and education programs, affordable housing, job training, family strengthening initiatives, violence interruption efforts, and community-based health, treatment, and reintegration programs. Evidence-based restorative justice approaches provide a far more effective path toward building safe, healthy, and equitable communities.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Warm regards,
Christy

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 4:47:20 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carla T Schmidt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support maintaining QUEST ABA rate increases in the budget to help children with autism.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 5:21:36 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Yahaira Gomez	Step Ahead ABA	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a provider, it has been a huge help to be able to hire qualified providers and pay them competitively with the 2025 higher reimbursement rates. I fully support efforts to maintain the QUEST rates for ABA. We are committed to serving Hawaii and reaching those who are underserved. We provide services to individuals on the autism spectrum from 0 to 21 years of age. We primarily serve those covered by Medicaid, so the increase has ensured that we are able to serve more families.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 5:32:39 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sondra Watts	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I advocate for expanding access to ABA services for children with autism. Please ensure that funding for QUEST ABA services remains in the budget.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 5:43:24 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicholas Klinkefus	Step Ahead ABA	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Hello!

As an ABA provider serving primarily Medicaid families in Hawaii, the temporary rates from 2025 have been SO necessary for us to provide a competitive wage to behavior technicians caring for vulnerable children and families. I fully support maintaining the QUEST rates for ABA services. Doing so will enable us, and other providers, to support Medicaid families in receiving medically necessary services. Returning rates to their lower level before will make it incredibly challenging to hire and maintain staff. Please support this bill!

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 5:45:33 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Wouter Brink	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

- I support increased access to ABA services for the underprivileged children with autism. Please keep the funds allocated for QUEST ABA services in the budget.
- I support making the QUEST ABA rates permanent to support underprivileged children

Hiring qualified providers and compensating them competitively with the 2025 higher reimbursement rates has been immensely beneficial. I fully endorse maintaining the QUEST rates for ABA. We are dedicated to serving Hawai'i and reaching underserved individuals. We offer services to those on the autism spectrum from 0 to 21 years of age, primarily covered by Medicaid. The increase has enabled us to serve more families.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 5:53:39 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cathy Kapua	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members:

*My name is Cathy Kapua and I live in Waianae. I'm testifying in opposition to provisions in **HB300** that expand mass incarceration and the building of a new \$1 billion super jail.*

Budgets reveal what and who we care about. The proposed budget includes an appropriation for the building of a new OCCC, but we don't need a new, \$1 billion jail. Instead, we need to fund youth and education programs, affordable housing, job training, family strengthening and violence interruption programs, community-based health, treatment and reintegration programs rooted in evidence-based practices, and restorative justice to help us build communities that are safe, healthy, and equitable.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 5:55:57 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mary Olson	Step Ahead ABA HI LLC	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

To Whom This May Concern,

With over 10 years of experience in the administrative side of the ABA field, working with three different ABA providers, I have been honored to witness the systemic changes that support and increase access to care for individuals affected by ASD. Bills like this one are critical in supporting providers to ensure the delivery of quality care. Adequate reimbursement rates are essential for sustaining operations, allowing providers to stay in business, pay staff competitive living wages, and ensure that providers feel valued. This, in turn, helps businesses stay open and continue to serve the community. The increase in rates has been pivotal in allowing us to expand our services and better support the families who rely on us.

Mary Olson | Directof of RCM | Step Ahead ABA HI LLC

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 6:00:56 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Niki Pollack	Step Ahead ABA	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

am writing to express my **strong support** for HB300, which seeks to make the increased Med-QUEST reimbursement rates for Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) services permanent. As a [your role, e.g., "Director of Talent Acquisition in the ABA field"/"concerned professional"/"parent of a child receiving ABA services"], I have witnessed firsthand the critical impact of ABA therapy on individuals with autism and other developmental disabilities. Ensuring adequate reimbursement rates is essential to maintaining access to these vital services for Hawai'i's most vulnerable populations.

Since the increase in Med-QUEST ABA reimbursement rates, providers have been able to **retain qualified professionals, reduce waitlists, and expand services to underserved communities**. However, if this rate increase is not made permanent, we risk reversing this progress, leading to staffing shortages, increased provider attrition, and reduced access to care. The reality is that lower reimbursement rates will make it financially unsustainable for many ABA providers to continue serving Med-QUEST members, forcing families to either seek private services—if they can afford them—or go without necessary therapy.

Hawai'i already faces significant challenges in recruiting and retaining Registered Behavior Technicians (RBTs) and Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs) due to the high cost of living and competition from other states with better reimbursement rates. Without competitive pay, we will continue to see high turnover, which disrupts continuity of care and negatively impacts patient outcomes.

HB300 is not just about numbers—it's about **ensuring children and adults with autism and developmental disabilities receive the support they need to thrive**. It is about making sure families do not face the devastating reality of losing access to essential therapy because providers can no longer afford to operate under unsustainable reimbursement models.

I urge this committee to pass HB300 and ensure that Hawai'i remains committed to supporting individuals with disabilities by maintaining adequate reimbursement rates for ABA providers. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Niki Pollack

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 6:15:09 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Danielle Degnan	Step Ahead ABA	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a provider, it has been a huge help to be able to hire qualified providers and pay them competitively with the 2025 higher reimbursement rates. I fully support efforts to maintain the QUEST rates for ABA. We are committed to serving Hawai'i and reaching those who are underserved. We provide services to individuals on the autism spectrum from 0 to 21 years of age. We primarily serve those covered by Medicaid, so the increase has ensured that we are able to serve more families.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 6:16:22 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nancy Porterfield	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

We need to build communities that are safe, healthy and equitable not a jail. Spend the billion dollars on evidence based practices and restorative justice. I have worked at prison for adult male, medium security, and childrens' prison and in public education for high risk youth. I wrote grants to provide therapy for my students and Thai Chi classes. We need to build a community that protects our families and not a prison. Support the community and not a prison.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 6:17:06 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Raelyn Reyno Yeomans	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am in **STRONG OPPOSITION** to HB300 as it does not focus on those community based services and housing options that are lacking in our state. Please do not invest in a billion dollar super jail that will divert much needed funds from the community.

We need mental health services and supported housing options at all levels, low cost sober living homes, youth programs, and so much more.

Again, please do not divert funds and focus away from what our community needs right now. Oppose HB300.

Thank you.

ROBERT K. MERCE
2467 Aha Aina Place
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96821
(808) 398-9594

March 4, 2025

TO: Committee on Finance
RE: HB 300
HEARING: Wednesday, March 5, 2025
TIME: 9:00 a.m.
ROOM: Conf. Room 308 and via video conference
POSITION: Comment on funding for jail planning

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the committee:

In 2018, the HCR 85 Task Force on Prison reform warned the Legislature that building a new jail without addressing the factors driving up the jail population and keeping our recidivism rate above 50% was short sighted and a waste of money:

Building new jails and prisons without fundamentally changing our approach to corrections would be short-sighted and a waste of money. The current system has been producing consistently poor outcomes for at least 40 years, and it will continue to do so even with new facilities because the problem is not the facilities—bad as they may be—but our belief that locking people up under harsh conditions for long periods of time will make them better citizens. Until we recognize that our approach is wrong, our correctional outcomes will not improve and our communities will not be safer. What Hawai'i needs at this critical juncture are to transition to a much more effective and sustainable correctional model that focuses on rehabilitation rather than punishment, and to adopt a strategic plan that addresses the many factors that are driving mass incarceration and keeping our recidivism rate above 50%.

Before committing to the size, design, or location of a new jail, or any system, the State—working in a truly collaborative manner with stakeholders and the public—should focus on expanding programs that divert low-level offenders away from the criminal justice system, enact bail reform to reduce the number of pretrial detainees in the jail, create forensic treatment facilities for offenders who are mentally ill, expand community-based programs as an alternative to jail for misdemeanants, house HOPE Probation violators in community-based housing instead of jail, and reserve jail for the small number of individuals who are a flight risk and/or a danger to society.¹

¹ “Creating Better Outcomes, Safer Communities: Final Report of the House Concurrent Resolution 85 Task Force on Prison Reform to the Hawaii Legislature, 2019 Regular Session,” December, 2018, pp. 62-63.

I apologize for the lengthy quotation, but the conclusion the Task Force reached, after two years of hard work studying Hawaii's correctional system, is one of the most important pieces of advice Hawaii's legislators have ever received with regard to criminal justice reform, **and it has been totally ignored**, which is why you now have before you a request for an additional \$30 million to build a \$1 billion jail that, as the Task Force said, will do nothing more than repackage all of the bad ideas of the old jail, and "create bad outcomes for the next half century or more."²

Worse yet, the plan is for the new jail to be acquired through a public private partnership, which means that it will likely be owned and maintained by a company with headquarters thousands of miles away, and whose employees do not live or work in Hawaii. And while the Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS) has tried to put a positive spin on a privately owned jail (the only one in the country?) the one thing it has never discussed is the most important: **How much will the lease rent be initially, what will it be over the life span of the jail, and can we afford the rent?** And this begs the question: why is the administration asking for \$30 million to plan a jail that we probably cannot afford.

If the Legislature's goal is to ultimately spend \$1,000,000,000 of taxpayer money on a jail that is owned by private corporation and to lock the State into a 30 or 40-year lease for a jail we probably can't afford, then by all means approve the \$30 million in the budget for jail planning.

But if the goal is to build a jail that we can afford, and that will make us safer and reduce recidivism, then you should follow the advice of the HCR 85 Task Force and plan a smaller and smarter jail.³ The recently issued report of the University of Hawaii Community Design Center (UHCDC) provides a roadmap for a better jail, and the State plan a jail that aligns with the UHCDC concepts and vision and is owned and operated by the State. Until there is a commitment to reducing the jail population and building a smaller jail, there should be no further appropriations for jail planning.

Thank you for allowing me to testify on this matter.



Robert K. Merce

² Id. p. 80.

³ See *Creating Better Outcomes, Safer Communities*, p. 100.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 7:47:50 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brian Burdt	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a Maui constituent, I am writing in support of the DHS budget appropriation for maintaining the QUEST rates for applied behavior analysis (ABA). I work with families with special health needs and have seen the positive impact access to ABA services has on children and their families, but unfortunately, have also seen the impact of provider shortages and the often long wait for QUEST families to be able to access care.

I respectfully request you maintain these funds in the budget bill.

Mahalo,

Brian Burdt

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 7:58:13 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Faith Kahakelii	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support increased access to ABA services for children with autism. Please keep the funds allocated for QUEST ABA services in the budget.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 8:28:12 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
halia	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support increased access to ABA services for children with autism. Please keep the funds allocated for QUEST ABA services in the budget.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 8:34:37 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sara Dinkelo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha State Representatives & Committee Members:

My name is Sara Dinkelo and I am a board certified behavior analyst. I've been practicing as a behavior analyst for almost 10 years and I have been supporting individuals with developmental disabilities for well over 20.

I am writing today in strong support of HB300. Specifically, I support ensuring the security for ABA services for children with autism by keeping the current funds allocated for QUEST ABA services in Hawaii. I am strong support of making the QUEST ABA rates permanent to ensure the sustainability of needed services.

Throughout my career I have seen the impacts of low reimbursement rates on agencies who are trying to provided needed ABA services across the islands. Local companies are struggling because of continued difficulties with our funders. As a result we see more and more companies coming in from the continent who don't understand the culture here in Hawaii. Securing these rates will give local companies a fighting chance to continue to provide supports to families and individuals who need it most who are impacted by Autism or other developmental disorders.

Mahalo for you time and for your continued work to support our communities.

-Sara Dinkelo

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 8:42:02 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Brian Burdt	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

“Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members:

My name is Brian Burdt and I live in Haiku, Maui. I’m testifying in opposition to HB300 that will expand mass incarceration and the building of a new jail.

We need to focus on the social determinants of health and put our money on and prioritize public health and preventing our community members from being incarcerated. We need to fund youth and education programs, affordable housing, job training, family strengthening, community-based health, treatment and reintegration programs rooted in evidence-based practices, and restorative justice to help us build communities that are safe, healthy, and equitable.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Brian Burdt

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

It is important to our well being. The many programs help to keep us fit and healthy. The programs here help to keep us active and well. It builds camaraderie and friendships, especially for those who live alone.

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Association K.T. Makolo

City where I live: Honolulu

My Zip Code: 96826

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

The Lanakila Center very important to me and other seniors in the community. As we get older we need the social interaction and connecting with others.

The physical activities is so important to our overall well being.

The Center has become a hub for seniors who live close by and seniors across the island.

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Linda Oka

City where I live: Aiewa

My Zip Code: 96817

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

As a retired state worker, Lanakila Senior Center gives me many opportunities to be with other kupuna. I'm learning to dance the hula, play ukulele, line dancing, exercise with weights, American Sign Language, Tai Chi, stretching and singing. We also go out to care homes to entertain the residents with ukulele music, singing and hula.

In 2020 COVID kept us in our homes. But I didn't feel in isolation because Lanakila offered classes on Zoom and felt connected.

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Carole S. Suzui

City where I live: Honolulu

My Zip Code: 96813

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

Funding is very important to help us seniors stay active to stay healthy and ~~not~~ also physically but ~~not~~ mentally. which helps to keep us relevant and able to contribute well to society!

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Lynne Howells

City where I live: Honolulu

My Zip Code: 96822

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

The Center is very important to many seniors from various backgrounds. It is a place where seniors make a continue friendship. They learn many new skills such as computer - phone - yoga - dance & singing. Many get to re connect with their own culture & learn about other cultures. The many activities keep the mind & body active - using your brain & body keeps one "young" & decreases the risk for increase mental health issues & medical problems. The cost is minimal - helping those with fixed income.

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Blossom Mau

City where I live: Honolulu

My Zip Code: 96822

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

It is important to have the seniors come to the center for various classes, informative health, exercise, etc. & presentations.

These classes & presentations help to keep the seniors healthy & mentally alert -

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: JEAN SUGIMARA

City where I live: HONOLULU

My Zip Code: 96817

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

Lanakila Multi-Purpose Center provides an essential and vital service for thousands of senior citizens (Kupuna). It has so many different classes to keep Kupuna active and stimulated. It also gives many lonely Kupuna a ^{safe} place to "hang out" and socialize.

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Mae Hong

City where I live: Honolulu

My Zip Code: 96817

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

For Kupuna to stay happy & healthy and focused. A place where Kupuna feels safe and part of a community

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Elizabeth Irvine

City where I live: Honolulu

My Zip Code: 96822

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

With all the many classes and presentations put on by LMPSC, us seniors are able to strengthen our minds and body.

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: DIANE KAWAKAMI

City where I live: Honolulu

My Zip Code: 96826

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

It is important for ^{us} seniors to be stimulated and have an opportunity to learn all ~~these~~ ^{our} lives so that we age well and stay healthy in body and ~~mind~~ mind. Lanakila Senior Center gives us that opportunity, as well as the chance to make new friends and have conversations, which also helps...

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Sharon Isa

City where I live: Honolulu

My Zip Code: 96814

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

Very, very important! It is part of our "kupuna" everyday lifestyle. It gives us a place to wake-up & go to exercise us body & soul. We appreciate all the activities they provide which we enjoy & keeps us healthy!
Mahalo!

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: SHARON NAKAI

City where I live: HONOLULU

My Zip Code: 96817

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center is
Very important for my everyday life.
It supports my physical and mental function.

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Myunghae Sueno

City where I live: Honolulu

My Zip Code: 96818

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

ALL WAYS HAVE SPECIAL PROGRAM.
MAKE A FRIEND

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: YOSHIKO KUMURA

City where I live: Waipahu

My Zip Code: 96797

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

The center provides activities and promotes socialization of seniors. There are classes to develop and promote movement and exercises, tai chi. And even chair tai chi for those of us who cannot do the regular tai chi, but still can exercise.

The music classes gives us the opportunity to perform at Care Centers to ^{entertain} ~~entertain~~ people who are institutionally. Gives us purpose and gratitude.

The center also provides us opportunities to venture out to places that most of us could not attend, expanding our horizons and develop interests in our island.

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Toi Endo

City where I live: Honolulu

My Zip Code: 96818

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

Because it gives the people (Kuyama) access to things they need to keep in shape and maintain their health.

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Yvonne Chin

City where I live: Honolulu My Zip Code: 96821

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

Lanakila MPSC provides an invaluable service to our Kupuana population. The activities provided address all aspects of health needs through social, physical, mental + emotional activities contributing to the well being of our Kupuana. The center continuously looks for new, appropriate activities. Many are free, including the Tai chi For Health Class that I provide for the center. Financially, I strongly believe that any investment in this center reduces the overall health costs for everyone.

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Randal M. C. Lau

City where I live: Honolulu

My Zip Code: 96821

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

Without the necessary funding from the State the Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center cannot provide all the ~~major~~ classes & various activities that are provided for the seniors. This is the only place many of the seniors come & look forward to socialization & participating in various activities to help them cope with their daily activities.

Without the Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center it will be very devastating as for many seniors this is the only place they come to. This Senior Center keeps their lives enriched, keeps them active & "Young at heart!"

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Diana F. Kawaguchi

City where I live: Kaialua

My Zip Code: 96734

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

TAKE CARES OF THE SENIOR ACTIVITIES.
I like to VOLUNTEER, TAKE CLASS AND MEETING.
FRIENDS, SOCIALIZE ALSO KEEP MY MIND GOING
TO LEARN ^{at} CLASSES.

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Neduko Oshiro

City where I live: Mililani

My Zip Code: 96789

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

LMPSC is so important to keeping seniors in good health. IF not for LMPSC the seniors would be left sitting at home with nothing to do. Dementia and other problems would plague them. So they need LMPSC to keep them hale and healthy.

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Betty Ann Schoepfer

City where I live: Kaneohe

My Zip Code: 96744

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

It's important for the seniors to get together or have new friends instead of being lonely at home.

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Barbara S. Satter

City where I live: Hick

My Zip Code: 96761

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

After I retired, going to Lanakila Senior Center has been my main place for keeping busy and involved. I am so happy with all the classes and events and other special things the center provides to keep me happy and involved. I really feel this place has enriched my life tremendously.
I love it here.

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Jubie Anne Tamayori

City where I live: Honolulu

My Zip Code: 96817

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

Lanakila has provided a wonderful place for seniors (men & women) to have a place to meet, participate in all sorts of classes, make new friends.

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Jean Murohama

City where I live: Honolulu

My Zip Code: 96825

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

Center provides classes such as hula, tai chi,
flex & fit and club meeting space.

Great place to come a few days a
week to socialize and interact with other
Seniors.

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Sandra Lum

City where I live: Kaneohe

My Zip Code: 96744

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

*Funding the Lanakila MP Senior Ctr.
would benefit all the active
seniors that participate in
the programs they offer.*

*I look forward to coming here
because I can find ^{helpful} messages
& flyers that I find will
help me.*

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Elaine Madeid

City where I live: Honolulu

My Zip Code: 96819

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

To keep the Facility Safe
and proper for the people

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Floyd Tasaka

City where I live: Kapolei

My Zip Code: 96707

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

a place for the Kupunas to
meet. Its good for their
health and mind

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Rose

City where I live: Honolulu My Zip Code: 96819

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

The center is important for the many seniors who gather here to learn, keep busy & healthy.

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Ellen Kishimoto

City where I live: Salt Lake

My Zip Code: 96818

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

It provides an essential service to the seniors — providing exercise, education, and social activities. With multiple and various activities, they provide services for many ethnicities. It is an important center for the seniors.

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Satsuki Higa

City where I live: Honolulu

My Zip Code: 96817

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center provides invaluable classes and opportunities for social interaction and stimulation. Such a wonderful variety of physical exercise and informative speakers!

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Gayle Fukunaga

City where I live: Aiea

My Zip Code: 96701

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

Taking the classes are very beneficial, Thank You!

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: JOAN KINA

City where I live: HONOLULU

My Zip Code: 96817

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

*A place for seniors get to
do activities & make new friends*

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: *Amy Imayoshi*

City where I live: *Aiea*

My Zip Code: *96701*

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

*THIS IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR ALL SENIOR CITIZENS
LIVING IN HAWAII, TO KEEP ACTIVE & MOVING. IT WILL
HELP & BENEFIT NOT ONLY THE SENIORS, BUT ALL PEOPLE
HERE IN HAWAII*

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Soyee D. Wong

City where I live: Honolulu,

My Zip Code: 96821

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

Recently retired center offers variety of classes to keep you busy for both mind and body. Helps with social skills too.

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: JoAnn Jones

City where I live: Honolulu

My Zip Code: 96821

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

- 1) I get much physical exercise.
- 2) I received much valuable information and updates on health, electronics, etc.

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: HARRIET ISA

City where I live: HONOLULU

My Zip Code: 96822

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

*Dementia Prevention
Senior Housing
Social Outlet*

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Dennis Kono

City where I live: Honolulu

My Zip Code: 96817

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

The many classes and clubs keeps us active.
Volunteering keep us busy.
We get to meet and make new friends.
The different presentations like health education
Seam and ~~board~~ keeps us informed.

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Jean Sugiyama

City where I live: Honolulu

My Zip Code: 96819

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

This is the best place to exercise,
stimulate my mind and have lots of
fun with other senior members my age.
A safe and well organized place.

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: _____

City where I live: _____

My Zip Code: _____

Hope Hironaga
Pearl City 96702

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

It is important because it keeps me active and keeps my mind stimulated.

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Sarah Swisher

City where I live: ~~FE~~ Honolulu. My Zip Code: 96813

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

LMPSC provides multiple opportunities - classes, activities, lectures, community service - to keep seniors healthy, engaged, socialized, active, informed, and happy!

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Irene Hino

City where I live: Honolulu

My Zip Code: 96822

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

*Sponsors community endeavors
provides seniors w/ activities and wellness support*

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: SHARON SHIRAKI

City where I live: HONOLULU

My Zip Code: 96817

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

LMPSC services hundreds of keperua daily via classes, field trips, etc... Not only do we gain valuable information and enjoyment, but first & foremost, the socialization is vital! For many of us, LMPSC is a home away from home - contributes greatly to our physical & emotional wellness.

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Rosie Ramirez

City where I live: Pearl City

My Zip Code: 96782

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

TO KEEP OUR SENIOR ACTIVE
& A PLACE TO FELLOWSHIP.

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: DORIS DOUGHEY

City where I live: HON

My Zip Code: 96807

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

WE CAN MAKE PLENTY FRIENDS
NICE PROGRAM AND EXPERIENCE
EVERY BODY ENJOYED TO SEE EACH OTHER

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: TAKAKO GOYA

City where I live: HONOLULU

My Zip Code: 96822

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

LMPSC is a very important meeting place for the senior population. The many activities provide an opportunity for old people to mingle - combine socializing. Without this place, where would people go to find friendship and fun?

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Donald Chun

City where I live: Honolulu

My Zip Code: 96817

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

*I am Member of Lanakila Senior Center
I'm in ~~Hawaii~~ Happy wherever always travel to
other part of the island to perform many different
places. I really enjoy some of the Excursion & bus
trips, Mahalo plenty.*

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Erlene Waiaa

City where I live: 98-501 Koa'Kapa My Zip Code: Aiea, HI 96201

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

Seniors need a place to be entertained

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: ERNA CHAIR CHAIR

City where I live: Palmyra My Zip Code: 9-3-2025

TO: Rep Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Committee on Finance

RE: **IN SUPPORT of GIA funding for Catholic Charities Hawaii/
Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center**

Please support GIA funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center, a program of Catholic Charities Hawaii, in the amount of \$175,000.

Why is funding for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center important:

LMPSC is the best thing I have had for my Jr free moments to stay of a wholesome engage of movements - cognitively, mentally, physically, emotionally, psychologically, etc. My whole being has been utilized of connecting to the staff of programs, classes, speakers, excursions, social contact stimulation - can't see where else would provide →

Your support of the Grant-in-Aid request of Catholic Charities Hawaii for Lanakila Multi-Purpose Senior Center helps seniors like me to remain independent and active in the community. Mahalo.

PRINT Name: Liz Luan

City where I live: Hon

My Zip Code: 96813

maybe should say
2nd place LMPSC

opportunities to stay young at heart
in all parts of my functional
being.

Stimulation in all needs of
staying as a good - near perfect
person - Meets all my needs
as a retiree - Now free
from grandchild responsibilities
gives me a chance for "self"

Stay young

#1 club TS LAPS C

#1 ☺

Even opportunity to keep
place clean & beautiful

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 8:54:31 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kehaulani Dickerson	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support maintaining QUEST ABA rate increases in the budget to help children with autism. Individuals with autism need our support and ABA to live a meaningful life for themselves and their Ohana.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 8:55:28 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alan Morita	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

- I support increased access to ABA services for children with autism. Please keep the funds allocated for QUEST ABA services in the budget.
- I support making the QUEST ABA rates permanent.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 9:58:44 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Shoushawna Kahikikala La'anui-Wilcox (Jackson)	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members:

My name is Shoushawna Arielle Kahikikala La'anui-Wilcox (Jackson) and I live in Honolulu, Hawaii. I'm testifying in opposition to provisions in HB300 that expand mass incarceration and the building of a new \$1 billion super jail.

Budgets reveal what and who we care new OCCC, but we don't need a new, \$1 billion jail. Instead, we need to fund youth and education programs, - affordable housing, job training, diversion infrastructure, family strengthening and violence interruption programs, community-based health, treatment and reintegration programs rooted in evidence-based practices, and = restorative justice to help us build communities that are safe, healthy, and equitable.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 10:01:06 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Scott Nishimoto	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

House Committee on Finance

Representative Kyle Yamashita, Chair

Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

March 4, 2025

Conference Room 308

RE: In Opposition to HB300

Dear Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of the Committee,

My name is Scott Nishimoto, and I'm the Co-Executive Director of Ceeds of Peace – a local nonprofit organization whose mission is to raise peacebuilding leaders. I'm testifying in opposition to provisions in HB300 that expand mass incarceration and the building of a new \$1 billion super jail.

Specifically, I am concerned about the current budget bill's appropriation of \$30 million for planning related to the proposed new jail to replace OCCC and \$10 million for a 10-year Department of Corrections Statewide Master Plan.

It is irresponsible to allocate this kind of money to “planning” for a prison expansion in a year in which we are facing unprecedented threats to public education and so many other services for vulnerable populations. Doing so, while also failing to fund important initiatives like HB754 (Community Schools) and HB757 (Universal School Lunch), would reveal that our state is choosing to prioritize mass incarceration over our most vulnerable keiki.

Currently, 40% of all people in jail in Hawai'i are houseless. Over 50% are Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander. It is clear to us that this would not be the case, and we would not need more prison beds, if we were to simply divest in the carceral system and instead make historic investments in the continuum of care – public education, supportive housing, and mental health care, just to name a few.

Please pass a budget that prioritizes the safety and well-being of our entire community. We are opposing HB300 because it fails to do so.

Sincerely,

Scott Nishimoto

Co-Executive Director, Ceeds of Peace

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 10:32:57 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alysa Lavoie	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

March 4, 2025

RE: Public Comment re: HB 300

Dear Chair Yamashita,

I appreciate the opportunity to submit comments on HB 300 and the critical need to invest in reproductive health and family planning services, aligning with Governor Green’s proposed budget.

As a health care provider working directly with patients in our community, I have seen firsthand the impact of Title X family planning funds, which were reintroduced in Hawai‘i in 2022 through a partnership with Essential Access Health.

Family planning services provide patients with a full range of birth control options, STI testing and treatment, pregnancy testing and options counseling, and cancer screenings. Title X funding is essential in supporting over 30 health care sites across the state, strengthening the healthcare workforce, ensuring same-day contraceptive care, and delivering essential health education.

The health center I work for provided family planning to over 4,000 unique patients thanks to Title X funding. This included over 7,000 STI tests and contraceptive care for over 3,700 patients. The consequences of reduced funding would be devastating for those who rely on these essential services. We would see an overwhelming surge in STI transmission rates and unplanned pregnancies.

With ongoing threats to the Title X program, state funding is critical to supplement federal dollars and safeguard these essential services.

Despite Hawai‘i’s strong commitment to expanding access to care, additional action and funding are urgently needed to ensure that all residents can obtain the reproductive health services they need. While federal funding has helped rebuild family planning programs, it is not enough to fully meet the demand. With ongoing threats to the Title X program, state funding is critical to supplement federal dollars and safeguard these essential services.

Thank you for considering this testimony.

Kind Regards,

Alysa Lavoie, MSW

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 10:54:52 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alice Smith	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members:

*My name is Alice Smith, MD and I live in Honolulu (96813). I'm testifying in opposition to provisions in **HB300** that expand mass incarceration and the building of a new \$1 billion super jail.*

Budgets reveal what and who we care about. The proposed budget includes an appropriation for the building of a new OCCC, but we don't need a new, \$1 billion jail. Instead, we need to fund youth and education programs, affordable housing, job training, family strengthening and violence interruption programs, community-based health, treatment and reintegration programs rooted in evidence-based practices, and restorative justice to help us build communities that are safe, healthy, and equitable.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Testimony Presented Before the
House Committee on Finance
Wednesday, March 05, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.
By
Brennon Morioka

HB 300 – RELATING TO THE STATE BUDGET

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and members of Finance Committee:

I currently serve as the Dean of the College of Engineering at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa; however, submitting this testimony in my individual capacity.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and to make a request for consideration in HB 300. We are requesting for an extension of funds for the University of Hawai'i to develop wildfire susceptibility and vulnerability maps for the State of Hawai'i.

We received funds from the State Legislature in fiscal year 2024-2025 to generate wildfire susceptibility and vulnerability maps. However, the funds were released to the University of Hawai'i with only a 6-month duration remaining in the fiscal year and thus will not be able to fully utilize the appropriation and complete this project on time. We request an extension of the lapse date for these funds for this project and re-appropriation for the fiscal year 2025-2026.

Wildfire susceptibility and vulnerability maps 1) help identify areas that are more susceptible to wildfire hazard, 2) allow decision-makers to prioritize high-risk areas for targeted risk reduction strategies, and 3) assist in the development of adaptation policies that lessen the disastrous impacts of future wildfires. Decision-makers can use wildfire vulnerability maps to guide zoning regulations to reduce the impact of wildfires on communities. Moreover, authorities will be more informed about policies allowing construction in vulnerable areas and locating essential facilities (e.g., hospitals, schools, and firefighting stations) in areas that are less vulnerable to wildfires.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 11:20:52 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michela Passos	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

RE: Public Comment re: HB 300

Dear Chair Yamashita,

I appreciate the opportunity to submit comments on HB 300 and the critical need to invest in reproductive health and family planning services, aligning with Governor Green’s proposed budget.

As a health care provider working directly with patients in our community, I have seen firsthand the impact of Title X family planning funds, which were reintroduced in Hawai‘i in 2022 through a partnership with Essential Access Health.

Family planning services provide patients with a full range of birth control options, STI testing and treatment, pregnancy testing and options counseling, and cancer screenings. Title X funding is essential in supporting over 30 health care sites across the state, strengthening the healthcare workforce, ensuring same-day contraceptive care, and delivering essential health education.

The health center where I work provided family planning to over 4,500 unique patients thanks to Title X/family planning funding. This included over 7,000 STI tests (and treatment) and contraceptive care for over 3,700 patients. The consequences of reduced funding would be devastating for those who rely on these essential services. We would see an overwhelming surge in STI transmission rates and unplanned pregnancies.

With ongoing threats to the Title X program, state funding is critical to supplement federal dollars and safeguard these essential services.

Despite Hawai‘i’s strong commitment to expanding access to care, additional action and funding are urgently needed to ensure that all residents can obtain the reproductive health services they need. While federal funding has helped rebuild family planning programs, it is not enough to fully meet the demand. With ongoing threats to the Title X program, state funding is critical to supplement federal dollars and safeguard these essential services.

Thank you for considering this testimony.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 11:33:59 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noelle Lindenmann	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members:

My name is Noelle Lindenmann and I live in Kailua-Kona. I'm testifying in opposition to provisions in **HB300** that expand mass incarceration and the building of a new \$1 billion super jail.

Budgets reveal what and who we care about. The proposed budget includes an appropriation for the building of a new OCCC, but we don't need a new, \$1 billion jail. Instead, we need to fund youth and education programs, affordable housing, job training, family strengthening and violence interruption programs, community-based health, treatment and reintegration programs rooted in evidence-based practices, and restorative justice to help us build communities that are safe, healthy, and equitable.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Noelle Lindenmann, Kailua-Kona

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 11:41:45 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kailey Reyes	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support increased access to ABA services for children with autism. Please keep the funds allocated for QUEST ABA services in the budget.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 12:09:13 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kareem Khozaim	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a health care provider working directly with patients in our community, I have seen firsthand the impact of Title X family planning funds.

Family planning services provide patients with a full range of birth control options, STI testing and treatment, pregnancy testing and options counseling, and cancer screenings. Title X funding is essential in supporting over 30 health care sites across the state, strengthening the healthcare workforce, ensuring same-day contraceptive care, and delivering essential health education.

The health center where I work provided family planning to over 4,500 unique patients thanks to Title X/family planning funding. This included over 7,000 STI tests (and treatment) and contraceptive care for over 3,700 patients. The consequences of reduced funding would be devastating for those who rely on these essential services. We would see an overwhelming surge in STI transmission rates and unplanned pregnancies.

With ongoing threats to the Title X program, state funding is critical to supplement federal dollars and safeguard these essential services.

Despite Hawai'i's strong commitment to expanding access to care, additional action and funding are urgently needed to ensure that all residents can obtain the reproductive health services they need. While federal funding has helped rebuild family planning programs, it is not enough to fully meet the demand. With ongoing threats to the Title X program, state funding is critical to supplement federal dollars and safeguard these essential services.

As an Ob/Gyn physician, I personally have to take care of pregnant patients who are as young as 14. I can testify that delivering a baby at age 14-18 carries serious consequences for a teenage girl. It often results in the teen not completing her self identified goals of finishing high school, attending college, apprenticeship, starting work, living independantly, achieving financial security. Teen pregnancies cause alot of the stress in the relationship and most don't survive, resulting in single mom teen households. Free, same day contraception is a highly effective strategy to reduce teen pregnancies. Title X supports this strategy in our community.

Thank you for considering this testimony.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 12:41:22 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sirinya Yothawong	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

- *I support increased access to ABA services for children with autism. Please keep the funds allocated for QUEST ABA services in the budget.*
- *I support making the QUEST ABA rates permanent.*

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 1:17:27 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sarabeth Basoukas	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Yamashita,

I appreciate the opportunity to submit comments on HB 300 and the critical need to invest in reproductive health and family planning services, aligning with Governor Green’s proposed budget.

Working for a FQHC directly with patients in our community, I have seen firsthand the impact of Title X family planning funds, which were reintroduced in Hawai‘i in 2022 through a partnership with Essential Access Health.

Family planning services provide patients with a full range of birth control options, STI testing and treatment, pregnancy testing and options counseling, and cancer screenings. Title X funding is essential in supporting over 30 health care sites across the state, strengthening the healthcare workforce, ensuring same-day contraceptive care, and delivering essential health education.

The health center where I work provided family planning to over 4,500 unique patients thanks to Title X/family planning funding. This included over 7,000 STI tests (and treatment) and contraceptive care for over 3,700 patients. The consequences of reduced funding would be devastating for those who rely on these essential services. We would see an overwhelming surge in STI transmission rates and unplanned pregnancies.

With ongoing threats to the Title X program, state funding is critical to supplement federal dollars and safeguard these essential services.

Despite Hawai‘i’s strong commitment to expanding access to care, additional action and funding are urgently needed to ensure that all residents can obtain the reproductive health services they need. While federal funding has helped rebuild family planning programs, it is not enough to fully meet the demand. With ongoing threats to the Title X program, state funding is critical to supplement federal dollars and safeguard these essential services.

Thank you for considering this testimony.

Kind Regards,

~ Sarabeth Basoukas

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 1:51:27 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kimberly Dark	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members:

*My name is [NAME] and I live in [TOWN]. I'm testifying in opposition to provisions in **HB300** that expand mass incarceration and the building of a new \$1 billion super jail.*

Budgets reveal what and who we care about. The proposed budget includes an appropriation for the building of a new OCCC, but we don't need a new, \$1 billion jail. Instead, we need to fund youth and education programs, affordable housing, job training, family strengthening and violence interruption programs, community-based health, treatment and reintegration programs rooted in evidence-based practices, and restorative justice to help us build communities that are safe, healthy, and equitable.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 1:57:46 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Caroline Kunitake	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB300. Please support this bill.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 2:16:11 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Patrick Uchigakiuchi	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members:

My name is Patrick Uchigakiuchi, and I live in Honolulu, Hawaii. I am testifying in opposition to provisions in HB300 that expand mass incarceration and the building of a new \$1 billion super jail.

We don't need a new, \$1 billion jail. Hawai'i can create *true* safety for all by more accurately meeting the needs of the many individuals currently overcrowding our jails. This involves greater emphasis on the Judiciary and community-based diversion programs and ensuring sufficient funding to our presently under-funded community-based social services and health/mental health care programs. More specifically, research clearly shows that we can reduce the need for bigger jails by providing affordable housing, job training, family strengthening and violence interruption programs, community-based health, treatment and reintegration programs rooted in evidence-based practices, including restorative justice and culture-based programs that strengthen personal, family, and community well-being to help us build communities that are safe, healthy, and equitable. This also includes prevention and early intervention programs to prevent vulnerable youth and families from becoming impacted by social determinants that increase their vulnerability to involvement in our criminal justice system.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Patrick Uchigakiuchi

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 2:27:36 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carla Blevins	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita,

I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony in favor of HB300 and express the vital need to invest in family planning and reproductive health as it aligns with Governor Green's proposal budget. I work in a health care setting and directly with patients in our diverse community. I have witnessed the positive impact that Title X family planning funding, which was introduced in partnership with EHA (Essential Access Health) The health center that I work at has been able provide family planning services to almost 5000 patients as a result of Title X funding. With the possibility of the loss of Title X funding, state funding is crucial in ensuring that these essential services are available to those who need it most.

I appreciate your consideration of this testimony.

With sincere respect,

Carla Blevins

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 2:30:37 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Franz Weber	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Chair Yamashita,

I would like to emphasize the critical need to invest in reproductive health and family planning services, aligning with Governor Green’s proposed budget.

Family planning services provide patients with a full range of birth control options, STI testing and treatment, pregnancy testing and options counseling, and cancer screenings. Title X funding is essential in supporting over 30 health care sites across the state, strengthening the healthcare workforce, ensuring same-day contraceptive care, and delivering essential health education.

State funding is critical to supplement federal dollars and safeguard these essential services. In the West Hawaii community, one health center provided critical family planning services to over 4,500 patients thanks to Title X funding. This included over 7,000 STI tests and contraceptive care for 3,700 patients. The consequences of reduced funding would be devastating for those who rely on these essential services.

Despite Hawai‘i’s strong commitment to expanding access to care, additional action and funding are urgently needed to ensure that all residents can obtain the reproductive health services they need.

Thank you for your time and consideration and your support

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 4:36:46 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristin Lee	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Reproductive and sexual health and rights are under attack in this country. Thus, in Hawai‘i, we must ensure that safety-net family planning providers will continue to be able to provide essential healthcare services and have the necessary funding to do so. I believe that healthcare is a fundamental right for all people. Safety-net family planning providers (e.g., Planned Parenthood) ensure that essential reproductive and sexual healthcare can continue to be accessed by low income and underinsured individuals. These services include screenings for cervical cancer, STI testing and treatment, birth control services, and gender-affirming care. Thus, I strongly support increased funding in the proposed state budget (HB300) for family planning services.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 4:47:20 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sean Harmon	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members:

My understanding is that HB300 contains language allowing for private involvement in the building and maintenance of a new prison. There should never be private involvement in our detention system. Incentivizing incarceration (ie-the more prisoners you have, the more money the private company makes)is immoral and unethical leading to innocent people being jailed and/or jailed for excessive terms. Much like our health care system, this is a situation where the government needs to be in full control of the system.

Mahalo for your consideration

Sean Harmon

Kamuela, Island of Hawai'i

3/4/2025

In Support of HB300

Dear Chair Yamashita,

I have worked in the health clinic setting, in the reproductive health specialty, for the last seven years. Over this time, I've witnessed firsthand the immense benefits that the Title X / Family Planning program has brought to our local community. The funding from this program is utilized daily in the reproductive health specialty, and it is essential for the continued success of these services. The health center I work for provided Family Planning services to over 4,500 patients in our community last year.

Key aspects of the program include a wide range of services offered such as various contraceptive options, including emergency contraception, STI testing and treatment, pregnancy testing, and pregnancy options counseling. Importantly, these services include same-day contraceptive care. This program is especially crucial for our teenagers and patients who are either uninsured or underinsured by their insurance providers.

Having accessible resources for patients to engage actively with their reproductive health rights is invaluable. These services not only provide immediate care, but they also have lasting positive effects on our community by allowing individuals to make informed decisions about their health and futures.

The potential repercussions of cutting these services would be severe, leading to an increase in unplanned pregnancies and higher rates of STI transmission. This funding currently supports 30 healthcare sites throughout Hawaii and has positively impacted thousands of lives. The continuity of these services is dependent on state funding, which is essential to supplement federal dollars and ensure that these reproductive health/ Family Planning services remain available to those who need them most.

For the health and well-being of our community, I strongly urge the support of HB 300.

Sincerely,

T. Carvalho, RN, BSN

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 7:32:33 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lauren N. Bundschuh DDS	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

For too long Hawaii has had the notorious record of having the highest rate of tooth decay in the *nation*. It also is too long for Hawaii to be without an Oral Health program for her people. It is time to invest in our children. By investing in oral health, we invest in their overall health. We need a proactive mindset, a proactive approach, a proactive program to change this shameful reality into a model of effective care that we can be proud of. It starts with passing HB300.

Mahalo for your time and careful consideration,

Lauren N. Bundschuh, DDS

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 8:05:53 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Thaddeus Pham	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members,

As a taxpaying citizen concerned with wasteful expenditures, I write in **STRONG OPPOSITION** to provisions in **HB300** that expand mass incarceration and the building of a new \$1 billion super jail.

The proposed budget includes an appropriation for the building of a new OCCC, but we don't need a new, \$1 billion jail. Instead, we need to fund youth and education programs, affordable housing, job training, family strengthening and violence interruption programs, community-based health, treatment and reintegration programs rooted in evidence-based practices, and restorative justice to help us build communities that are safe, healthy, and equitable.

Mahalo,

Thaddeus Pham (he/him)

Makiki, HI

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/4/2025 8:29:09 PM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Pablo Wegesend	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in support of using the money to build an updated version of the Oahu Community Correction Center (aka O.C.C.C). As it currently is, the O.C.C.C. is an outdated, unsanitary and inhumane facility. It's time to be build a more updated, sanitary and humane facility for the inmates which will make it easier for them to access rehabilitative programs and eventually re-enter normal society.

Some opponents of the bill claim that "we don't need another jail". But there are some people who need to be in jail. We just got to ensure that the jail is updated, sanitary and humane for the inmates.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/5/2025 7:36:22 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Gabrielle Capp	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I oppose the appropriation of \$1 billion dollars to build a new OCCC. We should be investing that monry into evidence based solutions that will get to the root of our issues. Those look like affordable housing, youth education, job training, diversion infrastructure, and community based health, treatment and reintegration programs.

Mahalo.

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/5/2025 8:01:34 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mecca Monson-Gere	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members:

*I'm testifying in opposition to provisions in **HB300** that expand mass incarceration and the building of a new \$1 billion super jail.*

Budgets reveal what and who we care about. The proposed budget includes an appropriation for the building of a new OCCC, but we don't need a new, \$1 billion jail. Instead, we need to fund youth and education programs, affordable housing, job training, family strengthening and violence interruption programs, community-based health, treatment and reintegration programs rooted in evidence-based practices, and restorative justice to help us build communities that are safe, healthy, and equitable.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

M. Monson-Gere

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/5/2025 8:04:42 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kristen Young	Individual	Oppose	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members:

My name is Kristen Young, I grew up on O‘ahu and currently live in Makiki. In my individual capacity I participate as a member of the Reimagining Public Safety in Hawai‘i coalition and Faith Action for Community Equity which has advocated for housing and bail reform among other issues. I’m testifying in strong opposition to provisions in HB300 that expand mass incarceration and the building of a new \$1 billion super jail.

When I look around today at our islands, I am saddened by what I see. We have clearly not invested in the wellbeing of the people of this place. There are also things that much of the public does not get to see, such as our own neighbors locked up in jail/prison. According to Prison Policy Initiative, Hawai‘i’s incarceration rate stands out internationally, locking up a higher percentage of its people than almost any democratic country on Earth. Among those locked up, Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, and Black residents are overrepresented. This should disturb all of us.

People are not naturally criminals. We need to consider the conditions that can lead to someone being locked up in our legal system and address those. People don’t need to be locked up— they need supportive housing, healthcare, treatment, food, community services and support. We CAN’T fund these things if we’re spending nearly \$1 billion on a new jail and even more to then keep people in there.

Budgets reveal what and who we care about. The proposed budget includes an appropriation for the building of a new OCCC, but we don’t need a new \$1 billion jail. Instead, we need to fund youth and education programs, affordable housing, job training, family strengthening and violence interruption programs, community-based health, treatment and reintegration programs rooted in evidence-based practices, and restorative justice to help us build communities that are safe, healthy, and equitable.

Last week, a bill that would provide universal free school meals for public school students was killed, not even given a hearing. I assume it was due to budget concerns. The fact that we (you) would not even entertain the possibility of feeding keiki while we proceed to lock up their caregivers is appalling and deeply concerning.

Investing in a new jail would be DIVESTING in infrastructure and services that could truly support our community and I believe this would increase harm in our communities. For this reason I oppose HB300.

Please prioritize people, including the most vulnerable, in the budget.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Kristen Young
Honolulu, HI 96813

HB-300

Submitted on: 3/5/2025 8:52:26 AM

Testimony for FIN on 3/5/2025 9:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Emily Sarasa	Individual	Oppose	In Person

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee Members,

I oppose provisions of the budget bill that expand mass incarceration and the building of a billion-dollar replacement for OCCC. How many people are in jail right now that don't need to be? According to our our DCR Director, too many. The recent report from Prison Policy Initiative demonstrates we don't need a billion dollar jail. We need to invest a fraction of those funds into decarceration measures (diversion programs, housing, etc.) and fully implement bail reform to ease overcrowding. If you build a bigger cage, which is the intention behind these additional appropriations, then you will fill it. As a constituent and taxpayer, I would rather you invest these funds into preventative measures, not a bigger and fancier cage.

Mahalo,

Emily Sarasa, 96813