

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**  
P. O. Box 3378  
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378  
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**Testimony in SUPPORT of H.B. 1112**  
**RELATING TO THE VENDING FACILITIES PROGRAM**

REPRESENTATIVE RYAN I. YAMANE, CHAIR  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, HUMAN SERVICES, & HOMELESSNESS

Hearing Date: 2/9/2021

Hearing Time: 9:30 a.m.

1 **Department Position:** The Department of Health (“Department”) strongly supports this  
2 measure and offers comments.

3 **Department Testimony:** The subject matter of this measure intersects with the scope of the  
4 Department’s Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) whose statutory mandate is to assure a  
5 comprehensive statewide behavioral health care system by leveraging and coordinating public,  
6 private and community resources. Through the BHA, the Department is committed to carrying  
7 out this mandate by reducing silos, ensuring behavioral health care is readily accessible, and  
8 person-centered.

9 The Department strongly supports the expansion of the vendor facilities program which  
10 will provide independent employment opportunities for persons living with mental illness in our  
11 state. If passed, people living with mental illness will have the opportunity to pursue self-  
12 employment, enlarging their economic opportunities and stimulating them to greater efforts in  
13 striving to make themselves self sufficient. They will also have the opportunity to provide  
14 employment opportunities for others with mental illness.

15 The Adult Mental Health Division (AMHD) Psychosocial Rehabilitation (PSR) Clubhouse  
16 program will provide ongoing supports to Hawaii Clubhouse members and assist in partnering  
17 with training with Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

1 (DVR) Ho'oponopono Program. The intent is that those with diagnosed mental illness will have  
2 the opportunity to establish a vendor business in state building currently without a blind  
3 vendor.

4 We emphasize that the intent of this bill is not to replace or decrease opportunities for  
5 vendors participating in the Ho'oponopono Program, but to extend the program to include  
6 those with mental illness in state and county public buildings currently without a blind vendor.

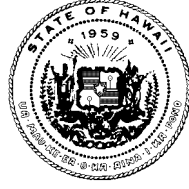
7 **Offered Amendments:** None.

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

9 **Fiscal Implications:** Undetermined.

LATE

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



CATHY BETTS  
DIRECTOR

JOSEPH CAMPOS II  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

February 8, 2021

TO: The Honorable Representative Ryan I. Yamane, Chair  
House Committee on Health, Human Services, & Homelessness

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 1112 – RELATING TO THE VENDING FACILITIES PROGRAM**

Hearing: Tuesday, February 9, 2021, 9:30 a.m.  
Via Videoconference, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent and provides comments.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the bill is to allow persons with a mental illness to access use of public buildings for the purpose of providing remunerative employment through vending facilities for self-employment. The bill limits vending facilities owned or operated by persons with mental health disorders to only those state or county public buildings not currently occupied by blind or visually handicapped vendors.

The federal Randolph-Sheppard Act was passed by Congress in 1936, giving blind entrepreneurs the right to operate businesses on federal government property. The amendments of 1974 expanded the Randolph-Sheppard Act to include military troop dining, cafeterias, and food service.

Prior to Statehood, Hawaii's Territorial Legislature codified its own version of the Randolph-Sheppard Act in 1937, now at section 102-14, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), and is known in Hawaii as the "Mini Randolph-Sheppard Act." Like the federal law, section 102-14,

HRS, extends the priority for blind vending facilities to state or county public buildings in Hawaii.

DHS Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR), Ho`opono Services for the Blind Branch, is designated by the United States Department of Education's Rehabilitation Services Administration (DOE RSA) as the State Licensing Agency (SLA) for managing the federal Randolph-Sheppard program to support eligible blind and visually impaired individuals to maintain vending stands through self-employment, also associated with their remunerative employment.

Should state law be modified to include individuals with mental illness to establish vending facilities on state property, DHS will require an additional general fund appropriation for staff and operations as funding received from the federal Randolph-Sheppard program is only available to those eligible individuals who are blind or have visual impairments.

DVR's federal award and the required state match used to support eligible individuals with disabilities to obtain employment in Hawaii's workforce would allow for expenditures associated with an approved Individualized Plan for Employment with self-employment goals but would be limited in providing any long-term supports. DVR's funding would only allow for the establishment of a vending stand to support the placement of an eligible individual with mental illness to operate a vending stand, but under a limited timeframe of less than five years.

Whereas DVR's Randolph-Sheppard program provides ongoing support for the duration of a blind vendors operation of the vending facility. With small businesses operating food services in Hawaii pre-pandemic, the estimated failure rates were above 50% during the first three years of operations. Without long-term funding for these vendors with mental illness, they would be at higher risk for failure than their blind or visually impaired peers in the current pandemic and economic crisis.

Due to the pandemic conditions, Hawaii's blind vendors' businesses are suffering. Many are still open or are preparing to reopen in order to subsist, despite risks to their health and a long anticipated recovery period, as well as the new model for teleworking that has decreased foot traffic in many facilities over the past 11 months. However, the Consolidated

Appropriations Act of 2021, did provide needed funding to support blind vendors during the economic crisis.

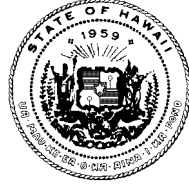
The non-profit PHOCUSED and stakeholders within the Club House community, have a working group in discussions with DVR. To replicate a similar program like the blind vendor program, will require a sustainable source of long term funding to mitigate the high risks associated with entrepreneurs operating successful vending stands statewide.

DHS suggests the Legislature consider funding of a pilot program to evaluate this opportunity to expand vending facilities to allow persons with a mental illness to access use of public buildings for the purpose of providing remunerative employment through vending facilities for self-employment, and leverage the expertise of blind vendors as well as other successful entrepreneurs to support this initiative. DHS asks that any appropriation not impact those budget priorities identified in the executive budget.

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

LATE

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



CATHY BETTS  
DIRECTOR

JOSEPH CAMPOS II  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
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The non-profit PHOCUSED and stakeholders within the Club House community, have a working group in discussions with DVR. To replicate a similar program like the blind vendor program, will require a sustainable source of long term funding to mitigate the high risks associated with entrepreneurs operating successful vending stands statewide.

DHS suggests the Legislature consider funding of a pilot program to evaluate this opportunity to expand vending facilities to allow persons with a mental illness to access use of public buildings for the purpose of providing remunerative employment through vending facilities for self-employment, and leverage the expertise of blind vendors as well as other successful entrepreneurs to support this initiative. DHS asks that any appropriation not impact those budget priorities identified in the executive budget.

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



NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND OF HAWAII

Testimony before the Committee on Health, Human Services, and Homelessness (HHH)  
Hawaii State House of Representatives  
Thirty-First Legislature, Regular Session of 2021  
February 9, 2021, 9:30 AM, hearing on HB1112

Good morning Mr. Chairman, vice chair, and committee members. I am James Gashel, testifying for the National Federation of the Blind of Hawaii. I am a resident of Honolulu.

The NFB of Hawaii stands in strong opposition to HB1112. Although well meant, this bill conflicts with Federal law. The state would be at odds with the federal government, and employment of blind vendors on federal and state property would be in jeopardy. The State would have to spend thousands of dollars trying to fulfill new promises and administer new responsibilities. At the same time the state could lose access to vending sites and vending machine revenue used to finance the current program. No one, including the proponents of HB1112, should want this to happen.

Hawaii's vending facilities program for the blind is by far our most successful blind persons employment program. Through their efforts blind vendors give valuable services to public employees and do so at a net revenue gain to the state. If you examine the facts and figures you will find that Hawaii's vending facilities program for the blind is an undeniable success, even more so than similar programs in some other states with much larger populations on the mainland. Hawaii's blind vendors bring pride to our aloha state. No one, including the proponents of HB1112, should want to lose this.

The vending facilities program established in HRS section 102-14 is conducted to carry out and extend the federal vending facilities program for the blind pursuant to a federal law known as the Randolph-Sheppard Act, 20 USC. section 107 et. seq., with extensive federal regulations at 34 CFR part 395. The federal law authorizes designation of a licensing agency for blind vendors in each state. This agency in Hawaii, referred to as the "state licensing agency" is the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. The operating unit for this federal/state program is the Services for the Blind branch, Business Enterprises Program. 45 blind vendors operate facilities on federal, state, county, and municipal property in Hawaii. Enactment of HB 1112 would preclude expenditure of federal funds for the vending facilities program and result in substantial additional expenditure of state funds, which are not available.

An application designating the state licensing agency has to be and has been approved by the U. S. Department of Education and is in effect for Hawaii. Signed by the governor, this application amounts to a contract between the state and the federal government. The terms of the application, binding on the state, specify that persons eligible to be licensed vendors must be blind. The Hawaii Supreme Court, in Tamashiro v. Dept. of Human Services, 112 Haw. 388 (2006), ruled that "[t]hus, if funds derived from the operation of vending facilities on any federal property, are used to establish or operate a blind vendor facility on non-federal

property, the provisions of the federal RSA [Randolph-Sheppard Act] apply.” HRS 347-12.5 establishes the Randolph-Sheppard Revolving Account, which the Tamashiro court stated:

The RSR Account provides a strong implication that the state and county properties fall within "other property" because income generated from state and county vending facilities, as well as federal facilities, are deposited into one central account, from which funds may be used for the benefit of blind vendors in Hawai'i.

*Tamashiro v. Dept. of Human Serv*, 112 Haw. 388, 407 (Haw. 2006). HB1112 also contravenes HRS § 347-5, which provides:

[DHS] may, as an agency of the State for the assistance of blind or visually handicapped persons, *do all things* which will enable the State and the blind and the visually handicapped in the State *to have the benefits of all federal laws for the benefit of blind and visually handicapped persons*.

[HRS § 347-5](#) (1993) (emphases added by Supreme Court in Tamashiro).

Once approved, the designation of a state licensing agency allows the state to establish vending facilities on federal property, state and county property by extension of the federal program. Designation of a state licensing agency does not permit licensing any person who is not blind, no matter the person's disability or need for employment.

The federal and state law and regulations define blind as vision no greater than 20/200 in the better eye with correction (10 percent of normal vision), or a restricted visual field of no greater than 20 degrees, as if looking down a gun barrel.

Approximately five thousand people of working age are blind under this definition in Hawaii. Approximately 70 percent are unemployed.

Blindness is the threshold qualification to be trained and licensed as a vendor. This is a federal requirement fulfilled by the state acting as the state licensing agency. The state does not have discretion to change who is eligible to be licensed. If the state did change eligibility by virtue of HB1112, the Hawaii vending facilities program would be placed in conflict with the federal law, regulations, vending machine revenue, and spending requirements.

The vending facilities program in Hawaii is operated financially with a combination of state funds and revenue from vending machines located on federal, state, county and municipal property. Federal money for vocational rehabilitation, received under title I of the federal Rehabilitation Act is often used for training or retraining blind vendors, and may be used for purchasing vending facility equipment and initial inventory for blind vendors. The federal law, Department of Education General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR), and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars applicable to use of federal funds by state and local governments, and state laws and regulations govern use of program funds.

As the Hawaii Supreme Court recognized in Tamashiro, providing support of any kind (purchase of equipment, use of space, personal services, or otherwise), for individuals who are not blind would not only be impermissible from the point of view of the federal government but would also expose the state to federal audit which would likely result in adverse audit findings. This would place operation of the existing vending facilities program for the blind (not to mention employment of blind vendors) at risk.

Our opposition to HB 1112 is not opposition to persons with mental illness or their advocates. For reasons that must be obvious, we support stability of the existing vending facilities program. We know the proponents of HB 1112 do not mean harm to this program. We believe their proposal is in good faith but not fully informed as to the consequences.

Moving from the legal to the practical, if there would ever be a time to enact a bill like HB 1112, now, during the time of the covid-19 pandemic, is not the time to do it. Please consider this. The statutory priority for blind vendor facilities applies to federal and state property. These are government buildings. A vending facility site is chosen by the state licensing agency based on the building population and potential patronage of the vending facility.

Opening a vending facility means an outlay of funds based on a determination of sufficient business to support a blind vendor. The vending facilities belong to the state and must meet the federal requirements for their establishment and operation, including the requirement to have a blind licensee. Licensees are not free to set up shop wherever they may decide. They are part of a supervised blind vendor program conducted within a framework of interwoven federal and state requirements. Even the state regulations which are published at HAR section 17-403 must be approved by the federal government and would not be approved for licensing any individual who is not blind.

At present most of the government buildings served by the vending facilities program are closed or substantially closed. Personnel assigned to work in these buildings are working from home. Public access is essentially prohibited. Consequently, the vending facilities that serve the employees and the public coming to these buildings are closed. The blind vendors are temporarily out of work, some may be permanently out of work. Their businesses require their physical presence and that of their patrons.

Experts say that office space occupancy will change after the pandemic subsides but no one knows the pattern of the future. One thing we do know is, working from remote locations is likely to be much more prevalent than it was before the pandemic. All government agencies will seek to save money by reducing use of space, reducing the need for vending facilities.

Existing vending facilities operated by 45 blind vendors will have to be realigned to meet the needs of remaining government employees and the public. Each vendor remaining in the program can expect many changes needed to maintain a sustainable business. Some facilities will certainly be closed.

When the pandemic subsides, those blind vendors who have already completed training, and who are ready to be licensed and assigned, may not be assigned due to lack of facilities. Unemployed blind people who want to enter the training program to become licensees are having to wait, with no training and no facilities available. Uncertainty is the only certainty. If there is ever a time to put this program at risk by changing eligibility, now is not the time to do it.

All of the foregoing considered, please do not advance HB1112. Even for the sake of the proponents, it would be wrong to pass a bill, jeopardizing the state's investment in current opportunities and promising opportunities to people with mental illness that the state could not then fulfill. The intent is good but passing HB1112 is not the way to help people with mental illness or people who are blind. Mahalo for caring, for understanding our lived experience as blind people, and much mahalo for considering our concerns about HB1112.

**HB-1112**

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 12:46:39 PM

Testimony for HHH on 2/9/2021 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Stan Young	Hawaii State committee of Blind Vendors	Oppose	No

Comments:

Testimony opposing HB1112: relating to the vending facilities program.

My name is Stan Young. I am a blind vendor and a resident of Honolulu.

**Federal regulations permits licensed blind vendors to operate on government property. Another program should be found for the mentally ill, because they may have a serious security problem to be able to pass the security and background check to operate on government property, like the State Capitol.**

As chairperson of the Hawaii State committee of Blind Vendors, a Committee federally mandated by the Randolph Sheppard Act, I oppose this bill because it would infringe, erode, and violate the precedent and priority of the Randolph Sheppard Act. The Committee “actively participates” in all major decisions of the State Licensing Agency, and will oppose this major chance in the vending facilities program.

The vending program has multiple Federal and State rules for the selection, qualifying, training, and licensing of blind vendors. Together with these processes are the requirements for ongoing finances to build, equip, and stock and manage facilities. With the COVID pandemic ongoing, we are moving as rapidly as we can to provide positions for blind people. This Bill would undermine all of the precedents and set up a separate track against all of the achievements and ground-work that has already been in place for more than 80 years at the Federal and State levels. In addition, this would deny the progress for those blind people who are on the waiting list, because there are only a limited opportunities for more vending facilities, considering the cost of development; construction, renovation, plumbing, electrical, cabinets and fixtures, electronics, stock and inventory, liability insurance, credit, accounting and on-going financial management and lease-rent, in some cases.. Remember that the Randolph Sheppard Account is funded from contributions from the blind vendors and vending machines. **There are NO State appropriated funds in the Randolph Sheppard Account.**

This second track will violate the rules for the placement, reassignment and promotion of the blind. These rules are in the HRS and have been approved by the federal RSA-Rehabilitation Services Administration, a division of the U.S. Department of Education.

Violating these rules and by-passing the blind will deprive the blind, who are on the waiting list.

The vending facilities program is an entrepreneurial program for the blind and on-going business operations are managed by the individual blind operators. There are no non-profit or outside-organization funding involved. I believe that this second track, that you are proposing, is not self-sustaining, has potential for **catastrophic liability**, may cost the State hundreds of thousands of dollars, and may cause the whole vending program to fail in this State.

**And so it would be sad for you to dilute and erode the best employment program for the blind that has been operating for more than 80 years in this State.**

**HB-1112**

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 1:17:19 PM

Testimony for HHH on 2/9/2021 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Derwin Teranishi	Hawaii State Clubhouse Advocacy Coalition	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Derwin Teranishi and I'm from the Waipahu Aloha Clubhouse and an advocate of the Hawaii State Clubhouse Advocacy Coalition. I'm in support of HB1112. I believe that passing this bill will impact those with mental health illnesses in such a positive way. This bill is the door for those in this population to not only become employed but to further their desire for a more challenging employment. Also, they will have an opportunity to manage their own vending facility, as their desire to make the effort to commit to a higher training or schooling presents itself. In the long term, the possibility for the outside community to see the potential within this population may offer more employment opportunities. I only see hope and growth in passing this bill.

Thank You,

Derwin Teranishi

**HB-1112**

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 6:10:29 PM

Testimony for HHH on 2/9/2021 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Norman Ota	Randolph Shepard Vendors of Hawaii	Oppose	No

Comments:

To the Committee on Health, Human Services and Homelessness

Chair, Representative Ryan I. Yamane

Sunday, February 7, 2021

Opposition to HB1112, Relating to the Vending Facilities Program

My name is Norman Ota and I am representing the Randolph Sheppard Vendors of Hawaii.

We oppose HB1112, relating to the Vending Facilities Program. The Randolph Sheppard Act was enacted exclusively for blind people. The primary purpose of this act was to provide employment for blind people. The Blind population unemployment rate is 70%, so as much as possible, we'd like to continue to focus on that primary purpose. By opening up the "floodgates," earning opportunities for blind people would decrease considerably and most likely increase our unemployment percentage.

We urge you to consider our opposition as a huge number in the blind population struggle to obtain employment which is even more difficult given the pandemic situation. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.



**HB-1112**

Submitted on: 2/5/2021 3:14:56 PM

Testimony for HHH on 2/9/2021 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
warren nihipali jr	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this Bill because I know how beneficial it will be to allow important growth in individuals that have Mental Health Issues through bonafide employment. Now to have further opportunities this will only increase greater results. Mahalo

**HB-1112**

Submitted on: 2/5/2021 4:35:03 PM

Testimony for HHH on 2/9/2021 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
DERRICK A YASUDA	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane,

My name is Derrick Yasuda and I am currently a Board Member of Koolau Clubhouse. I am in support of HB1112. I've worked with and supported Club Members for a number of years and I believe they truly deserve to learn and enhance their skills in our society. I can honestly say that I was afraid to associate with someone with a mental disability but have learned by working and interacting with the members that I'm very safe, in fact, I feel safer with the members than I do with a stranger on the street. Yes, I've erased the stigma that is usually associated with mental illness. Please consider supporting HB1112.

Mahalo,

Derrick Yasuda

**HB-1112**

Submitted on: 2/5/2021 4:41:36 PM

Testimony for HHH on 2/9/2021 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Christy MacPherson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support this bill. This is about parity and providing employment and economic opportunities for those with mental illness.

**HB-1112**

Submitted on: 2/6/2021 10:07:51 AM

Testimony for HHH on 2/9/2021 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Gail Stewart	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My name is Gail Stewart. I am with Hale O Honolulu Clubhouse, part of the Hawaii Clubhouse Advocacy Coalition Group. I am strongly in favor of HB1112, because as a person with mental illness and in recovery for 18 years, I feel that people like myself can have the opportunity to work with the public.

**HB-1112**

Submitted on: 2/6/2021 10:42:05 AM

Testimony for HHH on 2/9/2021 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Flora Patton	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha, this is for HB 1112 relating to the Vending Facilites Program. I'm strongly in support, my name is Flora Patton, I go to Waipahu Aloha Clubhouse for 11 years. I go to Advocacy Coalition Meetings with all different clubhouse and members. I would like to see this Vendor Expansion Bill to pass, because us clubhouse members are willing to learn and be successful. And to have a good experience and to be good employees. I hope that I can do my share to show the community that we also fit in with everyone. Thank you very much for reading my testimony.

**HB-1112**

Submitted on: 2/6/2021 11:21:49 AM

Testimony for HHH on 2/9/2021 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Linda Wakatake	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha, my name is Linda Wakatake and I strongly support HB1112. I feel that persons with a mental illness should be given opportunities and show what they are capable of. There is too much negative bias against them. Let's give them a chance to show what they are capable of and reduce the stigma. Thank you for your time.

**HB-1112**

Submitted on: 2/6/2021 3:54:07 PM

Testimony for HHH on 2/9/2021 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Kelly Cogo	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane,

My name is Kelly Cogo. I encourage you to Pass HB1112 named the Vending Facilities Program for People with Mental Illness Challenges. I am a Peer Member of the Hale 'Oluea Clubhouse in Hilo, on the Big Island, part of the Hawaii Clubhouse Advocacy Coalition.

I would like HB1112 to Pass in hopes of creating a work force to support ourselves financially, as well as to give us a sense of accomplishment in doing a day's work well done.

I would like to have the opportunity to learn how to run my Vending Business from Ho'opono with DVR. Our goal is not to take away Vending Facilities from the Blind Vendors. We would like to be included in their Program.

Mahalo for your time.

Sincerely, Kelly Cogo

**HB-1112**

Submitted on: 2/6/2021 4:52:39 PM

Testimony for HHH on 2/9/2021 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Keoki WRIGHT	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Representative Yamane,

I am in support of HB1112, Relating to Vending Facilities Program. I am a member of Ko'olau Clubhouse, part of the Hawaii Clubhouse Advocacy Coalition.

The reason I am in support of this bill is because it will help myself and my peers achieve vocational goals. We will be able to be leaders and examples within the community for our peers. I believe this is a positive move in the way of the work force. We would like to partner with DVR, Ho'opono, and the Blind Vendors.

If this bill passes, it would be a fulfilling task that would be therapeutic for my recovery. I believe that myself and my peers would be motivated to complete the program. And, we have the right support, especially with the Clubhouse.

Thank you for your time,

Keoki Wright



**HB-1112**

Submitted on: 2/6/2021 7:20:02 PM

Testimony for HHH on 2/9/2021 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
RONALD FLORMATA	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Ronald Flormata and I am a blind vendor under the Randolph-Sheppard Vending Program for the Blind. My current vending facility is the Sundries Store at the Hale koa Hotel in Waikiki.

For 10 years I've been a productive member of the community, working as a blind vendor in different facilities located in Oahu.

In 2003, I worked for a blind vendor as an employee and when I met the requirements, I earned my license as a blind vendor.

Needless to say, I have lived in Hawaii for more than 17 years.

As a blind individual, I tried but failed to secure a meaningful job. The only opportunity open to me to work was through the Blind Vending Program administered by Ho'Opono Business Enterprise Program in Hawaii. Through promotion and transfer, a licensed blind vendor can move up the ladder, improve his/her career by moving to a more lucrative vending facility when it becomes available.

As of the moment, there are 45 licensed blind vendors competing for a good stand as it opens for bidding regardless of location - federal, state or city & county. This system of promotion ensures career advancement within the blind vending program.

By amending the law to include the mentally disabled individuals into the Blind Vending Program of Hawaii curtails that opportunity to move. It diminishes the chances of licensed blind vendors to operate a better facility.

HB 1112 muddles the objectives of the Randolph-Sheppard Act which promises a better life for the blind and visually impaired citizens of the United States. While I don't have anything against the mentally disabled Hawaii residents, I VEHEMENTLY OPPOSE House Bill 1112.

Ronald Flormata

Ewa Beach, HI 96706

eMail: comhaus1@hotmail.com

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Brandon G. Young  
980 Maunawili Rd.  
Kailua, HI 96734  
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31<sup>st</sup> Session of the State of Hawaii Legislature  
Health and Human Services Committee  
HB 1112 Hearing on Tuesday, February 9, 2021

Dear Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Committee,

My name is Brandon Young, and I am a member of the National Federation of the Blind of Hawaii. I am submitting this testimony in support of the testimony that was offered by Mr. James Gashel representing the National Federation of the Blind of Hawaii. I am writing this testimony in opposition of HB 1112. As a blind person in Hawaii, there are many concerns that I as well as the blind community in Hawaii have with this bill. This bill should have never been authored and it is a shame for those who were behind its sponsorship.

As for the major problems with this bill, it would go against the federal government and the Randolph-Shepard Act of 1938. This law was enacted to give a priority to blind vendors on all federal and state government buildings to hold snack shops and to operate large dining facilities on military bases. This bill would violate the policies and rules of the blindness priority and would go against the State Licensing Agency (SLA) here in Hawaii. This is the Ho`opono Services for the Blind Branch. The bill also fails to define whom would be protected under the term of: "mental illness". These two major flaws of the bill cause me to testify in opposition of the bill and suggest that this bill be deferred. I think that it is good for us to support all groups of people with disabilities here in Hawaii, but this bill would infringe on a special priority that was created by the federal government for the blind. I think that those who pushed for the sponsorship of this bill were just not knowledgeable about the priorities put forward by the federal government. Even though there may not be a blind operator in the buildings that this bill would cover, the funds received from vending machines and other machines goes to support all vendors here in Hawaii. Thank you for your support and hearing my testimony.

**HB-1112**

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 9:42:07 AM

Testimony for HHH on 2/9/2021 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Joel Cho	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair,

My name is Joel Cho and I have been a blind vendor in Hawaii's Blind Vending Program for over 20 years. I have lived in Hawaii all of my life and I currently reside in Kealahou on the Big Island. I stand firm with the National Federation of the Blind of Hawaii in opposing HB1112.

When I was first introduced to our program so many years ago, my goal was to seek gainful employment so that I could remain a productive member of society. I had already had many years of experience in business and so a business enterprise program seemed like a perfect fit. I soon found out that this is not just a business program, but it also has a very strong element of rehabilitation for the blind. Upon entering the program an assessment of blindness skills are taken of each client; such as mobility, technical skills, social skills, personal and home management, along with an assessment of the client's basic business skill level. Perspective candidates for our program are taught how to run a business successfully by using their own unique blindness skillset in order to accomplish such everyday tasks such as how to correctly identify currency, manage inventory, maintain good housekeeping, and to provide excellent customer service to the public. In their development, blind vendors face many other life challenges and obstacles in which they learn how to overcome through use of their blindness skills. Through the Division of the Blind at Ho'oponou, we are also given opportunities to further improve our blindness skills; I was legally blind with some residual vision when I entered the program but then a few years into the program I eventually lost all of my vision. Ho'oponou was there for me and allowed me to participate in their New Visions Program an intense holistic program for teaching advanced blindness skills to those who need help. New Vision's helped me to sharpen my blindness skills and it also gave me back the confidence and the courage that I needed to succeed in the blind vending program.

Today, like so many other individuals and areas of society, our program is on the cusp of facing an enormous challenge and it is very uncertain if many of our facilities will be able to reopen. It will take a lot of innovation and creativity to find new ways to maintain the survival and expansion of our program. Candidates who were already sitting on the waiting list before the pandemic will have to wait much longer than they expected to have a chance to enter our

program. Those who are able to remain open will need to learn how to adjust to many changes in how they run their operation. We the blind, will be very active participants in guiding our program and finding solutions to overcome the challenges that lie ahead of us.

It is a very sad thing that such an overwhelming majority of blind people who are in the prime years of their lives still have such limited opportunities for gainful employment. It is my sincere hope that new and great opportunities are discovered and created for those who suffer from mental illness, I mean that from the heart. I also ask that the creators of HB1112 take a much closer look at our program before offering their suggestions to change it. Please leave the business of the blind to the blind.

Mahalo.

Hawaii State House of Representatives  
Thirty-First Legislature, Regular Session of 2021  
February 9, 2021, 9:30 AM  
HB 1112

Aloha Mr Chairman, vice Chairman, Member of the Committee. I am Wanda Takaesu, testifying to oppose HB1112. I am a blind vendor in Honolulu.

I was diagnose legally blind since childhood. I have an eye condition call Retinitis Pigmentosa. RP is retinal degeneration disorder of the eye that cause lost of vision.

I learned about Hoopono's Business Enterprise Program from my doctor. I enrolled in the program in 2010 and was placed on a long waiting list. In 2016, I started training and finally awarded a facility after a 8 years of waiting.

The reason for the long wait is there is simply not enough facilities for all of the over 500 people that suffers some form of blindness. The program allow us, the legally blind patients to be self-sustaining, making a living independently. Passing HB 1112 will make it even harder for the blind patients to get in the program and receive a facility in the future. It will affect our livelyhood.

I have much passion for all disability, including mental illness. However I strongly oppose House Bill 1112. Passing HB1112 at this time will not benefit blind and mental illness patients. It will only hurt the already hurting Blind Vendors in this COVID 19 pandemic and jeopardize the future vendors and the business program.

Please consider not advance HB1112. Even for the sake of the proponents. It will not benefit to promise opportunities to the mental illness when there is really not enough facilities to fulfill even to just the Blindness patients.

Sincerely,  
Wanda Takaesu

Virgil Stinnett  
Hawaii Licensed Blind Vendor

Testimony before the Committee on Health, Human Services, and Homelessness (HHH)  
Hawaii State House of Representatives  
Thirty-First Legislature, Regular Session of 2021  
February 9, 2021, 9:30 AM, hearing on HB1112

Good morning Mr. Chairman, vice chair, and committee members. My name is Virgil Stinnett testifying for myself as a Licensed Blind Vendor in Hawaii. I am a leader and member of the National Federation of the Blind of Hawaii. I am a resident of Honolulu at 2943 Kalakaua Avenue.

I am in strong opposition of measure HB1112 and I am asking you to vote this measure down. I believe that there are other ways to assist the proponents of this measure without destroying what is a successful employment program for the blind.

I am in strong support of the testimony submitted by James Gashel on behalf of The National Federation of the Blind of Hawaii and ask you to take our request and testimony for the blind of Hawaii into serious consideration.

The reality is if this measure passes, the smallest population of our disabled community will be pushed aside. We are considered by the federal government as one of the most catastrophic disabilities. The blind categorically amongst disabilities, has to this day the highest unemployment rate of qualified working age blind adults of any other disability group.

As blind individuals, we struggle so hard to become employed, even when meeting the job educational and essential function requirements, merely on the fact that we are blind due to misperceptions of blind people and our capacity to fully participate as contributing citizens. I ask you, why then even consider HB1112 which will jeopardize our program? There are blind individuals who have been on the waiting list for vending facilities and training that this measure if passes will further limit their hard earned opportunity. to attempt to jeopardize one of the oldest and best employment opportunities for the blind is just wrong.

When employment opportunities become available, a lot of folks apply for it as well as the blind and the blind may be the most qualified, yet who ends up being hired? I have firsthand experience as so many other blind people do and will guarantee that the blind will be the last person to be considered if at all. When you look at a blind person, what thoughts come up in your mind? The majority of the population will feel sorry for us and think to yourself glad it's not me.

Just consider what would happen to the blind if this measure passes? I believe that it is a negative action and further reaching than has been considered than the success for the individuals not blind in the measure if HB1112 passes. Please seriously consider how you are

undermining and continuing misperceptions about the capacity of blind people by passing HB1112.

Note that other disabilities will not be able to use the Federal funds that would support this program which is written into law for the blind.

We the blind are already along with so many struggling for our economic independence due to COVID and many of us once our state opens up will no longer have vending facilities with so many buildings and their tenants considering telework as the future norm. This is not the time to consider adding to a program that has its existing individuals to consider during the pandemic, but rather the time how to best ensure we the blind vendors can regain economic solvency.

There are other opportunities of employment for other disabilities, I believe that in the Department of Human Services, Vocational Rehabilitation. They have a self-employment program for all disabilities. Why not use what is available for other disabilities instead of taking from a small group that normally struggles and is doing more so than we usually do during COVID to find good employment for a quality life.

Mahalo for your serious consideration of the needs of blind individuals already limited and my testimony in opposition to HB1112.



Hoku Burrows

Testimony before the Committee on Health, Human Services, and Homelessness (HHH)  
Hawaii State House of Representatives  
Thirty-First Legislature, Regular Session of 2021  
February 9, 2021, 9:30 AM, hearing on HB1112

Good morning Mr. Chairman, vice chair, and committee members. My name is Hoku Burrows, I am a blind woman residing at 824 Laula Way, 96814 in Honolulu. I am a long time active member of The National Federation of the Blind of Hawaii.

I strongly oppose HB112 and ask that you do not pass the measure.

I strongly support the testimony submitted by The National Federation of the Blind of Hawaii and ask that you take our testimony into serious consideration.

Mahalo for your commitment to blind people of Hawaii and your consideration of my testimony opposing HB1112.

**HB-1112**

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 8:27:23 PM

Testimony for HHH on 2/9/2021 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Cy Tomsun	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane,

My name is Cy Tomsun and I am in support HB1112, Relating to Vending Facilities. I am affiliated with the Clubhouse as I am the President of the Board for Ko'olau Clubhouse. I believe this bill is important as I believe this is a positive program that members of the Clubhouse could benefit from. I believe in equal opportunity and I believe the consumers of Adult Mental Health could benefit from this program.

So please support HB1112, Relating to Vending Facilities.

Thank you for your time,

Cy Tomsun

**HB-1112**

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 8:28:44 PM

Testimony for HHH on 2/9/2021 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Almedo "Junior" Pamintuan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane,

I am in support of HB 1112. As a Friends of Ko'olau Clubhouse board member I have regular, sometimes daily interaction with the members of the Ko'olau Clubhouse which is always an honor and privilege to be part of. I was first drawn to the Ko'olau Clubhouse four years ago and one of the standards I most appreciate and admire is the staff and members complete all tasks as a team working together side by side. I have been a working professional in the mental health/substance abuse treatment field for almost twenty years and I really love what the Clubhouse model offers. HB 1112 will give the clubhouse members an amazing opportunity as it does the blind vendors. I have witnessed/experienced the clubhouse members in the State Capitol on other activities and functions and believe the members are totally respectful, professional, and kind, so please support HB 1112, relating to vending facilities.

Aloha,

Almedo "Junior" Pamintuan

**HB-1112**

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 9:04:59 PM

Testimony for HHH on 2/9/2021 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jonah Sniffen	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Jonah Sniffen Jr. and I am blind. I want to be a blind vendor and I actually only need to finish the classroom training at Ho'Opono to become one. Unfortunately, the COVID19 pandemic put a hold to that dream. Regardless of what happens, I am determined to be one of the best blind vendors in the Business Enterprise Program of Ho'Opono.

The proposed HB 1112 is very alarming and worrisome specifically in my case. The addition of mentally disabled persons in the Randolph Sheppard Vending Program in Hawaii is questionable and would prove highly detrimental to the advancement of blind individuals like myself. Eighty four (84) years ago in 1936, the proponents of the federal law - Representative Jennings Randolph (D-WV). Senator Morris Sheppard (D-TX) wrote the law with the intent of specifically assisting blind and visually impaired citizens of the country be financially independent. Any amendments to the Randolph Sheppard law must be an improvement - NOT a major disservice to the blind. It is worth mentioning that 70% of blind residents in Hawaii who are of working age are unemployed. HB 1112 will undoubtedly increase this unacceptable figure. The addition of another disability group in the Blind Vending Program is sure to pose another hurdle to the blind candidate who is already facing stiff competition.

I, therefore, strongly OPPOSE HB 1112.

jonah sniffen jr.

Testimony of Clifford Miyashiro  
Bill HB1112  
Committee on HHH  
Hawaii state House of Representatives  
February 9, 202, 9:30 AM1

Aloha Committee. I am Clifford Miyashiro. I am strongly opposing HB1112. REASON, FOR A SECOND CHANCE IN LIFE,

I am 74, am legally blind with very limited vision in my left eye and right eye with no vision. 3 years ago I had to shut down my retail store, was self-employed for over 26 years, due to vision loss from Glacoma. Currently, I am surviving on social security benefits which is not enough to survive without another income.

I am currently attending Hoopono for the blind and have been waiting to begin training for the blind vendors program which would take 9 months to a year to complete program and to be qualified.

I am not being selfish but this blind vendors program has definitely given me hope to be independent and not relying on anyone to help support my family.

My intention has been to qualify for a location, do the best I can to be successful and in 5 to 8 years being able to pass it forward to another qualified vendor.

I hope you will seriously consider my testimony and pray for your help.

sincerely,  
Clifford Miyashiro

**HB-1112**

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 9:07:22 PM

Testimony for HHH on 2/9/2021 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jade Mariano	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I believe that an attempt to extend the Randolph Shepard Act to other disabilities is inconsistent with the intent of the Act. Therefore, I don't support this bill.

**HB-1112**

Submitted on: 2/7/2021 9:21:44 PM

Testimony for HHH on 2/9/2021 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Steve Kim	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

I, Steve Kim, became a blind in 1995 at age of 19, due to a brain tumor.

I was depressed and felt like there's no place for me this world.

Thankfully, my church members helped me get in touch with social worker and I found out there's program to help blind people. I worked hard to learn to live as a blind and became a blind vendor in 2002. Thanks to the Randolph-Sheppard Act, I was able meet a wonderful wife and have a perfect daughter.

Randolph-Sheppard Act is created for the blind person(s) like myself and other blind person(s) to have hope and bring in bread and butter for our family.

I strongly oppose bill HB1112 and please have merci and take my humble words into consideration.

Thank you and God bless.

## MEMORANDUM

To: Rep. Ryan Yamane, Chair  
Rep. Adrian Tam, Vice-Chair  
House Committee on Health, Human Services and Homelessness

From: Kyle Aihara

RE: HB1112 RELATING TO THE VENDING FACILITIES PROGRAM  
Tuesday, February 9, 2021, 9:30 am  
Room 329 via videoconference

Date: February 9, 2021

Chair Yamane, Vice Chair Tam and members of the House Committee on Health, Human Services, and Homelessness:

My name is Kyle Aihara, and I own and operate the Kauai Blind Vendor facility at the Lihue Airport. My vending facility is part of the State and federal blind vendor program administered by the US Department of Education and the Hawai`i Department of Human Services.

HB1112 seeks to expand the State's vending facilities program to include persons with mental illness. Because the proposed amendments are not accordance with the federal Randolph Shepard Act, I am writing in opposition to the HB1112.

The Randolph-Sheppard Act, 20 USC §107 et. seq., provides persons who are blind with remunerative employment and self-support through the operation of vending facilities on federal and other property. The State's vending facilities program, embodied in HRS §102-14, is in accordance with federal law, and extends the program specifically for the blind to operate in state and county facilities. The State agency responsible for licensing and overseeing the Randolph Sheppard Act is the Department of Human Services Division of Vocational Rehabilitation.

While expanding Hawai`i's vending facilities program to the mentally ill is well intended, the State's expansion of the program is not contained within the current parameters of existing federal law. For the State to expand the blind vending program to the mentally ill, it would appear that Congressional approval to amend the Randolph Shepard Act is required. Until then, including the mentally ill in the State's vending facilities program would not be permissible. For those reasons, I urge you to hold HB1112.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.



**HB-1112**

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 6:33:59 AM

Testimony for HHH on 2/9/2021 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Elizabeth Flormata	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

My name is Elizabeth Flormata and I am married to a blind vendor.

I am a strong advocate for the blind and visually impaired and a Treasurer for 3 blind organizations.

I strongly oppose House Bill 1112 and the accompanying Senate Bill 1233 as it will adversely impact the current and future blind vendors in a very detrimental way.

As it is, employment opportunities for the blind are very limited and it is only through the Randolph Sheppard's blind vending program that they are given the opportunity to operate a business and become useful and productive members of society. The blind community, along with its advocates and supporters, have worked hard to get where they are now in this program. The blind vendors are struggling to keep afloat especially during this pandemic.

I have nothing against people with mental illness but adding them to this program will greatly diminish the opportunities for the blind. Let the advocates of those who are mentally ill work hard and create and build their own program, secure their own funding, and leave the blind alone.

The law is very clear – IT IS MEANT FOR THE BLIND! Opening it up to those who are not blind will have negative consequences for current and future blind entrepreneurs, not to mention the enormous violations that would be created as a result of existing federal and state policies and procedures that are in place in the administration of this program.

I strongly urge the proponent(s) of this bill to withdraw this bill as it will put everyone in jeopardy, especially the blind.

Thank you.

**HB-1112**

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 8:22:18 AM

Testimony for HHH on 2/9/2021 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Don Patterson	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

February 8, 2021

The Randolph Sheppard program for the blind needs to remain for the blind only. There are blind people waiting to be trained now. I have been a blind vendor since 1995. I have worked my way up through many promotions. It has enabled me to support my family with 3 kids. It takes blind people longer to accomplish tasks, but as owners we can take all the time we need to get the job done very well. There are very few good opportunities for blind people, and this program is the best one. We do not have to be worried about being discriminated against. If other disability groups are allowed in the program, they will take businesses away from blind people who want to get in the program and will be promoted easier because blindness is the most severe disability. Blind people would become very discouraged, and we may be left with only seasoned blind vendors like myself.

Respectfully,

Don Patterson

Katie Keim

Testimony before the Committee on Health, Human Services, and Homelessness (HHH)  
Hawaii State House of Representatives  
Thirty-First Legislature, Regular Session of 2021  
February 9, 2021, 9:30 AM, hearing on HB1112

Good morning Mr. Chairman, vice chair, and committee members. My name is Katie Keim a blind business woman and a member of The National Federation of the Blind of Hawaii. I reside at 2943 Kalakaua Avenue in Honolulu.

I stand in strong opposition to HB1112.

7 years ago I was a public servant of the Department of human Services, Division of Vocational Rehabilitation working as a program specialist and client liaison. DVR is an employment program primarily funded by federal dollars that gives support through training and education ensuring individuals with disabilities can attain a good job with a living wage. I was once a non-disabled individual and did not ever expect to become blind, yet at the age of 36 awoke one morning with no sight and no medical chance of recovery. I had been in the height of my career that left me at the bottom of my career unemployed. It was a long 8 years before I was able to advocate my abilities to an employer and become gainfully employed once again. That is what our blind are against everyday of our lives just because of misperceptions about our capacity as blind people.

Blind individuals are the smallest population of our disabled and the highest percentage of unemployed at 70%. The Randolph Sheppard program is the most successful employment program for blind people interested in a career in the food service industry with very specific federal and state regulations. The first and most important eligibility requirement is the individual must be medically proven to be legally blind. that is a very specifically defined disability and requirement.

For our legislation to even consider passing HB1112 at any time would be a back step for our blind vendors. How often I worked hard to ensure an individual got a good job yet my blind clients were left in the dust just because they were blind. How many times i was asked, well seriously Katie, what can a blind person really do? Here I am standing in front of the employer as a totally blind individual being told indirectly that we the blind have no value in the work place. Imagine me a blind person myself attempting to explain how the individual who was often highly educated let alone well trained and the employer could not get past the mere fact they were blind. I too ran into those issues when seeking employment and still do today in all facets of my life, how can you really do all you do? This common misperception keeps blind people limited in our opportunities.

Although HB1112 may be written with good intentions in mind, it will tragically be a great disservice to the blind and mentally ill if it passes. DHS and DVR already struggle with limited

state funding yet have excellent employment programs using federal dollars for all disabilities. if HB112 passes, the department will be required to use extremely limited state funding to support vending facilities for individuals who are not legally blind.

Under DHS, The state licensing agency for the blind vending program has blind people currently still waiting for training and facilities to gain respect and value as working citizens. many have been waiting for years, which in itself is telling.

Licensed blind vendors are currently displaced and have been unemployed since march, 2020 with many whose facility may never see the light of day and population needed to give them a living wage again. this means the waiting list will get longer once we regain the uncertain future of our unknown normal post COVID.

HB1112 will rather than establish the intended success for blind and mentally ill individuals, will be more detrimental ensuring the blind and mentally ill stay underemployed or unemployed waiting for years for an opportunity of a good wage.

The Randolph Sheppard program is a long established successful program and is the best employment opportunity for legally blind people who are interested in being business owners and managers in the food service industry.

I am in strong support of the testimony of The National Federation of the blind of Hawaii which does an excellent job of outlining the specific regulations and how it will impact our state and blind vendors. and encourage you to take seriously the ramifications if HB1112 passes.

Passing HB1112 would not only push aside our blind who are already a small population and least employed, but would switch the scale restricting funds from federal to our precious state funding. This is the time we need to focus on getting our people back to work, vaccinated to prevent further illness and death from COVID and ensure our economic solvency in Hawaii once again. Please do not take away what has been hard earned and is currently already in jeopardy for many due to the pandemic.

Mahalo for your commitment to our community and consideration of my testimony.

Jaclyn Leilani Borsa

Testimony before the Committee on Health, Human Services, and Homelessness (HHH)

Hawaii State House of Representatives

Thirty-First Legislature, Regular Session of 2021

February 9, 2021, 9:30 AM, hearing on HB1112

Good morning Mr. Chairman, vice chair, and committee members. My name is Jaclyn Leilani Borsa, I am a blind woman residing at 91-031 Parish Drive, Ewa Beach, 96706 in Ewa Beach. I am a member of The National Federation of the Blind of Hawaii.

I strongly oppose HB1112 and ask that you do not pass the measure.

I strongly support the testimony submitted by The National Federation of the Blind of Hawaii and ask that you take our testimony into serious consideration.

Mahalo for your commitment to blind people of Hawaii and your consideration of my testimony opposing HB1112.

**HB-1112**

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 9:07:21 AM

Testimony for HHH on 2/9/2021 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jennifer Pamintuan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Yamane,

My name is Jennifer Pamintuan and I am in strong support of HB1112. I am submitting written testimony today as a private citizen.

The reason I am in support of HB1112 is that currently I am a Mental Health Social Worker working with Adults with Severe and Persistent Mental Health Issues. I have personally seen consumers successfully working in the community. I believe this is a group that would benefit from a variety of vocational opportunities, and with the right support, I believe they will be successful. If this bill passes, it would allow mental health consumers to be included in the Vending Facility Program.

So please support HB1112, Relating to Vending Facilities, as it would open up more vocational opportunities to the mental health community and give this group access to an already successful training program, Ho'opono.

Thank you for your time,

Jennifer Pamintuan

LATE

Testimony of Donald Sakamoto  
Bill HB1112  
Committee on HHH  
Hawaii state House of Representatives  
February 9, 2021, 9:30 AM

Thank you chair, vice chair, and members of the committee. I am Donald Sakamoto. I live here on Oahu. I am blind and active in the National Federation of the Blind of Hawaii. I strongly oppose HB1112. Changing eligibility so people with mental illness can participate in the vending facilities program is not a good idea. I do not oppose people with mental illness but feel strongly that passing this bill is not the way to help them or their advocates.

If the legislature were to make such an important change as proposed in HB1112, there would have to be a detailed study to show that the change would be justified. Just thinking up a bill before understanding the consequences is not a good way to make public policy. Please think about the impact and possible harm to our state that would result from enacting HB1112. The vending facilities program for the blind is very successful and has operated at a









benefit to the state for many years. Nothing should be done that would place this program in jeopardy.  
Thank you for considering my views in opposition to HB1112.

LATE

**HB-1112**

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 9:37:32 AM

Testimony for HHH on 2/9/2021 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Earl Maeda	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this bill HB1112.

**HB-1112**

Submitted on: 2/14/2021 1:31:01 PM

Testimony for HHH on 2/9/2021 9:30:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Stacy Abe	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

To: Chair Yamane

My name is Stacy Abe and I am in strong support of House bill 1112. Currently I am a board member for the Koolau Clubhouse and am I support of this bill because it would open up vocational opportunities for the mental health community.

Throughout my affiliation with all the Clubhouses on Oahu, and with my work with mental health consumers, I believe that given the right training and support, they can be very successful candidates to own and operate their own vending facilities. Work gives those suffering with mental illness a purpose and sense of belonging and being able to eventually own their own business will empower them and allow them to be active participants in the community. Personally, I have seen mental health consumers successfully work throughout various businesses in the community.

Please support HB1112, relating to vending facilities.

Thank you, Stacy Abe