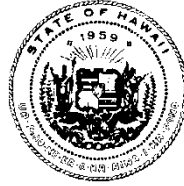


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IN REPLY, PLEASE REFER TO:

Statement of
Hakim Ouansafi, Executive Director
Hawaii Public Housing Authority

Before the
Senate Committee on Housing

1:01 p.m., March 14, 2023
Hawaii State Capitol
Room 225

In consideration of
HB 674, HD1
RELATING TO THE HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY

Honorable Chair Chang and members of the Senate Committee on Housing, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 674, HD1, relating to the Hawaii Public Housing Authority.

The Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) is in **strong support** of HB 674, HD1, which would repeal the percentage requirements related to the admission of applicants, with or without preferences, into federal and State low-income public housing units.

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.

The removal of the preference percentage requirements would allow the HPHA to conduct its admissions in a fairer and more appropriate manner based on the State's current needs and availability of funds. Under 24 CFR §960.206, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban

Development allows Public Housing Agencies to develop residency requirements or local preferences in the admission process for their public housing programs.

The HPHA has established local preferences for both its State and federal public housing programs within their respective Administrative Rules. This bill would allow the HPHA to continue prioritizing housing for families with preferences (e.g., victims of domestic violence, families experiencing homelessness) through its valued relationships with our non-profit partners.

The HPHA appreciates the opportunity to provide the committee with its testimony regarding HB 674, HD1. We thank you very much for your dedicated and continued support.