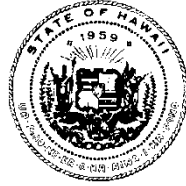


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR



HAKIM OUANSAFI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY
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POST OFFICE BOX 17907
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96817

IN REPLY, PLEASE REFER TO:

Statement of
Hakim Ouansafi, Executive Director
Hawaii Public Housing Authority

Before the
House Committee on Housing

9:30 a.m., February 8, 2023
Hawaii State Capitol
Room 312

In consideration of
HB 680
RELATING TO THE HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY

Honorable Chair Hashimoto and members of the House Committee on Housing, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 680, relating to the Hawaii Public Housing Authority.

The Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) is in **strong support, with amendments** of HB 680, which would appropriate funds to the HPHA for the rehabilitation, remodeling, renovation, and repair of dwelling units at federal and state low-income public housing projects.

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.

Given the age of our public housing inventory, the HPHA is facing a capital needs backlog upward of approximately \$800 million. With multiple properties that were built over 50 years ago, additional funding is desperately needed to keep these public housing units in safe,

decent, and sanitary condition. As you may know, the HPHA is roughly 90% federally funded. This federal funding is tied to the HPHA's occupancy rate. The majority of public housing families earn less than 15% of the Area Median Income or less.

Approximately 350-500 units become available for new families each year. Unit rehabilitation and modernization work often includes lead abatement, electrical infrastructure upgrades, plumbing replacements and upgrades, roof replacements, spall repair, painting, unit modernization, reasonable accommodations, and other federally-mandated project/unit improvements and retrofitting to ensure compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The HPHA humbly requests the following amendment:

1. Authorize the HPHA to contract out the repair and maintenance of vacant or damaged units, without regard to civil service requirements. Repair and maintenance work is traditionally done by civil servants. This exemption would allow the HPHA to partner with multiple contractors to ensure this work is done in a more timely manner.

Section 2. There is appropriated out of the general revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$30,000,000 or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 and the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2024-2025 for the repair, renovation, improvements, and maintenance of federal and state low-income public housing units without regard to Chapter 76, Hawaii Revised Statutes, from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2025.

The HPHA appreciates the opportunity to provide the committee with its testimony regarding HB 680. We thank you very much for your dedicated and continued support.

HB-680

Submitted on: 2/5/2023 1:23:00 PM

Testimony for HSG on 2/8/2023 9:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Will Caron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB680.