

Committee on Housing: House of Representatives
February 4, 2009

LATE TESTIMONY

Testimony in Support of HB 1694

I am Ilalo Parayno. I am testifying in support of HB 1694, a bill that will mandate for a minimum rent at our public housing projects. To protect the solvency of our rental projects especially during these times of low state revenues coupled with inconsistent level of funding and diminishing federal funds, we can no longer do business as usual. In 2008, the short fall in federal revenues to HPHA was 3-5 Billion dollars, in a report provided by the Department of Human Services. We should have a graduated increase in rents. A one bedroom share a room in Kalihi now cost \$500.00. I believe the minimum rent \$250.00 should allow for a graduated increase of \$50.00 per year for the next five years. If we do not increase the rent and the state is unable to infuse funds like they have been all these years, these projects will continue to deteriorate. This matter needs cooperation and solution from HPHA, then residents and the community. The tax payers and government cannot do it alone.

With respect to the preferential status of homeless people, this is unfair to the 9,000 people in the wait list. The Hawaii Revised Statutes give preferential status to veterans only. People are getting smarter by registering themselves registered "homeless" to bypass the long lines. People in the wait list have been waiting for up to six years. These preferential admissions are unfair.

If we continue to populate these rental facilities with homeless tenants, we will defy the concept of a mix use concept. We need working responsible people. Homeless can come in these projects, but they can not be the priority. If we do not do anything to these projects now, the only alternative will for the state to sell it to non-

profit as a mix use rental units that may not maximize tenancy for the poorest.

Committee on Housing: House of Representatives
February 4, 2009

Testimony in Support of HB 1694

I am Christopher Manabat. I am testifying in support of HB 1694, a bill that will mandate for a minimum rent at our public housing projects. On these tough economic times wherein the State or the tax payers can no longer provide for everybody, we all need to pitch in to make the system work. I do not think that it is fair for able bodied people to pay \$108 dollars for one bedroom and \$128.00 for two bedrooms. I make \$11.00 an hour and pay \$950 for my one bedroom. These rents with HPHA were set in 2001. It is time for these rents to go up.

Preferential admissions on these projects are unfair. We reward people for being homeless. Poor people should have equal access to these government assisted rentals. Registering themselves as bonafide homeless is so unfair. To improve the living conditions in these projects, we should reserve it for the working poor as oppose to able bodied homeless people.

Committee on Housing: House of Representatives
February 4, 2009

Late

LATE TESTIMONY

Testimony in Support of HB 1694

I am Flor Martinez, a radio announcer at KNDI radio. I read about the horrible living conditions at Kuhio Park Terrace due to deteriorating building conditions. The State is unable to keep up with the maintenance of the place. Representative Cabanilla told me that rent is as low as \$212.00 for a five bedroom unit. I think that is ridiculous. I said to myself that I should find a way to be accepted there. These rental rates must be disincentive for people to look for a job and do better. This is wrong.

Now, I ask myself, who is smarter, them or me? I work very hard to pay my mortgage of over three thousand dollars a month, or should I just go to a homeless shelter to fast track myself to Kuhio Park Terrace.

Government should help the needy but do not enable them to remain needy.

February 4, 2009

Dear Madame Chairwoman, vice chair and members of the House Housing Committee,

My name is Dr. Inam Rahman. I have been a resident of Honolulu, Hawaii for the last 15 years. I appear before you this morning to express my strong support for HB1694. I strongly believe that this bill provides opportunity for low income working families to have decent and secure place to live.

By setting up a minimal renting requirements, HB 1694 encourages people to actually work and not just being homeless throughout their life. It also allows the landlords enough revenues to continue to maintain and the integrity and security of rental units.

Finally I strongly believe that disabled veterans should always be our first preference for tenancy of rental units. This is one of very small ways to appreciate our disabled veterans for what they have done to protect us and our country. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



Inam Rahman MD