
From: on behalf of EBMtestimony
Subject: FW: HB 658/ Vietnam Veterans of Maui County

From: mangomitch [mailto:mangomitch8@hawaii.rr.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 18, 2009 4:15 PM
To: Rep. Angus McKelvey
Subject: HB 658/ Vietnam Veterans of Maui County

Aloha EBM Committee Members:

We are presenting testimony to ask for Your Support and a YES vote on passing HB 658 into Law; to give Our Maui OVS office a much needed 2ND Counselor.

We have already given You data on the hugh increase in our Maui OVS workload over the last 6 years(which equals the Honolulu office) that along supports the Need for this counselor!

And WE know both Angus Mc Kelvey and Mele Carroll ,and Cindy Evans have met with Our various Maui Veteran Organization leaders over the last 6 months at our Maui OVS ; and have seen First Hand the overwhelming work load and Veteran clients that continually visit the office on a daily basis. Your response to these visits have also supported the additional counselor.

What You may not be aware of as well is that we expect upwards of 1,000 additional Maui born and raised War Veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan to start needing to use our Maui OVS resources and Counselor's with the next 12 months.

WE are currently in NO position to even handle our existing 12,000 Veterans on Maui ;much less those New and Brave War Hero's returning by the end of 2009 and early 2010!!!

And as You know we have work for the last 10 years to support our Respected Maui Legislature's to Add this much needed 2nd Counselor for our Maui OVS.

We are aware of Your support expressed to US for this Counselor in this session and are very encouraged and thankful for making this Your top Priority in this session..

We will be available to give you our continued support toward this Additional counselor at Our Maui OVS!

Mahalo Nui Loa
For you Heartfelt support to date

Mitch Skaggerberg/ President - Vietnam Veterans of Maui County
Legislative Liaison-Maui County Veterans Council

STATE OF HAWAII
OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES
TESTIMONY ON H.B. 658, RELATING TO MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR
THE MAUI OFFICE OF VETERANS' SERVICES

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION, BUSINESS & MILITARY
AFFAIRS

February 19, 2009

Good morning Chair Angus McKelvey, Vice-Chair Isaac Choy, and members of the House Committee on Economic Revitalization, Business and Military Affairs.

I am Mark Moses, Director of the Office of Veterans Services (OVS). I appreciate this opportunity to support H.B. 658 which appropriates funds to establish one additional full-time counselor position at the Maui OVS.

The OVS supports the intent of this measure as long as its implementation does not impact or replace the priorities set forth in the Executive Biennium Budget for Fiscal Years 2009-2010.

I would like to share background information on what has occurred in the past. The Maui OVS was responsible for making itinerant visits to Molokai and Lanai. Suddenly, the Maui Veterans Services Counselor applied for retirement and the OVS requested to refill this position. Since the Maui Counselor position is technically still filled by the individual seeking retirement, the OVS was required to establish an identical position, which we accomplished. After some delay, we were able to employ an individual as a temporary appointment outside of list to provide counseling services to Maui veterans and their family members. Additionally, as requested and granted by the Legislature, the OVS created and filled a roving counselor position that visits Molokai two times a month and Lanai once a month.

The OVS will hire a counselor once the previous position holder's retirement issues are resolved. Unfortunately, during the time period between the hiring for the above mentioned counselor positions, the Maui Office Assistant, filed for and was granted retirement. We have made arrangements to hire a temporary replacement for this position, and as I sit here, OVS is in the process of interviewing applicants for this temporary position.

The OVS can understand the need of the Maui veterans and their families for permanent staffing of the office and this request for an additional counselor, however, *given our current economic circumstances, it may not be practical to implement this measure at this time. It most definitely is a matter worthy of consideration when the state's fiscal situation improves.*

Thank you for this opportunity to speak on behalf of Hawaii's veteran community. I will respond to questions from the committee.