

SB 1294

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR



CHAD K. TANIGUCHI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY
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Statement of
Chad K. Taniguchi
Hawaii Public Housing Authority
Before the

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND HOUSING

February 9, 2009 1:15 p.m.
Room 225, Hawaii State Capitol

In consideration of
S.B. 1294
RELATING TO PUBLIC HOUSING

The Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) **opposes** S.B. 1294, which would appropriate funds for HPHA to perform repair and renovation of public housing projects statewide.

The HPHA opposes this measure because it would adversely impact the priorities set forth in the Executive Biennium Budget for Fiscal Years 2009-2010. The HPHA acknowledges that this measure has merit; however, given the current fiscal difficulties, it would not be prudent to pursue enactment at this time.

TESTIMONY TO THE TWENTY-FIFTH STATE LEGISLATURE, 2009 SESSION

To: Senate Committee on Education and Housing

From: Hawaii Disability Rights Center

Re: Senate Bill 1294
Relating to Public Housing

Hearing: Monday, February 9, 2009, 1:15PM
Conference Room 225, State Capitol

Members of the Committee on Education and Housing:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony supporting Senate Bill 1294, Relating to Public Housing.

The Hawaii Disability Rights Center, formerly known as the Protection and Advocacy Agency of Hawaii (P&A) is the agency mandated by federal law and designated by Executive Order to protect and advocate for the human, civil and legal rights of Hawaii's estimated 180,000 people with disabilities.

We **support this bill**. We have been following this issue for some time of the lack of accessible units with the Hawaii Public Housing Authority. All public housing units owned or operated by HPHA must be brought into compliance with state and federal laws requiring accessibility for persons with disabilities. Federal laws require, for example, a minimum of **5%** of total dwelling units accessible to persons with mobility impairments. An additional **2%** of the units must be accessible for persons with hearing or vision impairments. These accessible units should be distributed throughout projects and sites and be available in a sufficient range of sizes and amenities.

By its own admission with the data it has provided to us, HPHA has repeatedly been in violation of these requirements. We understand that a federal court action has been filed against them to force compliance. We believe that if compliance must occur, the state is best advised to proactively address the issue head on, as opposed to waiting for a federal court to enter an order. Our experience in other areas is that court monitored compliance can be more costly and not always the most efficient way for local agencies to function. SB 1294 will address these actions by assuring adequate funds to facilitate compliance. It will save the state substantial additional costs in the long run.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this bill.

From: [Joel Fischer](#)
To: [EDH Testimony](#)
Subject: SB1294; EDH; 2/9/09; 1:15PM; Rm 225
Date: Wednesday, February 04, 2009 12:53:38 PM
Importance: High

SB1294, Relating to Public Housing
EDH; Cahir, Sen Sakamoto

PLEASE PASS THIS BILL!

I want to thank you holding this hearing.

This bill, along with its companion bills, SB188 and SB757, the clearest examples of a compassionate Legislature doing whatever is possible to preserve the safety net. We are going to see a huge outpouring of need over the next 2 years, and we should do everything possible to help our people with their most basic needs, especially housing. it really is essential that we repair all public housing as quickly as possible. We cannot condemn our people to life in hellholes!

Thank you so much.

Aloha, joel

Dr. Joel Fischer, ACSW
President, 19-3, Democratic Party

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University of Hawai'i, School of Social Work
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"It is reasonable that everyone who asks justice should DO justice."
Thomas Jefferson

"There comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular, but one must take it because one's conscience tells one that it is right."

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

"Never, never, never quit."
Winston Churchill