

LATE TESTIMONY



FRANCINE MAE AONA KENYON

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Wednesday, February 10, 2010 at 9:00 AM in Conference Room 325

TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

HOUSE BILL 2280 – RELATING TO THE HOMELESS

My name is Francine Aona Kenyon and I am a deaf advocate. I have dealt with many deaf and hard of hearing people who are both homeless and jobless.

I support the intent of the House Bill 2280, Relating to the Homeless. The purpose of this bill is to establish a return-to-home program for the homeless.

Pertaining to Section 356D, Lines 5 to 9, "eligible homeless persons with assistance in being reunited with their families and relatives in the person's home state" does not appear to assist those who are deaf or hard of hearing and homeless because of three major reasons: (1) deafness and lack of communication, (2) joblessness, and, (3) family problems.

Some deaf people who are homeless have either been kicked out by their families and relatives or spent ALL their earnings on their parents' or relatives' mortgages. I have helped them get back on their feet but there is a shortage of housing for people who are deaf and homeless in the state.

Communication barrier is always # 1 problem that may also impact deaf people when looking for housing. There are video and phone relay services are available to serve BOTH deaf and hearing people which could also assist in resolving some of the communication problems to make finding a place to live easier for deaf people.

I support the intent of the House Bill 2280 with the full access to including those homeless people who are Deaf and hard of hearing as well as those of people with other types of disabilities.

Thank you for the opportunity testify.

Sincerely,

Francine A. Kenyon

Francine Aona Kenyon
Deaf Advocate

Alice Greenwood
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Committee on Housing
Wednesday, February 10, 2010
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Rep. Rida Cabanilla, Chair
Rep. Pono Chong, Vice Chair

Support of H.B. 2280

Many times with very good intentions, we travel to our dream place in hopes of starting a new and better life. Sometimes as hard as you may try things just don't work out the way it should.

This Bill H.B. 2280, gives someone or families a chance to be back home where the support of one's families and friends are.

I have come across many homeless families and friends, who would look forward to going back home, but due to situations, but mostly cost factors, they are still here.

Thank You

Alice Greenwood

LINDA LINGLE
GOVERNOR



RUSS K. SAITO
Comptroller

SANDRA L. YAHIRO
Deputy Comptroller

**STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING
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**TESTIMONY
OF
RUSS K. SAITO, COMPTROLLER
DEPARTMENT OF ACCOUNTING AND GENERAL SERVICES
TO THE
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
HOUSING
ON
February 10, 2010**

H.B. 2280

RELATING TO THE HOMELESS

Chair Cabanilla and committee members, thank you for allowing me to testify on H.B. 2280. The Department of Accounting and General Services opposes this bill because it will require funds to implement that are not in the Administration's supplemental budget. Currently, all homeless programs are operating at their limits. It would be disadvantageous to the State to add the programs this bill proposes if it means that some of the existing homeless programs must be reduced or eliminated. Unless the State's economy improves faster than forecasted, there will be no money for the program this bill proposes.

I also note that this bill refers to a "Parks for homeless special fund under Chapter 184, HRS. If moneys in this special fund were to be used only to transport homeless people to their home states, the special fund would be improperly placed. If instead the moneys are used to prepare and use State parks as homeless camps, there are added costs for site preparation, additional sanitary facilities, water, utilities, security and outreach

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services that must be accounted for. Once again, these are costs that are not in the Administration's supplemental budget.

In short, while the intent of this bill is good, it would require moneys to implement, first, to transport people back to their home state and second, potentially, to establish campgrounds and ensure the health and safety of the people who occupy them. I recommend that this bill be held.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

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