

LATE

NEIL ABERCROMBIE
GOVERNOR



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P. O. Box 339
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February 3, 2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services

FROM: **Patricia McManaman, Interim Director**

SUBJECT: **S.B. 900 - RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS**

Hearing: Thursday, February 3, 2011; 1:15 p.m.
Conference Room 016, State Capitol

PURPOSE: The purpose of S.B. 900 is to establish the Hawaii interagency council on homelessness under the Department of Human Services for administrative purposes and makes an appropriation for administrative expenses.

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the intent of this bill.

President Obama has renewed the effort to empower the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness through which the State of Hawaii is affiliated via the Region 9 Federal governance.

The establishment of a Hawaii interagency council on homelessness will allow the State to collaborate with the jurisdictional Interagency Councils across the nation to continually fine tune the effort to end homelessness. The United States Interagency

Council on Homelessness recommends that the States establish such a State agency by legislative action or executive order, or both.

The appointment of Marc Alexander as the Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness, to spearhead homelessness collaborations across federal, State and County jurisdictions and with community and businesses partners, is an excellent starting point to revisit the State's Strategic Plan to End Homelessness and to provide the statewide collaboration needed to address homelessness issues through the backing of the Governor's Office.

We recommend that the placement of the Hawaii interagency council on homelessness be left open until such time as the Department has the opportunity to more fully discuss the coordination of efforts between the Governor's Office and DHS.

The Department's short staffed Homeless Program Office does not have the resources to administer and implement a statewide interagency council effectively.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this bill.



LATE

CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

COMMENTS on SB 900: RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS

TO: Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair, Senator Les Ihara, Vice Chair,
and Members, Committee on Human Services

FROM: Betty Lou Larson, Legislative Liaison, Catholic Charities Hawaii

Hearing: Thursday, 2/3/11; 1:15 p.m.; CR 016

Chair Chun Oakland, Vice Chair Ihara, and Members of the Committee on Human Services

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 900, which establish the Hawaii Interagency Council on Homelessness. I am Betty Lou Larson, Legislative Liaison for housing issues at Catholic Charities Hawaii. While Catholic Charities Hawaii supports the concept, **we suggest that you hold the bill at this time.**

It seems that the newly appointed Coordinator on Homelessness has been tasked by the Governor to bring together the government entities that are listed in the bill, as well as the providers represented by the continuum of care collaborations across the state, businesses and others concerned about homelessness. This bill is not needed for the new Coordinator to gather these entities and seek new strategies and ways to end homelessness. It is important to give the new Coordinator flexibility to achieve the goals of the Governor and the State for solutions to homelessness as he begins his work in mid-February. All parts of our community need to be involved to resolve this sometimes overwhelming social problem. Holding the bill would give the Coordinator time to establish the partnerships and linkages to achieve effective outcomes.

If this bill does proceed forward, we urge the Legislature to ensure that any administrative costs for the Council not impact on direct service funding to homeless programs. Additional funding would need to be appropriated for the expenses of this Council.

Thank you for hearing our testimony and especially for your concern and your support to end the crisis in homelessness. In these difficult economic times, we appreciate your dedication to continue to seek solutions to the homeless problems of our State.



Kanani Kaaiawahia Bulawan

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 900 w/AMENDMENTS: RELATING TO THE HOMELESS

TO: Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair, Senator Les Ihara, Vice Chair, and Members, Committee on Human Services

FROM: KananiKaaiawahia Bulawan, Administrative Advisor

Hearing: Thursday, 2/3/11; 1:15 p.m.; CR 016

Aloha and good afternoon, Chair Chun Oakland, Vice Chair Ihara, and Members of the Committee on Human Services:

I am a private resident, homeowner and a concerned citizen that supports SB900 with a few amendments suggested.

We all can agree we have problems with Homelessness and how interagency offices for government and non-government agencies communicate. This is at time a barrier in itself and how clients are served or get served. The issue of an interagency council has been around for the past decade and to the credit of the Homeless Program Office under the leadership of Ms. Sandra Miyoshi, this group has been meeting. The difficulty I suspect to not having regular or consistency with membership is the changes in administration and how they view this council's important.

This bill will make the council important enough that everyone now has a role and responsibility. Based on this, I suggest that you **INCLUDE IN THE LANGUAGE FOR MEMBERSHIP ON THIS COUNCIL IS THE LEEWARD HOUSING COALITION** or its representative/designee. There is valuable work going on in the Leeward Coast and this group will provide input as to the way they work together. Including them is as important as adding the Catholic Dioceses of Honolulu and the Office for Social Ministry.

Mahalo for allowing me to submit testimony and for your consideration to the suggested amendment.