

LATE



HB519 HD1 Relating to Housing: Appropriates funds for state rent supplement program for homeless who are ready to rent permanent housing.

- ↓ COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES: Senator Chun Oakland, Chair; Senator Green M.D., Vice Chair
- ↓ Saturday, Mar. 9, 2013; 3:00 p.m. Conference Room 229

HAWAII SUBSTANCE ABUSE COALITION Supports HB519.

Good morning Chair Chun Oakland, Vice Chair Dr. Green and Distinguished Committee Members. My name is Alan Johnson. I am the current chair of the Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition (HSAC), a statewide hui of more than twenty non-profit treatment and prevention agencies.

Housing First approaches for the chronic homeless is growing in popularity across the nation because it has demonstrated positive outcomes. When housing is coordinated with comprehensive treatment, poor health is improved and extensive costs are avoided.

As typical with chronic homeless, other issues often conclude mental illness, substance use disorders and adverse medical conditions. It is critical that appropriate treatment is provided to this homeless group.

Because they can be “frequent flyers” for costly emergent care and reoccurring “pass throughs” in our Judiciary systems, the chronic homeless are generally included in the 20% who account for 80% of our health costs.



Housing First plus Treatment can avoid the exorbitant costs we are paying for healthcare.

Since this population is so expensive to society, a reasonable investment in Housing First as well as treatment for medically necessary conditions would help Hawai'i avoid substantial costs.

We very much appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony.