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HONOLULU

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

February 25, 2016

TO: The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Scott Morishige, MSW, Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness

SUBJECT: **HB 1773 HD1 – RELATING TO HOUSING.**

Hearing: Thursday, February 25, 2016, 1:00 p.m.
Conference Room 308, State Capitol

POSITION: The Governor's Coordinator on Homelessness appreciates the intent of this measure, as it proposes to provide funding to address key aspects of the state's work to end homelessness. However, the Coordinator's support is limited to the extent that passage of this bill does not replace or adversely impact priorities identified in the Executive Budget.

The Coordinator notes that the shallow rent subsidy program described in the bill is similar to the Rapid Re-Housing program in the Governor's Executive Budget. The Coordinator asks for the Legislature's support of the Executive Budget request, which includes \$3 million for Housing First and \$2 million for Rapid Re-Housing.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the bill is to appropriate funds to the Department of Human Services (DHS), including \$3 million for the continuation of the State's Housing First program and \$2 million for the establishment of a shallow rent subsidy program.

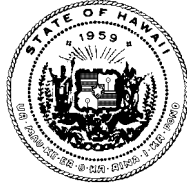
Housing First is an essential tool to address the needs of chronically homeless households and connect them quickly to permanent supportive housing. The State's Housing First program has provided housing subsidies for 106 chronically homeless persons since July 2014, including many individuals with serious and persistent mental illness and chronic health conditions.

The State Housing First program has not only provided housing subsidies for these individuals, but has also stabilized their health conditions and significantly reduced healthcare

costs. A preliminary analysis by the University of Hawaii Center on the Family of a subset of Housing First clients found that estimated healthcare costs for clients dropped an average of 43% in the six months following housing placement – from an average of \$10,570 per client per month to \$5,980 per client per month. While the program is currently limited to Oahu, there is a need for Housing First statewide. This measure would enable statewide expansion of the program.

In regards to the appropriation for shallow rent subsidy, the Coordinator defers to DHS in regards to specific issues related to implementation of the program, including cost implications.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

February 25, 2016

TO: The Honorable Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Rachael Wong, DrPH, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 1773 HD1 – RELATING TO HOUSING**

Hearing: Thursday, February 25, 2016; 1:00 p.m.
Conference Room 308, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the intent of this proposed bill, especially as it relates to funding for the continued operation of the State's Housing First Program which currently provides housing subsidies and serves 106 chronically homeless individuals and families. We note, however, that the Governor's Executive Budget includes a request of \$3 million for the Housing First program and are concerned about the potential that this proposal may have an adverse impact on the priorities indicated in the Executive Budget.

DHS supports the intent of Section 4 regarding a shallow rent subsidy program provided that its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities indicated in the Executive Budget, and offers comments.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the bill is to appropriate funds to DHS for the for the Shallow Rent Subsidy Program for homeless working individuals or families who are ready to rent permanent housing to obtain and maintain permanent housing, and appropriates funds to continue to administer Housing First (HF) Programs for chronically homeless individuals.

The State's Housing First program continues to serve 106 persons (70 individuals and 10 families). These individuals and families were all referred to the HF program via Hale O Malama, or

the Coordinated Entry System (CES). This means that the VI-SPDAT (Vulnerability Index Service Prioritization and Decision Assistance Tool), our community's agreed upon screening instrument, was administered, and based upon the client's needs, the client was deemed eligible for the highest level of service we have available, which is Housing First. The commitment of DHS to Hale O Malama is clearly demonstrated as DHS understands the need for improved coordination of services and allocating appropriate resources to meet client needs.

As many as 20 of the Housing First clients being provided housing subsidies are receiving intensive Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) level of care through the Hawaii Pathways Program (HPP). HPP is the implementation of the Pathways Model of Housing First that is funded by a federal grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) through the Department of Health. The State's HF program was designed to achieve fidelity with the HPP to the extent possible to build capacity to provide the supportive services necessary to successfully maintain this high-need population in stable housing.

Regarding Section 4 that appropriates funds to DHS for a shallow rent subsidy program, the Department notes that in discussion with the Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA), HPHA currently operates a state-wide rental subsidy program funded at approximately \$1 million. The HPHA program is currently operated with 1.25 FTE, however at one time the program was staffed at 5.0 FTE. The DHS is not certain whether the proposed rent subsidy program is intended to supplement the HPHA program or to supplant it. We would need to exercise caution about transferring the existing program staffed by civil servants and offering it via a contract in accordance with Chapter 103F, Hawaii Revised Statutes. There are a number of measures this session that propose a similar program.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

From the office of -
Council Member
District 4 - Puna Makai



Office: (808) 965-2712
Fax: (808) 965-2707
Email: gilagan@hawaiiicounty.gov

GREGGOR ILAGAN

25 Aupuni Street, Hilo, Hawai'i 96720

February 24, 2016

The Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
And Members of the Committee on Judiciary

Dear Chair Luke and Committee members,

Thank you very much for the opportunity to write in support of House Bill 1773, HD1. The lack of homeless shelters is a major problem on Hawaii Island, and in Puna my office has tackled the issue of homelessness in many ways, from helping homeless people get the necessary documentation to supporting Dr. Cliff Kopp's efforts to raise awareness on the issue, to working with the Hawai'i County Office of the Prosecuting Attorney regarding squatting issues in the many vacant homes in my district.

HB 1773 provides another way to help out those in need, by appropriating funds to support "housing first" and shallow rent subsidy programs. It is a good idea and I thank you for moving it forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gregggor Ilagan".

Greggor Ilagan
Council Member



DEPARTMENT OF
HOUSING AND HUMAN CONCERNS
COUNTY OF MAUI

ALAN M. ARAKAWA
Mayor

CAROL K. REIMANN
Director

JAN SHISHIDO
Deputy Director

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**TESTIMONY OF CAROL K. REIMANN
DIRECTOR OF HOUSING AND HUMAN CONCERNS
COUNTY OF MAUI**

BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Thursday, February 25, 2016
1:00 p.m. - Conference Room 308

HB 1773, HD1, RELATING TO HOUSING

Honorable Sylvia Luke, Chair
Honorable Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair
Honorable Members of the House Committee on Finance

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT of HB 1773, HD1.**

The purpose of this Act is to appropriate funds to the department of human services to support the: (1) Housing first programs; and, (2) Shallow rent subsidy program.

I support this bill for the following reasons:

1. The State of Hawaii has a homeless crisis. With an estimated 7,620 people living on the streets, parks, beaches and in shelters, Hawaii has the unenviable distinction of having the highest per capita rate of homelessness of any state in the country, as well as the highest rate of chronic unsheltered homeless per capita of any state.
2. **HOUSING FIRST PROGRAMS**
 - a. While housing first programs have been funded on a year-to-year basis by the legislature, most of the funding has been used for the island of Oahu. The neighbor islands, including Maui County, is in dire need more intensive housing first services.
 - b. Housing first programs help the chronically homeless, including individuals with an addiction or mental illness, or both, by providing housing and support services which enable the homeless to transition to permanent housing.

- c. Housing first programs are cost-effective as providing housing and services under this program is less costly than incurring costs for emergency, healthcare, and other services.

3. SHALLOW RENT SUBSIDY PROGRAM

- a. Many families in Hawaii are homeless simply due to the lack of affordable housing. These individuals are employed and have an income but simply cannot leave the shelters due to the fact that the cost of housing is more than their income.
- b. The shallow rent subsidy program provides such individuals with a small rental subsidy that allows working individuals and families to transition from shelters to permanent housing.
- c. This program has a trickle-down effect as it frees up existing shelter space for individuals and families currently living on the street.

For these reasons I **strongly support HB 1773, HD1.**

Respectfully yours,



CAROL K. REIMANN
Director of Housing and Human Concerns



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1773, HD1: RELATING TO HOUSING

TO: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair, Representative Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair; and Members, Committee on Finance

FROM: Betty Lou Larson, Legislative Liaison, Catholic Charities Hawai'i

Hearing: Thursday, 2/25/16; 1:00 PM; CR 308

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Nishimoto, and Members, Committees Finance:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony **in strong support** of HB 1773 HD1, making appropriations for a shallow rent subsidy program and to continue housing first programs. I am Betty Lou Larson, with Catholic Charities Hawai'i. We are also a member of Partners in Care. Catholic Charities Hawai'i has prioritized these two programs among our top priorities for 2016.

Catholic Charities Hawai'i (CCH) is a tax exempt, non-profit agency that has been providing social services in Hawai'i for over 60 years. CCH has programs serving elders, children, developmentally disabled, homeless and immigrants. Our mission is to provide services and advocacy for the most vulnerable in Hawai'i. Catholic Charities Hawai'i has a long history of working in the areas of affordable housing and homelessness.

The causes of homelessness are diverse and a comprehensive plan such as provided in this bill is essential. Different solutions must be implemented using interventions targeted to the particular characteristics of the population being served. Two programs critically necessary to address homelessness in Hawaii are the housing first and rapid rehousing/shallow rent subsidy programs.

We support **\$3 million** to continue the Housing First program which houses chronically homeless individuals and families, and to expand it to the Neighbor Islands. We respectfully urge you to add this funding to the **base budget of DHS**. Because funding is not in the base budget, the sustainability of housing for individuals in the current program (80 households as of 1/11/16) is at risk. **Housing First saves the state money:** *The Pathways preliminary study of healthcare savings found that after deducting the cost of rental subsidies (\$1,100/mo) and supportive services (\$1,120/mo), the net savings was estimated at \$2,370 per client/month. Total savings per year for each stably housed Housing First client would be about **\$28,440 per client**.*

We support **\$2 million** for a rapid rehousing program. Providing shallow rent subsidies can quickly enable working families to obtain a permanent rental unit. Families are often stuck in transitional or emergency housing since their work income is not enough for a market unit. By providing a small rental subsidy, these working people will become permanently housed, opening up space in shelters for more families. This not only addresses family homelessness, it better utilizes shelter space and may reduce the need to build and staff more family shelters.

Thank you for addressing these multiple paths out of homelessness. Please contact me at (808) 373-0356 or bettylou.larson@catholiccharitieshawaii.org if you have any questions.



Catholic
Charities
USA



CLARENCE T. C. CHING CAMPUS • 1822 Ke'eumoku Street, Honolulu, HI 96822
Phone (808) 373-0356 • bettylou.larson@CatholicCharitiesHawaii.org



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1773, HD1: RELATING TO HOUSING

TO: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair, Representative Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair, and Members, Committee on Finance

FROM: Stephen Kealoha, Maui Advisory Board Member, Catholic Charities Hawai'i

HEARING: Thursday, 2/25/16; 1:00 pm; Conference Room 308

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Nishimoto, and Members of the Committee on Finance:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of HB 1773, which appropriates funds to the department of human services for the rapid rehousing (shallow rent subsidy program) of homeless working individuals or families who are ready to rent permanent housing. It also appropriates funds to continue the housing first programs for chronically homeless individuals. Our mission is to provide services and advocacy for the most vulnerable in Hawai'i.

On Maui, our homelessness concerns are rapidly growing and if not abated, could evolve into a near out of control situation as on Oahu. The State's Housing First program is currently limited only to the island of Oahu. Although the City & County of Honolulu recently launched a Housing First initiative, there are no similar programs for the neighbor islands.

I strongly urge your support of HB 1773 to work towards our goal of ending homelessness in Hawaii. Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on this important bill to help end homelessness. Please contact me at (808) 280-0072 or at skealoha99@gmail.com if you have any questions.



PROTECTING HAWAII'S OHANA, CHILDREN, UNDER SERVED, ELDERLY AND DISABLED

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TO: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Scott Nishimoto, Vice Chair
Members, House Committee on Finance

FROM: Scott Fuji, Executive Director, PHOCUSED

HEARING: **Thursday, February 25th, 2016 at 1:00 p.m. in Conf. Rm. 308**

Testimony in Support of HB1773 – RELATING TO HOUSING

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **strong support** of HB1072 which would appropriate funds for the Shallow Rent Subsidy program and expand the State's Housing First program. PHOCUSED is a nonprofit membership and advocacy organization that works together with community stakeholders to impact program and policy change for the most vulnerable in our community, including homeless individuals and families. For the last two years PHOCUSED has worked closely with both government,

Hawaii's homeless situation has reached crisis proportions as we are currently ranked as having the #1 rate of homelessness per capita and as such requires a multi-faceted approach to housing Hawaii's individuals and families experiencing homelessness. The funding allocations of \$3 million dollars to the State's Housing First program and \$2 million dollars to the Shallow Rent Subsidy program within HB1773 do exactly that; provide for both individuals and families according to the needs. Data gathered by Oahu providers shows that there are over 1,000 households currently that could benefit from programs such as the State's Housing First Program and nearly 500 families struggling to find affordable housing. Increasing the State's Housing First program and providing funds for Shallow Rent subsidies would immediately and directly move these households into permanent housing with the appropriate wrap around services they need.

The State's current Housing First program on Oahu has shown tremendous success in housing some of Oahu's hardest to house, highest utilizers of public services, and long-term homeless individuals and families. Through a combination of on-going rental subsidies and wrap-around support services and case management, the State's program have permanently housed over 80 households, including families, with a 97% retention rate. Not only does this program effectively work to place and keep chronically homeless households in permanent housing but it has been shown to effectively and efficiently reduce public costs through accumulated healthcare savings. A preliminary report on the State's Housing First program shows an estimated savings of \$2,370 per month in reduced healthcare expenditures. Reducing a household's ER utilization by just one visit a month results in savings that equal to the average monthly rent to permanently house them.

We also recognize that there are many families in Hawaii struggling with homelessness for the simple lack of affordable housing. Despite having regular income from employment hundreds of Hawaii's families are unable to leave shelters because the price of housing simply exceeds their current income. The shallow rent subsidy program would provide a small rental subsidy allowing working families to exit shelters



PROTECTING HAWAII'S OHANA, CHILDREN, UNDER SERVED, ELDERLY AND DISABLED

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and enter permanent housing immediately. This frees up existing shelter space for families currently on the street preventing the need for expanding shelter services and focusing on the true means of ending homelessness; moving families into permanent housing.

Once again, PHOCUSED strongly urges your support of this bill. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact PHOCUSED at 521-7462 or by e-mail at admin@phocused-hawaii.org.



1124 Fort Street Mall, Suite 205 • Honolulu, Hawai'i 96813 Ph: 808.521.1846 Fx: 808.533.6995
Email: info@mentalhealth-hi.org • Web: www.mentalhealthhawaii.org

February 23, 2016

TO: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair, Representative Scott Nishimoto, Vice Chair, and the members of the House Committee on Finance
FROM: Trisha Kajimura, Executive Director

RE: Testimony in support of HB 1773, HD 1 Relating to Housing

HEARING: Thursday, February 25, 2016 1:00 PM, Conference Room 308

Thank you for hearing HB 1773, HD1, Relating to Housing, which provides funding for both the Housing First Program and a Shallow Subsidy Rental Assistance Program. **Mental Health America of Hawaii supports HB 1773, HD 1** because it offers two viable solutions to assist people out of homelessness.

Mental Health America of Hawaii is a 501(c)3 organization founded in Hawaii over 70 years ago that serves the community by promoting mental health through advocacy, education and service.

The Housing First program is an evidence-based program making great strides in our community to house the chronically homeless. Putting the chronically homeless in their own units with wrap-around services to help them stay housed and start addressing their mental health and substance abuse issues saves the state the cost of emergency care and hospitalization that this group utilizes at a high rate. Funding for this program will help current clients stay housed and also bring more vulnerable and very sick people off of the streets.

The issue of chronic homelessness is not unique to Oahu and the neighbor islands also need this service. *Mental Health America of Hawaii supports the funding of the Housing First program at an annual rate of at least \$3 million, preferably in the base budget, with services initiated on neighbor islands in addition to Oahu.*

We also support funding the Shallow Subsidy Rental Assistance Program at \$2 million per year because it will help a different homeless population – those who are working but not making enough to afford their full rent. The shallow subsidy will give these families just enough to maintain a stable living environment as they work to become self-supporting.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.



PARTNERS IN CARE

Oahu Continuum of Care

Partners in Care is a coalition of Oahu's homeless service providers, government representatives and community stakeholders working together in partnership to end homelessness.

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1773: RELATING TO HOUSING

TO: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair, Representative Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair, and Members, Committee on Finance

FROM: Greg Payton, Advocacy Committee Chair, Partners in Care

HEARING: Thursday, February 25th, 2016 at 1:00pm in Conf. Rm. 308

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Nishimoto, and Members of the Committee on Finance:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **strong support of HB 1773**, which appropriates funds to the department of human services for the rapid rehousing (shallow rent subsidy program) of homeless working individuals or families who are ready to rent permanent housing. It also appropriates funds to continue the housing first programs for chronically homeless individuals.

Hawaii's homeless situation has reached crisis proportions. We are currently ranked as having the #1 rate of homelessness per capita in the nation. This crisis requires a multi-faceted approach to housing Hawaii's individuals and families experiencing homelessness. The funding allocations in HB1773 of \$3 million to the State's Housing First program and \$2 million to a Shallow Rent Subsidy program do exactly that; provide for both individuals and families according to their needs.

The State's current Housing First program on Oahu has shown tremendous success in housing some of Oahu's hardest to house, highest utilizers of public services, and long-term homeless individuals and families. Through a combination of on-going rental subsidies and wrap-around support services and case management, the State's program have permanently housed over 80 households, including families, with a 97% retention rate. Not only is this program effective to keep chronically homeless households in permanent housing but it efficiently reduces public costs through accumulated healthcare savings. A preliminary report on the State's Housing First program shows an estimated savings of \$2,370 per month in reduced healthcare expenditures. Reducing a household's ER utilization by just one visit a month results in savings that equal to the average monthly rent to permanently house them. Data gathered by Oahu providers shows that there are over 1,000 households that would benefit from the State's Housing First program, demonstrating a clear and immediate need for these additional funds.

We also recognize that there are many families in Hawaii struggling with homelessness for the simple lack of affordable housing. Despite having regular income from employment, hundreds of Hawaii's families are unable to leave shelters because the price of housing simply exceeds their current income. The shallow rent subsidy program would provide a small rental subsidy allowing working families to exit shelters and enter permanent housing immediately. This frees up existing shelter space for families currently on the street preventing the need for expanding shelter services and focusing on the true means of ending homelessness; moving families into permanent housing. Oahu data shows there are nearly 500 families that could potentially benefit from a Shallow Rent Subsidy program.

Once again, we strongly urge your support of HB 1773 to work towards our goal of ending homelessness in Hawaii.



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February 25, 2016

To: Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair
Rep. Scott Nishimoto, Vice Chair
House Committee on Finance

From: Deborah Zysman, Executive Director
Hawaii Children's Action Network

Re: **HB 1773, HD1 Relating to Housing - Support**
Hawaii State Capitol, Conference Room 308 – February 25, 2016 at 1 PM

On behalf of Hawaii Children's Action Network (HCAN), formerly Good Beginnings Alliance, we are writing in support of HB 1773, HD1 Relating to Housing.

HCAN is committed to improving lives and being a strong voice advocating for Hawai'i's children. Last fall, HCAN convened input in person and online from more than 50 organizations and individuals that came forward to support or express interest for a number of issues affecting children and families in our state that resulted in the compilation of 2016 Hawai'i Children's Policy Agenda, which can be accessed at <http://www.hawaii-can.org/2016policyagenda>.

HCAN supports this initiative to provide rent subsidies for homeless working families and adults who are ready to transition into more stable rental housing.

We need stable funding sources that address the chronic housing shortage and bridge the economic gap for families to afford safe and secure housing, especially those with young children. Without state investments, we could see our state continue to lead the nation in growing rates for homelessness and unsafe and unstable housing.

Homeless Children: Hawaii has the highest homeless rate in the nation. It's estimated that one-third of the homeless in Hawaii are children.

Unstable Housing: Many of our families may not be living on the street or the beach, yet they don't have permanent housing -- they stay with friends and family -- moving frequently.

High cost of housing for families: 60 percent of households with young children in Hawaii pay more than 30% of their income for housing.

We need better solutions and outcomes for our most vulnerable populations. Let's help our state build a comprehensive affordable housing solution that helps families at every stage to secure stable housing options that help families and keiki in our state build a pathway toward greater economic stability and a healthier thriving community.

For these reasons, HCAN respectfully requests that the committee vote to pass this bill.



**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB1733 HD1: RELATING TO HOUSING
WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY**

TO: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair, Committee on Finance
Representative Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice-Chair, Committee on Finance
Members of the Committee on Finance

FROM: Jan Harada, CEO, Helping Hands Hawaii

Hearing: Thursday, February 25, 2016, 1:00pm; CR 308.

Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Nishimoto, and Committee members:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony **in support** of HB1733 HD1, which proposes to provide continued funding to the Department of Human Services for two critical programs addressing the needs of those who are homeless – (1) the Housing First program for chronically homeless individuals and (2) the Shallow Rent Subsidy program.

Helping Hands Hawaii has been involved in working with homeless individuals and families for many years through our health and human service programs and community supports. Our services for homeless have included access to needed public benefits (primarily SNAP), case management, day treatment/intensive outpatient, representative payee services for adults with serious and persistent mental illness (many of whom also struggle with substance use disorders), emergency financial assistance and financial literacy/education.

Housing First is a proven strategy to address the needs of those who have been struggling with homelessness over many years. While perceived as expensive in its implementation, the Housing First model currently being utilized by the State and its contract partners and network of community providers, is helping to reduce other costs associated with homelessness including but not limited to, emergency room visits, hospital admissions, and interactions with law enforcement and in fact is saving the State money. *A preliminary Hawaii study of healthcare savings found that after deducting the cost of rental subsidies (\$1,100/mo) and supportive services (\$1,120/mo), the net savings was estimated at \$2,370 per client/month. Total savings per year for each stably housed client would be about \$28,440 per client.* In addition, the \$3 million will allow the Department of Human Services to expand the Housing First Program to the Counties of Maui, Hawaii, and Kauai who are also struggling with homelessness in their communities. Lastly, we respectfully encourage you to add this to the base budget of the Department of Human Services to create greater stability for those who continue to need support from the Housing First program. When you have been on the streets for many years, as most of whom are in the Housing First program have been, recovery and stabilization will take more than 1 or 2 years.

Shallow rent subsidy programs are a proven, cost-effective tool in combating homelessness. A relatively small appropriation can help a relatively large number of households out of

homelessness. Shallow Rent Subsidies are designed to be short term. Coupled with appropriate case management services, Shallow Rent Subsidies can take a struggling family out of homelessness and set them on the path toward self-sufficiency. Many studies indicate that participants often only required 6 months of subsidies before they were living in permanent, affordable housing. When administering the Shallow rent subsidy program, additional consideration should be paid to: (1) eligibility criteria for participating in the program – including guidelines on access and prioritization (with there being more households eligible for the subsidy than funds available, attention needs to be paid to not only who qualifies, but the method/mechanisms for access as well as how to prioritize when there are not enough subsidies to help everyone who needs it), (2) clear guidelines on co-existence of shallow rent subsidies with other housing assistance (including but not limited to Section 8, HUD-VASH, public housing, Shelter+Care), (3) development and implementation of a transition plan as a part of the individualized plan for post-subsidy living of the households who receive the short-term subsidy assistance so that they are prepared for life after the subsidy (sustainability/retention of housing is as important as moving into the housing, and (4) ensuring that the Department of Human Services has or will be allocated/funded for, sufficient staffing and infrastructure to manage these additional funds.



HAWAII APPLESEED

CENTER FOR LAW & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Testimony of Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice
Supporting HB 1773 Relating to Housing
House Committee on Finance
Scheduled for Hearing Thursday, February 25, 2016, 1:00 PM, Room 308

Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice Hawai'i Appleseed is committed to a more socially just Hawai'i, where everyone has genuine opportunities to achieve economic security and fulfill their potential. We change systems that perpetuate inequality and injustice through policy development, advocacy, and coalition building.

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Nishimoto and Members, Committee on Finance:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 1773, which makes appropriations for two housing programs that will combat chronic homelessness.

Hawaii has the highest homelessness rate in the nation, and the problem continues to worsen. We need to adopt proven, cost-effective solutions to address homelessness. We support the continuance of the Housing First program on Oahu and its expansion to neighbor islands. The program gets people off the streets immediately, moving them into a more stable environment where they can be rehabilitated and achieve self-sufficiency. Housing first has been proven nationally as the most effective model for combating chronic homelessness.

The Shallow Rent Subsidy program proposed by HB 1773 is intended to help working households who do not need a deep subsidy to secure or maintain housing, but without some financial assistance (capped at \$500 per month) will become or remain homeless. Among homeless families, 50% of them are homeless because they were short money to pay rent and had no other underlying issues. Since the subsidy is shallow, a relatively small appropriation can help a relatively large number of households out of homelessness. Shallow Rent Subsidies are designed to be short term. Many studies indicate that participants often only required 6 months of subsidies before they were living in permanent, affordable housing. Shallow subsidies are a relatively low-cost, short-term intervention that can be a permanent solution to homelessness for many Hawai'i families—Hawai'i needs such a program.

Thank you very much for hearing and considering this important bill to help end homelessness.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 24, 2016 12:06 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: gpcolton@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1773 on Feb 25, 2016 13:00PM

HB1773

Submitted on: 2/24/2016

Testimony for FIN on Feb 25, 2016 13:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Gary Colton	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I SUPPORT HB1173 AND ENCOURAGE THE LEGISLATORS TO DO THE SAME. MAHALO

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 23, 2016 5:02 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: ajc@aloha.net
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1773 on Feb 25, 2016 13:00PM

HB1773

Submitted on: 2/23/2016

Testimony for FIN on Feb 25, 2016 13:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alika Campbell	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I strongly support this bill as shallow rent subsidies and housing first for chronically homeless are both proven "technologies" for addressing the complex issues of homelessness.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, February 24, 2016 3:25 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: ssoares@hopeserviceshawaii.org
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1773 on Feb 25, 2016 13:00PM

HB1773

Submitted on: 2/24/2016

Testimony for FIN on Feb 25, 2016 13:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Shirley Soares	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I support this bill. I work for a homeless service provider on the Big Island and provide services to the West Hawaii region. The difference in rent between East and West Hawaii are quite large. Having rent subsidy funds available to individuals and families in West Hawaii can make a big difference to housing them rapidly. Our goal is that they are self-sustaining when the assistance ends which is where intensive case management takes place to assist them on their road to self-sustainability. At this time, without the rent subsidy, they have to prove they are already self-sustaining before giving them security deposit, utility deposit assistance. This leaves families who are almost there but not quite there on the streets. It is more difficult obtaining self-sustainability while unsheltered than when sheltered and stable.

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Kaua'i Community Alliance

c/o Catholic Charities Hawai'i, 3016 Umi St, Ste 206, Līhu'e, HI 96766

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1773, HD1: RELATING TO HOUSING

TO: Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair, Representative Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair, and Members, Committee on Finance

FROM: Debra deLuis, Advocacy Chair, Kaua'i Community Alliance

HEARING: Thursday, 2/25/16; 1:00 pm; Conference Room 308

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Nishimoto, and Members of the Committee on Finance:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 1773, which appropriates funds to the Department of Human Services for the rapid rehousing (shallow rent subsidy program) of homeless working individuals or families who are ready to rent permanent housing. It also appropriates funds to continue the housing first programs for chronically homeless individuals.

We are reminded daily of Hawaii's homeless situation and that we currently rank as the highest rate of homelessness per capita in the nation. **This crisis requires a multi-faceted approach to housing Hawaii's individuals and families experiencing homelessness. The funding allocations in HB1773 of \$3 million to the State's Housing First program and \$2 million to a Shallow Rent Subsidy program do exactly that: provide for both individuals and families according to their needs.**

The State's current Housing First program on Oahu has shown tremendous success in housing some of Oahu's hardest to house, highest utilizers of public services, and long-term homeless individuals and families. Through a combination of on-going rental subsidies and wrap-around support services and case management, the State's program have permanently housed over 80 households, including families, with a 97% retention rate. Not only is this program effective to keep chronically homeless households in permanent housing but it efficiently reduces public costs through accumulated healthcare savings. A preliminary report on the State's Housing First program shows an estimated savings of \$2,370 per month in reduced healthcare expenditures. Reducing a household's ER utilization by just one visit a month results in savings that equal to the average monthly rent to permanently house them. Success on O'ahu needs to be extended to the neighboring islands.

We also recognize that there are many families in Hawaii struggling with homelessness for the simple lack of affordable housing. Despite having regular income from employment, hundreds of Hawaii's families are unable to leave shelters because the price of housing simply exceeds their current income. The shallow rent subsidy program would provide a small rental subsidy allowing working families to exit shelters and enter permanent housing immediately. This frees up existing shelter space for families currently on the street preventing the need for expanding shelter services and focusing on the true means of ending homelessness; moving families into permanent housing.

Once again, we strongly urge your support of HB 1773 to work towards our goal of ending homelessness in Hawaii. Please contact me at (808) 632-6950 or debra.deluis@catholiccharitieshawaii.org if you have any questions.

Kaua'i County Chapter, Bridging the Gap
The Neighbor Island Continuum of Care

Kaua'i Community Alliance is a collaborative working together to end homelessness and create sustainable housing options on Kaua'i and in the State of Hawai'i.

LATE



Community Health Outreach Work

677 Ala Moana Blvd., Suite 226
Honolulu, HI 96813
Phone (808) 853-3292 • Fax (808) 853-3274

TESTIMONY in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 1773 & HB 1774: RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS

TO: Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair and Rep. Scott Nishimoto, Vice Chair; House Finance Committee

FROM: Heather Lusk, Executive Director, CHOW Project

Hearing: Thursday, February 25, 2016 1:00 PM Conference Room 308, State Capitol

Dear Chair Luke, Vice Chair Nishimoto, and Members of the Committee:

The CHOW Project is in strong support of HB 1773 & HB 1774 which would appropriate 3 million for outreach to the homeless. As you know, Hawaii has the HIGHEST rate of homelessness among states in the U.S. and resources to connect the homeless to services through outreach are an essential component of our continuum of care.

The Community Health Outreach Work (CHOW) Project is dedicated to serving individuals, families, and communities adversely affected by drug use, through a participant-centered harm reduction approach. CHOW works to reduce drug related harms such as but not limited to HIV, hepatitis B/C and overdose. CHOW has successfully worked with Gregory House Programs over the years and is currently overseeing its Ryan White-funded activities. Our community is stronger because of programs like GHP and support for their case management activities will only make them more effective.

Throughout the past 20 years, the CHOW Project has used outreach to connect some of the most vulnerable in our community to services. While we hope that people will come to us for services, our data demonstrates that our approach to "meet people where they are" and take the services to the community has been immensely effective in linkage and access to care for those struggling with homelessness, addiction and mental and physical challenges. Please support this bill so that those who need help the most can be reached.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Heather Lusk". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Heather" and last name "Lusk" clearly distinguishable.

Heather Lusk
Executive Director
CHOW Project