



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

February 9, 2016

TO: The Honorable Representative Dee Morikawa, Chair  
House Committee on Human Services

The Honorable Representative Mark J. Hashem, Chair  
House Committee on Housing

FROM: Rachael Wong, DrPH, Director

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

Hearing: Tuesday, February 9, 2016; 8:31 a.m.  
Conference Room 329, 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 houses 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 the Department of Human Services for the continuation of the Housing First Program (\$3 million) and for the establishment of a shallow rent subsidy program (\$2 million) to be administered by the DHS.

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 the client's needs 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 the Department of Health via a federal grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). 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 \$2 million 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.



**EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS**  
HONOLULU

**DAVID Y. IGE**  
GOVERNOR

February 9, 2016

TO: The Honorable Dee Morikawa, Chair  
House Committee on Human Services

The Honorable Mark J. Hashem, Chair  
House Committee on Housing

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

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

Hearing: Tuesday, February 9, 2016, 8:31 a.m.  
Conference Room 329, 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 permanently housed 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 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 state 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 to extend 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.

Edward Thompson, III

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
Sent: Monday, February 01, 2016 9:41 AM  
To: HUS testimony  
Cc: tsymons@fsswh.org  
Subject: \*Submitted testimony for HB1773 on Feb 9, 2016 08:31AM\*

**HB1773**

Submitted on: 2/1/2016

Testimony for HUS/HSG on Feb 9, 2016 08:31AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Toni Symons	Family Support Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

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## CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

### TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1773: RELATING TO HOUSING

TO: Representative Dee Morikawa, Chair, Human Services Committee,  
Representative Mark J. Hashem, Chair; Housing Committee, and Members,  
Committees on Human Services and Housing

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

Hearing: Tuesday, 2/9/16; 8:31 am; CR 329

Chair Morikawa, Chair Hashem, and Members, Committees on Human Services and Housing:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony **in strong support** of HB 1773, 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 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:** *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.*

We support **\$2 million** for a shallow rent subsidy program. This promotes the rapid rehousing of families who are working. Often they are 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.

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



# FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

1020 South Beretania Street ♦ Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-1492

Tel: 808-522-9555 ♦ Web: [www.firstumchonolulu.org](http://www.firstumchonolulu.org)

February 4, 2016

Dear House of Representatives Human Services & Housing Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of HB 1773, which appropriates \$3 million for Housing First and \$2 million for the creation of a shallow rent subsidy program.

As a pastor in downtown Honolulu, I see every day the effects of poverty in our islands. The church's ministries to those who are hungry and homeless have had to grow in recent years to meet the demand. It breaks our hearts to know that so many of our brothers and sisters are struggling to survive in paradise. There must be a better way.

In recent months, I have seen first-hand how Housing First can change people's lives. Several of the "regulars" at our weekly free pancake breakfast have moved from chronic homelessness to housing due to this program. Having a stable home has enabled them to address the other issues that plague their lives. It gives them a place to rest, a place to re-group, and a place from which to start over. But there are so many more who need this assistance. As the regulars have been less frequent due to their new housing and stability, we have begun to see many new faces replacing them. Last week we served over 300 breakfasts, as compared to 200 last year.

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. Housing First and the shallow rent subsidy program proposed by HB 1773 is exactly what we need.

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

Sincerely,

Rev. Amy C. Wake  
Pastor



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

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TO: Representative Dee Morikawa, Chair Human Services  
Representative Mark Hashem, Chair Housing  
Representative Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice-Chair Human Services  
Representative Jo Jordan, Vice-Chair Housing  
Members, House Committees on Human Services and Housing

FROM:

HEARING: **Tuesday February 9<sup>th</sup>, 2016 at 8:31am in Conf. Rm. 329**

**Testimony in Support of HB 1773 RELATING TO HOUSING**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in **strong support** of HB 1773. Appropriates funds for the shallow rent subsidy program for homeless working individuals or families who are ready to rent permanent housing in order to obtain and maintain permanent housing. Appropriates funds to the department of human services. Also appropriates funds to the department of human services to continue to administer housing first programs for chronically homeless individuals.

Since March 2014, PHOCUSED has worked together with 30+ homeless service providers throughout Oahu for better coordination of housing placements for the homeless. Based on this experience, we have a deeper understanding of the many challenges facing homeless households who are trying to transition off of the streets and into a stable residence.

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





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

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.

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*Alan Shinn*

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, 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](mailto:admin@phocused-hawaii.org).

**kobayashi2-Jessi**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Sunday, February 07, 2016 7:00 AM  
**To:** HUS testimony  
**Cc:** graybip@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for HB1773 on Feb 9, 2016 08:31AM

**HB1773**

Submitted on: 2/7/2016

Testimony for HUS/HSG on Feb 9, 2016 08:31AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Margaret Graybill	FACE	Support	No

Comments: I represent Nu'uuanu Congregational Church within the FACE organization but am also testifying in relation to my work experience as part of a "partners in care" team in Seattle, Washington. I know that the teamwork between the hospital staff, nurses and community social workers helped to significantly reduce hospitalizations of chronically ill people by keeping them in housing and medically stable. This is a program worth funding on a long-term basis.

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

TO: Representative Dee Morikawa, Chair, Committee on Human Services  
Representative Mark Hashem, Chair, Committee on Housing  
Members of the Human Services and Housing Committees

FROM: Jan Harada, CEO, Helping Hands Hawaii

**Hearing: Tuesday, February 9, 2016, 8:31am; CR 329.**

Chair Morikawa, Chair Hashem, and Committee members:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony **in support** of HB1733, 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 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 millions 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.

## kobayashi2-Jessi

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 04, 2016 11:45 AM  
**To:** HUS testimony  
**Cc:** ajc@aloha.net  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for HB1773 on Feb 9, 2016 08:31AM

### **HB1773**

Submitted on: 2/4/2016

Testimony for HUS/HSG on Feb 9, 2016 08:31AM in Conference Room 329

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

Comments: As you know, homelessness is a complex issue that requires a multipronged response as there is no "silver bullet." Housing First and shallow rent subsidies are two vital tools that Hawaii needs to include in our continuum of care.

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## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1773: RELATING TO HOUSING

To: Rep. Mark J. Hashem, Chair; Rep. Jo Jordan, Vice Chair; and House Committee on Housing

From: Cristina Howe, Masters of Social Work Student at University of Hawaii at Manoa

Hearing: Tuesday, February 09, 2016; 8:31 A.M. Conference Room 329 State Capitol

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony **in support of HB 1773**. I am Cristina Howe, Masters of Social Work student at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, and also a qualified mental health provider working with veterans who have been or are currently homeless and diagnosed with a severe mental illness.

I strongly support Housing First and this bill HB 1773. Housing first programs are proven to be effective in addressing homelessness for chronically homeless individuals, including those who have an addiction or mental illness, or both. It has also shown a dramatic improvement in the health and well-being of our most vulnerable residents. Housing first reduces costs associated with homelessness such as hospitalization, emergency services, arrests, and incarceration. Many states across the country have adopted this Housing first and seen a large decrease in their chronically homeless population and cost. The shallow rent subsidy program will increase flow out of existing shelters, allowing for entry and services to a higher number of homeless individuals and families each year. Increasing flow out of shelters to permanent housing better utilizes current staffing and shelter services and will reduce the need to create new shelters with added costs.

Please support, HB 1773 so that Hawaii can continue to reduce the number of the homeless population and save money while providing evidence based services.

TO WHOM IT SHOULD CONCERN

On behalf of the hundreds of homeless and working poor that I serve in the district of Mo`ili`ili, I urge you to pass **HB1773**.

When the average hourly wage of a worker in Hawaii is \$14.49 and the cost of renting an apartment is \$31.54, affordable, subsidized housing is ESSENTIAL!

Sincerely

**Fr. Gregory Johnson+**

Senior Priest  
St. Mary of Mo`ili`ili  
2062 S. King Street, Honolulu, HI 96826  
808-949-4655

*Cynthia K.L. Rezentes*

Testimony in **Support** of HB 1773 Relating to Housing  
Committee on Human Services and Committee on Housing  
Scheduled for Hearing Thursday, February 9, 2016, 8:30 AM, Room 329

Dear Chairs Morikawa and Hashem, Vice Chairs Kobayashi and Jordan and Members, Committee on Human Services and Committee on Housing:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 2086, which appropriates \$2 million for the creation of a shallow rent subsidy program.

In having the experience of following and seeing what conditions affect families on the Leeward Coast and what prevents individuals from moving from a homeless or houseless situation into housing, it is very evident that many families just need a little help to get back on their feet again and into permanent housing. Mostly, they cannot afford the monthly rent that we are facing today and sometimes just a few hundred dollars per month, supplementing their own monthly income, could see them located into housing and not requiring the other services that the State provides when someone cannot manage to continue living in permanent housing.

This shallow rent subsidy will go a long way to help these families get back on their feet, stabilize their living situations and, hopefully, in a very short time, 6 months to a year, be able to stand on their own again. This type of program has proven to be successful in other locations and deserves a chance for us to utilize all tools available to decrease the numbers of families we continue to see living in unsheltered conditions.

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



Esther Kwon Arinaga  
1434 Punahou Street, #701  
Honolulu, HI 96822

February 8, 2016

To: Chairman and Members  
House Committee on Human Services and Housing  
State Capitol  
Honolulu, HI 96813

Re: In **Support** of HB 1773 — Relating to Housing First and Shallow Rent Subsidy

Hearing Date: February 9, 2016  
8:30 a.m.  
Room 329, State Capitol

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of HB 1773, which asks for 3 million dollars for the Housing First Program and 2 million dollars for the Shallow Rent Subsidy.

I am a retired public interest lawyer and a member of First United Methodist Church which offers services to help the homeless and supports other community and public agencies who intervene on behalf of Oahu's growing homeless population.

**Housing First** offers a unique approach to our homeless problem: it focuses on the most vulnerable individuals, those who require medical attention and whose needs are at such a high level, they cannot access other housing programs. Their condition forces them to be chronically homeless. **Housing First focuses on finding housing for them as quickly as possible and then "wraps them" with services, including a permanent housing subsidy and intensive supportive services and case management.**

Temporary shelter —a "roof over the head" and a few hot meals — does not work for the chronically homeless. Since beginning its program to help this segment of the homeless population with State assistance in July 2014, **Housing First** has successfully placed 80 individuals and families on Oahu into permanent housing for FY 2015. This is solid evidence that swift intervention and placement into permanent housing, coupled with strong supportive services will reduce the number of chronically and medically vulnerable living on our streets. It is in truth a rare success story in the midst of so many failed attempts to help the homeless.

I urge you to continue supporting **Housing First** and consider its expansion to the neighbor islands.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation to alleviate homelessness.

## kobayashi2-Jessi

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 06, 2016 9:48 PM  
**To:** HUS testimony  
**Cc:** pastordianem@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for HB1773 on Feb 9, 2016 08:31AM

### **HB1773**

Submitted on: 2/6/2016

Testimony for HUS/HSG on Feb 9, 2016 08:31AM in Conference Room 329

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Diane S. Martinson	Individual	Comments Only	No

Comments: Providing funds to continue Housing First with "wrap around" services and making shallow rent subsidies available with appropriate case management services to stabilize households economically are fiscally smart measures and morally the right decisions. I support HB1773. Thank you.

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**Children's Action Network**  
Building a unified voice for Hawaii's children

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**Address**

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96813

P: (808) 531-5502

February 9, 2016

To: Rep. Mark Hashem, Chair  
Rep. Jo Jordan, Vice Chair  
House Committee on Housing

Rep. Dee Morikawa, Chair  
Rep. Bertrand Kobayashi, Vice Chair

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

Re: **HB 1773, Relating to Housing - Support**  
**Hawaii State Capitol, Room 329 – February 9, 2016 – 8:31 AM**

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