



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 2498 – RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS**

Hearing: Tuesday, February 09, 2016, 8:31 a.m.  
Conference Room 329, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent of this bill as it offers a different strategy to address the needs of some homeless individuals. However the Department has concerns about the fiscal implications, and the development and implementation of a new program.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the bill is to establish a homeless care residence program to provide financial assistance to households providing temporary housing and care to a homeless relative and requires that providers undergo certification and inspection by DHS and caps program participation at twelve months.

The proposed bill describes financial assistance and implies that such assistance would be paid to family members who undergo licensing and registration, whose homes are inspected by the Department, and who provide a standard of care for a homeless relative. There does not, however, appear to be any provision regarding how these family members/homes would receive such financial assistance. The bill also does not have an appropriation for funding.

If every homeless person could be easily reintegrated into their family systems and family homes, the proposed program would enhance the efforts being made to address homelessness. Family reunification is always one of the first interventions that homeless providers pursue when working with clients. If familial bonds can be re-connected, support garnered, and the homeless individual's needs addressed through a family placement, homelessness may end for that individual. However, there are a multitude of reasons that people become homeless and the needs of some individuals far exceed those that could be provided by reunification with family members. Some individuals require levels of care far beyond the love and stability of a family home, in these cases individuals simply cannot live with their family members.

The Department consults frequently with homeless service providers and can confidently state that family reunification is a current strategy in the repertoire to achieve housing for the homeless.

However, the Department has prioritized programs and policies that align with the state homelessness plan. This includes expanding Housing First and Rapid Re-Housing, and we respectfully ask the committees to support the Executive Budget requests of, respectively, \$3 million and \$2 million for these programs, as well as \$2 million for homeless outreach services, rather than creating another program and administrative process.

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 2498 – RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS**

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 utilize family relationships as a strategy to address homelessness. The Coordinator defers to the Department of Human Services (DHS) in regards to specific details related to implementation, including cost implications generated by this proposal. While the Coordinator establishes and coordinates State policy to address homelessness, the DHS Homeless Programs Office (HPO) is responsible for the administration and implementation of homeless programs.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the bill is to establish a homeless care residence program to provide financial assistance to households providing temporary housing and care to a homeless relative. The bill will also require that providers undergo certification and inspection by DHS, and will cap program participation at 12 months.

According to homeless service providers, establishing connections with family is often a key strategy used to assist a homeless individual to transition to permanent housing. However, when family support is not available, service providers employ other evidence-based interventions, such as Housing First or Rapid Re-Housing. The ultimate goal of homeless services is to transition homeless households to permanent housing as quickly as possible. The

Coordinator asks for the Legislature's support of the Governor's Executive Budget request, which includes \$3 million for Housing First, \$2 million for Rapid Re-Housing, and \$2 million for homeless outreach services, instead of proposing a new program and administrative process.

The Coordinator notes that this bill does not include an appropriation to support the operation of the homeless care residence program.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

**kobayashi2-Jessi**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Monday, February 08, 2016 4:55 PM  
**To:** HUS testimony  
**Cc:** sylvia cabral maui@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for HB2498 on Feb 9, 2016 08:31AM

**LATE**

**HB2498**

Submitted on: 2/8/2016

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
sylvia cabral	Individual	Support	No

Comments: This is a very important crucial bill not only for homeless but also for ag farmers. The antiquated law only requiring one house and one farm house per 2 + acres is ridiculous. Farm workers are paid minimum wage and offering them housing would be such a great advantage for both the workers and the owners. The county/state habit of evicting "hippie huis" is tragic. Those huis should be "grandfathered" at least. Some of those residents have lived on those large country parcels since the 60s & 70s. Now 60 & 70 with the health problems that come with age, the county of Maui is putting hundreds of elders out of housing and onto the cement where they will surely die of displacement. Please change these laws now.

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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**kobayashi2-Jessi**

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 09, 2016 8:00 AM  
**To:** HUS testimony  
**Cc:** shanash428@gmail.com  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for HB2498 on Feb 9, 2016 08:31AM\*

**LATE****HB2498**

Submitted on: 2/9/2016

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
S	Individual	Support	No

**Comments:**

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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