

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, March 28, 2016 7:52 PM
To: JUDtestimony
Cc: Ken_Conklin@yahoo.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HR35 on Mar 31, 2016 14:01PM

HR35

Submitted on: 3/28/2016

Testimony for JUD on Mar 31, 2016 14:01PM in Conference Room 325

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kenneth R. Conklin, Ph.D.	Individual	Support	No

Comments: America is a nation built by immigrants. Everyone in Hawaii is either an immigrant or descended from immigrants, even if they arrived here more than a thousand years ago. Immigrants who come seeking employment and material success bring energy which revitalizes us. Immigrants who come fleeing oppression or war inspire us with their strength of character and the trust they place in us to give them the security and stability they so desperately need. We are blessed and enriched to have them join us. Our national government should provide immigrants with the help they need to comply with bureaucratic requirements imposed upon them by the government. Considering the difficulty of paddling a canoe from the neighbor islands to Honolulu, the absence of passenger travel by boat, and the very large expense of repeated round trip airfare, our national government should provide outreach to the neighbor islands so that immigrants living there can comply with bureaucratic requirements including any personal interviews that may be necessary and/or filing of documents. Such outreach might be done at low cost on Saturdays once or twice per month at a building owned by the federal, state, or county government and publicized through social service agencies and public service announcements on radio, TV, and newspapers.

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CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAII

TO: Representative Karl Rhoads, Chair
Representative Joy A. San Buenaventura, Vice Chair
Committee on Judiciary

FROM: Diane M. Terada, Division Administrator

DATE: Thursday, March 31, 2016 (2:01 p.m., Room 325)

RE: **IN SUPPORT of HR 35, Urging United States Citizenship and Immigration Services to Immediately Resume Biometric Intake and Interviews on the Counties of Hawaii, Maui, and Kauai**

Catholic Charities Hawai'i (CCH) strongly supports HR 35, Urging United States Citizenship and Immigration Services to Immediately Resume Biometric Intake and Interviews on the Counties of Hawaii, Maui, and Kauai.

CCH is a Board of Immigration Appeals (BIA) recognized agency and has the only three BIA partially accredited staff in the State of Hawai'i, including one accredited staff on the island of Hawai'i. This accreditation allows our non-attorney staff to represent immigrants on legal immigration matters with the U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS), such as Application for Naturalization, Petition for Alien Relative, Deferred Action for Childhood Action, or Change of Status to Permanent Resident.

Our work targets low-income immigrants. One of the barriers to maintaining legal status is cost. In addition to paying for USCIS filing fees, which generally cost several hundred dollars, our neighbor island immigrant clients must pay to travel to Oahu, including air and ground transportation, to complete biometric intake and interviews. This is often a significant barrier that results in immigrants falling out of legal status, or unable to achieve their goal of becoming U.S. citizens.

We support this resolution in order to provide immigrants, who live on the neighbor islands, reasonable access to USCIS-required steps that are necessary to maintain legal status or achieve U.S. citizenship.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of HR 35.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2016 1:59 PM
To: JUDtestimony
Cc: jabola@facehawaii.org
Subject: Submitted testimony for HR35 on Mar 31, 2016 14:01PM

HR35

Submitted on: 3/30/2016

Testimony for JUD on Mar 31, 2016 14:01PM in Conference Room 325

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Khara Jabola Carolus	Hawai'i Coalition for Immigrant Rights	Support	Yes

Comments: On behalf of the Hawai'i Coalition for Immigrant Rights, the immigration arm of Faith Action for Community Equity (FACE), I would like to thank the Committee for this opportunity to testify. The Coalition strongly supports H.R. 35, which urges U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to restore equal access to the immigration process for all Hawai'i residents. In 2007, USCIS discontinued its mobile operations to Hawai'i Island, Kaua'i, and Maui. The lack of basic immigration services outside of Honolulu has a pervasive discriminatory effect on people attempting to access benefits that the agency is adjudicating. Residents are required to travel to Honolulu from their neighbor island homes, at their own expense, in order to undergo USCIS fingerprinting and interviews required to obtain or maintain lawful immigration status. The ability to lawfully work, study, and reside in the United States or secure the highest privilege of our nation's immigration system— citizenship— is essential for access to vital medical services, job security, and political participation. HCIR is the only organization in the state that coordinates policy advocacy to advance immigrant rights. We serve as a partnership platform for over one hundred direct service providers, immigration attorneys, faith leaders, professors, and individual advocates. Through our community work, we have witnessed the discriminatory impact USCIS operating against the reality that our state is a set of islands. USCIS has an obligation to provide a feasible process otherwise its services are meaningless. Thank you.

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LATE

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2016 9:00 PM
To: JUDtestimony
Cc: Dinocelda@susannahwesley.org
Subject: Submitted testimony for HR35 on Mar 31, 2016 14:01PM

HR35

Submitted on: 3/30/2016
Testimony for JUD on Mar 31, 2016 14:01PM in Conference Room 325

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dominic Inocelda	Inter-Agency Council for Immigrant Services	Support	No

Comments: Rep. Karl Rhoads and House Judiciary Committee Members, I am writing on behalf of the Inter-Agency Council for Immigrant Services. The IAC Council fully supports HR35 to extend USCIS services to the neighbor islands. We agree that reducing the cost for neighbor island immigrants to receive services and benefits from USCIS by extending services to the neighbor islands is fair and right. Neighbor island immigrants seeking USCIS services should have the same opportunity as those who reside on Oahu to services offered by USCIS. For USCIS it would seem economical to schedule their service availability so that a significant number of persons can be served on the neighbor islands on a scheduled bases. We would fully support the Hawaii Legislative backing to current USCIS plans to provide service to the neighbor islands.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2016 4:54 PM
To: JUDtestimony
Cc: milton_s_bain@yahoo.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HR35 on Mar 31, 2016 14:01PM*

HR35

Submitted on: 3/30/2016
Testimony for JUD on Mar 31, 2016 14:01PM in Conference Room 325

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Rev. Stanley Bain	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

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dasguptafirst@gmail.com on behalf of Monisha Das Gupta <dasgupta@way.net>
Thursday, March 31, 2016 12:05 PM
JUDtestimony
HR 35: Resolution for Immigration Services to Neighbor Islands

I am writing to urge the legislators to impress upon USCIS through this resolution of the dire need to make the services offered by USCIS available on neighbor islands. As a professor at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, I have conducted research with immigrant communities on neighbor islands and am only too aware of the logistical and financial hardship the trip to Oahu imposes on our neighbor island residents. These residents should not have to bear the burden of inter-island travel and, sometimes, the cost of overnight stays to access USCIS services, especially those that require biometric services. Application fees charged by the USCIS are already hard to bear for working families in Hawaii. The added cost of travel is unfair to those who live on the neighbor islands. I hope you will vote in favor of the resolution.

Monisha Das Gupta
Associate Professor
Ethnic Studies and Women's Studies
University of Hawaii
306 George Hall
2560 Campus Road
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