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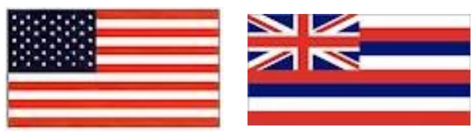
Unity, Equality, Aloha for all



To: SENATE COMMITTEE ON HAWAIIAN AFFAIRS

For hearing Tuesday, February 12, 2019

Re: SCR 18 / SR 13

URGING THE DEPARTMENT OF HAWAIIAN HOME LANDS TO BUILD ALTERNATIVE HOUSING OPTIONS FOR LESSEES.

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT

The Hawaiian Homes Commission Act was introduced in Congress in 1920 and enacted into law in 1921. It remains the law, whether or not we like it. It remains the law, and was incorporated into our State of Hawaii Constitution in the Admissions Act of 1959; and we remain bound by it, even if we believe HHCA was unconstitutional in 1921 and remains unconstitutional today.

Following a successful lawsuit in year 2000 to racially desegregate candidacy for OHA trustee I became a candidate for OHA trustee on the ballot in the general election that year. As part of my platform I pledged to work toward OHA turning over its assets to the Department of Hawaiian Homelands to enable DHHL to fulfill its obligation to provide homesteads to eligible native Hawaiians. And as part of that plank in my platform I pledged to demand that DHHL finance construction of homes other than freestanding houses -- homes such as apartments that could be owned or rented by their occupants.

Alternative housing options can be far less expensive than freestanding houses, including larger indoor living space and better amenities. I am the fee-simple owner of my apartment in a high-rise condominium building in Kane'ohe. My apartment has 2 bedrooms and one bathroom, with 723 square feet of indoor floor space, one parking space which I own, and a proportionate share of the surrounding landscape, infrastructure, and common element amenities (meeting room, beautifully landscaped grounds with a variety of native trees including a huge hala, tennis court, picnic table and barbecue grill). Its assessed valuation for the current year is $377,100. Although I live alone, a neighboring apartment of the same size is home to a husband, wife, and three children.

This resolution provides information that DHHL holds $38,000,000.00 federal dollars which remain unspent. That's outrageous. It's scandalous! Simple arithmetic shows that $38 Million would be enough to purchase in fee simple 100 of my apartments, easily able to house 500 people, with money left over to throw a huge lu'au for the entire town of Kane'ohe. Considering that DHHL land comes at no cost to the homeowners, whereas land values are a significant portion of my apartment's valuation, that $38 Million might well pay for 200 of my apartments with 1,000 residents.

DHHL leadership should be ousted for malfeasance. This resolution is a much-needed kick to their 'okole.

And have you seen SB1501 to give these clowns 439,087,200.00 during the net two years? Did I see 14 Senators' signatures on it?