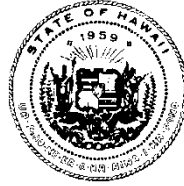


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IN REPLY, PLEASE REFER TO:

Statement of
Hakim Ouansafi, Executive Director
Hawaii Public Housing Authority

Before the
House Committee on Human Services

8:30 a.m., February 7, 2023
Hawaii State Capitol
Room 329

In consideration of
HB 224, HD 1
RELATING TO HUMAN SERVICES

Honorable Chair Mizuno and members of the House Committee on Human Services, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 224, HD1, relating to human services.

The Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) is in **strong support** of HB 224, HD 1, which would establish an Upward Mobility Pilot Program for our public housing residents.

The HPHA's mission is to provide Hawaii's residents with adequate and affordable housing, economic opportunity, and suitable living environments that are free from discrimination through both its public housing and rental assistance programs. The HPHA serves our state's most disadvantaged populations, including families earning less than thirty percent of the Area Median Income, the disabled, and the elderly.

The HPHA has found that some public housing residents lack adequate training or the work experience needed to find gainful employment. This pilot program will empower our residents, enabling them to learn valuable work skills and earn an income to enhance their family's wellbeing. With our recent Moving to Work (MTW) designation from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), we believe this general funded pilot program can lead

the way for a future expansion enabled by federal funding. This approach is similar to what will be accomplished with the landlord incentives the Legislature approved last year as Act 287, SLH 2022.

The HPHA appreciates the opportunity to provide the Committee with its testimony regarding HB 224, HD1. We thank you very much for your dedicated and continued support.