

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR



JADE T. BUTAY
DIRECTOR

WILLIAM G. KUNSTMAN
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

REY DOMINGO
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS
KA 'ŌIHANA PONO LIMAHANA
OFFICE OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
830 PUNCHBOWL STREET, ROOM 420
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
www.hawaii.gov/labor
Phone: (808) 586-8675 / Fax: (808) 586-8685
Email: dlir.ocs@hawaii.gov

IN REPLY, REFER TO:
OCS 25.1033

February 6, 2025

To: The Honorable Henry J.C. Aquino, Chair,
The Honorable Chris Lee, Vice Chair, and
Members of the Senate Committee on Labor and Technology

Date: Friday, February 7, 2025
Time: 3:00 p.m.
Place: Conference Room 224, State Capitol

From: Rey Domingo, Executive Director
Office of Community Services
Department of Labor and Industrial Relations (DLIR)

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Rey Domingo", written over the printed name and title.

Re: S.B. 853 RELATING TO IMMIGRATION

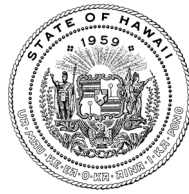
I. OVERVIEW OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION

This bill would establish a TRUST FUND within the DLIR for use by the Immigrant Services and Access Unit of the Office of Community Services (OCS) for support of that unit. As a practical matter, this fund would – among other things – provide money to retain legal counsel for persons needing assistance in immigration proceedings. To the extent that any appropriation is made pursuant to this bill that is consistent with the Governor's fiscal goals and priorities, OCS **supports** the intent of this bill.

II. CURRENT LAW

In the 2024 Session, Act 207 (H.B. 2787) amended HRS Chapter 371K to create the Immigrant Services and Access Unit within OCS. Section 3 provided various appropriations for OCS to use in establishing that Unit and our related Immigrant Resource Centers (IRC). However, none of those appropriations directly touched on legal services, and OCS does not otherwise have sufficient funds to provide for legal services in its IRC funding. Accordingly, this bill would help support our services.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

SYLVIA LUKE
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR

SABRINA NASIR
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
Ka 'Oihana Mālama Mo'ohelu a Kālā
P.O. BOX 150
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT DIVISION
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT

WRITTEN ONLY
TESTIMONY BY LUIS P. SALAVERIA
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON LABOR AND TECHNOLOGY
ON
SENATE BILL NO. 853

February 7, 2025
3:00 p.m.
Room 224 and Videoconference

RELATING TO IMMIGRATION

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

Senate Bill No. 853 amends Chapter 371K, HRS, to establish the Immigration Services Trust Fund (ISTF), administered by the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations, to provide continued support to the Office of Community Services for immigration-related matters, and appropriate an unspecified amount of general funds for FY 26 and FY 27 to be deposited into the ISTF. The ISTF may receive funds from legislative appropriations, grants, donations, or the proceeds from contributions, and the interest or return on investments earned from the ISTF.

As a matter of general policy, B&F does not support the creation of trust funds that require regular general fund appropriations to support its activities. Pursuant to Section 37-62, HRS, a trust fund is defined as a fund in which designated persons or classes of persons have a vested beneficial interest or equitable ownership, or which was created or established by a gift, grant, contribution, devise, or bequest that limits the use of the fund to designated objects or purposes. Regardless of the type of fund, it is difficult to determine whether the proposed ISTF would be self-sustaining and thus feasible.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/5/2025 9:34:01 PM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|---|--------------------|-----------|
| amy agbayani | Testifying for hawaii friends of civil rights | Support | In Person |

Comments:

Testimony in support of SB853. RELATING TO IMMIGRATION

Submitted by Co-chairs: Amy Agbayani and Pat McManaman, Hawai'i Friends of Civil Rights,

Hawai'i Friends of Civil Rights strongly support RELATING TO IMMIGRANT SERVICES. This bill establishes the Immigration Services Trust Fund and appropriates money to support immigration related services within the Office of Community Services, Department of Labor and Industrial Relations.

In 2024, Act 207 established an Immigrant Services and Access unit within the Office of Community Services whose purpose is to promote economic self-sufficiency, inclusion, and community integration for immigrants in our state. There are over 250,000 foreign born persons in the state; nearly half of all immigrants to Hawai'i are from the Philippines (46%); Japan (8%), China (8%), Korea (7%), Micronesia (5%), Vietnam (4%) and Mexico (2%). Fifty-seven percent of Hawaii's immigrants are naturalized US citizens and many have US born children.

Community leaders and the legislature acknowledge that resources for immigrants are needed for the Office of Community Service to meet its legislative mandate to support immigrants and refugees. The proposed Immigration Services Trust Fund and funding can utilize funding from various sources to serve the state's immigrant community who face barriers to accessing government and non-government resources



Statement Before The
Friday, February 7, 2025
3:00 PM
Conference Room 224 & Videoconference

in consideration of
SB853

RELATING TO IMMIGRATION.

Chair AQUINO, Vice Chair LEE, and Members of the Senate Labor and Technology Committee

The Legal Clinic (TLC) supports SB853, which establishes the Immigration Services Trust Fund (Fund) to support immigration-related matters within the Office of Community Services (OCS), requires the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations to submit annual reports to the Legislature on the accounting of expenditures of the Fund, and appropriates funds.

TLC is a Hawai'i nonprofit, nonpartisan organization. TLC is a direct legal services provider, representing those in Hawai'i who meet income eligibility guidelines without regard to immigration status, national origin, ethnic background, race, religion, ideology, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, or disability. TLC works alongside immigrants so they can attain authorization to work and live with dignity, reunite with their families after years of separation and escape horrific violence to find refuge in the United States. TLC recognizes that every person needs and deserves to feel a sense of trust, welcome, and belonging.

According to the 2020 U.S. Census, Hawai'i is the most diverse state in the nation.¹ In 2023, Hawai'i had about 256,000 immigrants, which is approx. 18% of the State population.² The top countries of origin for immigrants were the Philippines (45 percent of immigrants), China (9 percent), Japan (8 percent), Korea (6 percent), and the Pacific Island Nations (4 percent).³

A Fund to provide continued support to the OCS for immigration-related matters would benefit Hawaii's immigrant community and serve the state overall. Having funding for OCS to assist refugees and immigrants to live healthier lives and achieve greater economic self-sufficiency improves Hawaii and our collective society.

¹ See <https://thehill.com/homenews/state-watch/567625-hawaii-california-and-nevada-are-most-diverse-states-in-the-us-census/> (retrieved 1/14/2025).

² See <https://usafacts.org/answers/how-many-immigrants-are-in-the-us/state/hawaii/> and <https://data.census.gov/profile/Hawaii?g=040XX00US15#populations-and-people> (retrieved 1/14/2025).

³ See https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/sites/default/files/research/immigrants_in_hawaii.pdf (retrieved 1/14/2025).

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB853, and TLC respectfully urges the Committee members to pass SB853 out of your Committee. If you have questions of me, please contact me at sma@tlchawaii.org.

Very respectfully yours,

Sandy Ma

Sandy Ma
Community & Policy Advocate
The Legal Clinic

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 12:21:40 PM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|---|--------------------|------------------------|
| Alika Valdez | Testifying for The Hawai'i Democratic Party | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I support this bill.

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 12:10:56 PM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|-----------|
| Kerwin Canionero | Individual | Oppose | In Person |

Comments:

Subject: Strong Opposition to SB853 – Immigration Services Trust Fund

Dear Legislator's,

I am writing to express my firm opposition to Senate Bill 853, which seeks to establish an Immigration Services Trust Fund to provide taxpayer-funded immigration services for individuals with pending immigration proceedings, including those who are in the country illegally. This bill is not only an undue financial burden on the hardworking taxpayers of Hawaii but is also unconstitutional under the United States Constitution.

First and foremost, SB853 places an unjust and excessive tax burden on Hawaii's citizens. With the cost of living in our state already among the highest in the nation, it is unacceptable to further strain our state's budget by diverting taxpayer dollars toward individuals who are unlawfully present in our country. Hawaii residents are struggling to afford basic necessities such as housing, food, and healthcare. Rather than addressing the pressing needs of our own citizens—such as homelessness, education, and infrastructure—this bill irresponsibly reallocates public funds to non-citizens who have no legal standing to receive such benefits.

Furthermore, SB853 is unconstitutional. The United States Constitution explicitly establishes federal authority over immigration matters. Article I, Section 8, Clause 4 grants Congress exclusive power to establish a uniform rule of naturalization. By establishing a state-run trust fund for immigration services, Hawaii is overstepping its constitutional authority and directly interfering with federal immigration laws. This bill effectively encourages and facilitates illegal immigration, undermining federal statutes designed to regulate lawful entry and residency in the United States.

Additionally, this legislation sets a dangerous precedent by prioritizing illegal aliens over law-abiding, taxpaying citizens. Providing free immigration services using state funds creates an incentive for more illegal immigration and sends the message that violating U.S. immigration laws comes with state-sponsored benefits. This undermines the integrity of our legal immigration system, which millions of immigrants have lawfully navigated to obtain citizenship and legal residency.

Instead of misallocating funds toward illegal immigrants, Hawaii's lawmakers should focus on policies that serve legal residents and citizens who contribute to our economy and society. The

state has a duty to prioritize its own residents—our veterans, seniors, low-income families, and the homeless—before allocating resources to individuals who have no legal claim to them.

For these reasons, I urge you to reject SB853. The people of Hawaii deserve responsible governance that upholds the rule of law, protects taxpayer dollars, and ensures that public resources benefit those who have a lawful right to them.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I trust that you will stand for the rights of Hawaii's hardworking citizens and oppose SB853.

Sincerely,

Kerwin Canionero

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 9:41:31 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------------|--------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| Noela von Wiegandt | Individual | Oppose | Remotely Via Zoom |

Comments:

Aloha,

I oppose SB853. These illegals came into our United States knowing that they have to live up to a standard of benefiting our country. Instead many came into Violation of Title 8 U.S.C. 1324, 1325, 1365. The State of Hawaii Senate and Legislature should be enforcing Federal Immigration Law, not help these criminals with a "Trust Fund", most likely facilitated by our Tax dollars. Thank you.

Noela von Wiegandt

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 7:28:31 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Jackie Hester | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Oppose. We don't need to use our tax dollars for non-citizens. They can come up with their own money or hit the road. We don't need to be footing the bill to provide for them, if they can't afford it, they will continue to be a nuisance and drain the system / use our tax dollar for citizens!

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/4/2025 10:39:45 PM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Andrew Crossland | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I STRONGLY OPPOSE this Bill which would provide immigration services to illegal aliens. We need to put legal citizens and residents of Hawaii first! I urge all members of the Committee to **VOTE NO** on this Bill.

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 7:22:44 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Ryan Willis | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I Strongly oppose

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 7:32:35 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Kanoe Willis | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I STRONGLY OPPOSE

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 7:43:27 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Laurie Anne Bell | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

You want more rights for illegals than CITIZENS.

America 1st-

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 7:43:32 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Joelle Seashell | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Strongly opposed. Your job is to take care of America citizens, the people you represent who pay your salary. You're so far off the mark with this.

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 7:45:32 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Yumi Moore | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Committee Members,

I am writing to strongly oppose SB853, which would establish an Immigration Services Trust Fund to provide financial assistance to low-income individuals with pending immigration cases. While immigration issues are complex, Hawai'i taxpayers should not be forced to fund legal assistance for non-citizens when many local residents are struggling to afford basic necessities.

With rising costs of housing, food, and healthcare, our state should be prioritizing services for Hawai'i families who need support. Redirecting taxpayer money to assist those with pending immigration proceedings is an irresponsible use of public funds.

I urge you to reject SB853 and focus on policies that prioritize the needs of Hawai'i residents.

Yumi Moore

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 7:52:36 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Deven English | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am in strong opposition of this bill, you want to establish a trust fund for immigration services, why not set up a trust fund for homeless veterans and homeless americans? Protect Americans, not foreigners who came to our country illegally.

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 8:00:06 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Dorinda Ohelo | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I DO NOT WANT ANY OF MY HARD EARNED TAX DOLLARS GOING TOWARDS
THIS.

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 8:20:26 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Laurie West | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

OPPOSE

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 8:25:21 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Christopher Gouveia | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose SB853. This bill is putting foreigners first over our own people. We already have a homeless problem, many of whom are locals. And rather than prioritizing locals, we're instead prioritizing people who did not legally come here. It's unacceptable.

I do not support my tax dollars being used to fund illegal immigrants.

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 8:26:14 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| James K. Rzonca | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose this bill. Our tax dollars should go to services for us actual citizens, not some foreigners. They want to be a citizen they can pay for it themselves.

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 8:40:57 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| KELVIN AWAYA | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I strongly oppose SB853.

Taxpayer dollars should not be used to assist/fund immigrants to complete the immigration process. If anyone wants to immigrate to the USA, they are free to do so. But not at the taxpayers expense. Another attempt at abuse of power being introduced by lawmakers/politicians.

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 9:00:06 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| stacy diaz | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I, Stacy Diaz oppose bill SB853.

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 9:02:44 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Jessica Gellert | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha LBT Committee,

My name is Jessica Gellert, and I strongly oppose SB853.

Financial Burden on Hawaii Taxpayers

- **The bill establishes a trust fund but does not specify how much taxpayer money will be appropriated, leaving it open-ended and unaccountable.**
- **Given Hawaii's budget constraints, the state should prioritize spending on local issues such as homelessness, affordable housing, public education, rather than diverting funds to non-citizen legal services.**
- **There is no guarantee that the "grants, donations, and contributions" mentioned in the bill will be enough to sustain the program, meaning taxpayers will likely have to cover the costs indefinitely.**

Encourages More Immigration to Hawaii Without Addressing Infrastructure Issues

- **By offering state-funded immigration services, Hawaii could become a magnet for more illegal immigrants, potentially straining local resources such as housing, healthcare, and schools, which are already overwhelmed.**
- **The bill fails to address how an increase in immigration could impact Hawaii's already high cost of living, limited job market, and public services.**

Prioritization Over Local Needs

- **The bill targets funds specifically for immigration services while many low-income Hawaiian citizens, Native Hawaiians, veterans, and struggling families lack sufficient support for basic needs.**

- **Why should the state allocate resources to assist non-citizens in immigration matters when many local residents face financial hardships and lack access to legal aid in other critical areas?**

Lack of Accountability and Oversight

- **The bill proposes that the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations administer the fund, but there are no clear guidelines on how funds will be spent, who qualifies for services, or how effectiveness will be measured.**
- **Without strict oversight, there is a risk of waste, fraud, and misallocation of funds.**

This bill raises serious concerns about state funding priorities, fiscal responsibility, and jurisdictional overreach. A more balanced approach would be to focus on legal aid for all low-income residents, including U.S. citizens, rather than singling out one group for state-funded assistance. Hawaii should prioritize the needs of its own residents first before committing indefinite taxpayer funds to federal immigration matters.

Please do not pass this bill. Put Hawaii's people first, not illegal immigrants.

Mahalo,

Jessica Gellert

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 9:03:11 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Monique Perreira | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

OPPOSE. No TAXPAYER dollars should go to illegals. Please put the hardworking people of Hawaii first. Remember who get to vote and donate to all of you legislators and properlery represent THEM, not illegals.

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 9:15:42 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Jeanine Acopan | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Why are the needs of YOUR "illegals" more important than those of the legal citizens of Hawaii who voted you into office? Can't wait to vote you all out!

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 9:03:51 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Zac Nosugref | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose establishing and funding an immigration services trust fund. Public funds should never be used to support anyone who is an illegal alien, illegal immigrant, or illegal resident of the USA.

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 9:42:55 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Shari saiki Rodrigues | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose this bill.

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 10:01:06 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Robin D. Ganitano | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose SB853 in order to establish immigration services trust fund to serve low-income individuals with immigration services who have pending immigration proceedings, for example illegal aliens. Unconstitutional.

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 10:18:19 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Kealohi Hanohano | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose!

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 10:41:00 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Brandon Iani | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Oppose.

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 11:10:36 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Rosemarie Vailisale | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose of this bill!!

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 11:15:25 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| kamakani de dely | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose this bill.

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 11:16:55 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Mallory De Dely | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose this bill.

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 11:17:07 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Josh Fowler | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Senate Committee on Judiciary & Labor**RE: Strong Opposition to SB853 – Relating to Immigration****Chair, Vice-Chair, and Committee Members,**

My name is Joshua Fowler, and I strongly oppose SB853, which seeks to establish an Immigration Services Trust Fund using state taxpayer dollars to provide continued financial support for immigration-related services. While I recognize the importance of community support programs, this bill misallocates public funds, prioritizes non-citizens over Hawaii residents struggling with the high cost of living, and places an unnecessary burden on taxpayers.

Reasons for Opposition:

- **State Taxpayer Funds Should Not Be Used for Immigration Services**
 - Immigration is a **federal** responsibility, and it is not Hawaii's role to fund services that should be handled by federal agencies or private organizations.
 - Diverting state funds to immigration services takes resources away from **education, healthcare, infrastructure, and housing**—areas where Hawaii residents desperately need support.
- **Unfair to Struggling Hawaii Families**
 - Many local families are **barely making ends meet**, facing rising costs in rent, food, and healthcare. This bill prioritizes non-citizens over taxpaying residents who are also in need of assistance.
 - Instead of creating new programs that **expand the financial burden on the state**, lawmakers should focus on direct relief for **Hawaii's working-class families**.
- **Encourages Increased State Dependency for Immigration Services**
 - Funding immigration services at the state level creates an **unsustainable financial commitment**, leading to potential calls for **more funding and expanded benefits in the future**.
 - Other states, such as **California**, have seen costs spiral when implementing similar programs, requiring **hundreds of millions in additional taxpayer dollars**.
- **Better Use of Resources**

- If the goal is to support immigrants and low-income individuals, funds should be directed toward **workforce development, job training, and housing assistance** that benefit all residents.
- The **Office of Community Services** already provides multiple assistance programs—funneling additional funds specifically into immigration-related services is an inefficient allocation of resources.

A Smarter Approach for Hawaii:

- ✓ Prioritize funding for **Hawaii residents** struggling with cost-of-living challenges.
- ✓ Ensure taxpayer money is used for **state responsibilities, not federal immigration matters**.
- ✓ Encourage **nonprofit and private sector** partnerships to fund immigration services rather than relying on state appropriations.

This bill creates an unnecessary financial burden for Hawaii taxpayers while prioritizing services that should be federally funded. I strongly urge you to reject SB853.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

Joshua Fowler
Hawaii Resident

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 11:18:07 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Susan Dedely | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose this bill.

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 11:20:57 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Yvonne Alvarado | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I, Yvonne Alvarado Oppose Bill SB583

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 11:30:38 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Sharan Sadowski | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose the use of taxpayer dollars for the use of services for illegals.

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 11:40:10 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Darian | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB853, which seeks to establish an Immigration Services Trust Fund to provide taxpayer-funded immigration services to low-income individuals with pending immigration proceedings. This bill places an unfair financial burden on law-abiding taxpayers by allocating public funds to assist individuals who have violated immigration laws.

While I recognize the challenges faced by immigrants, the responsibility for legal representation and immigration services should not fall on taxpayers. These funds would be better spent on essential services that benefit lawful residents, such as education, healthcare, public safety, and infrastructure improvements.

Additionally, SB853 creates an unfair precedent by prioritizing free legal assistance for individuals with pending immigration cases while many law-abiding citizens struggle to afford legal representation for their own civil and criminal cases. This approach undermines the integrity of the legal system and places an undue financial strain on hardworking taxpayers.

Instead of passing SB853, I urge the Legislature to focus on policies that promote legal immigration pathways, strengthen immigration enforcement, and ensure that public resources are used to benefit those who have followed the law.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to oppose SB853.

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 11:40:46 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Dawn O'Brien | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Senators who Represent the Legal Residents of Hawai'i

I am not even sure why I need to testify to a bill that should never have been proposed, yet here we are. Taking my precious time from working to pay for our government (you) to let you know that this is a criminal proposal to continue to steal from the state residents who have the HIGHEST COST OF LIVING IN THE NATION.

I STAND IN STRONGEST OPPOSITION & SO SHOULD YOU if we are to continue to have a State of Hawai'i for any much longer, which would be in all of our interests.

Please kill this bill before it kills us.

Gratefully with ALOHA!

Dawn O'Brien

Aloha Ambassador, *CHOOSE ALOHA* Program

President, HOPE HI, Inc.

Lifetime resident of Hawai'i & taxpayer

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 11:46:24 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| David Ruiz | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

No

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 12:01:09 PM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Corinne Solomon | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I OPPOSE SB853. Please vote NO on this bill.

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 12:02:02 PM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Wendy | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose this bill!

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 12:43:56 PM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Noel Baker | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Illegals should not have American citizen rights, deport and apply legally in their own country.

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 12:57:43 PM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Emiko Baker | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Hello!

I can't understand why, we citizens of America and also a tax paying Hawaii resident have to help establish an immigration service trust fund to serve low-income individuals with immigration serviced. They are illegal meaning they are somehow not law abiding. So, why do I have to fund this trust that serves the illegal aliens that are violating law?? This don't make sense at all. It is very upsetting as a Hawaii state resident!!!

I oppose SB853.

Sincerely, Emiko Baker

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 1:05:26 PM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Sarah Barientos | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

State Bill 853 is an outrageous misuse of taxpayer money. This bill proposes creating an **Immigration Services Trust Fund** to support immigration-related matters—essentially forcing hardworking citizens to pay for services benefiting those who are not legally in the country. This is unacceptable and a slap in the face to every law-abiding American.

Imagine struggling families, veterans, and senior citizens in Hawaii who desperately need financial assistance—yet their tax dollars are being funneled into a fund that prioritizes **illegal immigrants** over their own needs. How is it fair that citizens who work hard and follow the law are being asked to bankroll immigration services that should **not** be their responsibility?

The Constitution guarantees protections and benefits **for legal citizens**, not those who have violated immigration laws. This bill creates a financial incentive for illegal immigration, encouraging more people to come here unlawfully, knowing they will receive state-funded support. Instead of addressing Hawaii’s housing crisis, rising crime, or education system, lawmakers want to **divert funds to non-citizens**—completely disregarding their duty to American taxpayers.

State Bill 853 is a **reckless** and **irresponsible** attempt to funnel public money into immigration services at the expense of legal residents. Lawmakers must put **citizens first** and reject this bill **immediately**.

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 1:13:51 PM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| John Sadowski | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose this bill.

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 1:16:10 PM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| TiaLynn Coryell | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Oppose--- to diverting funds to illegal invaders "MY TAX THAT I PAY"....while I'm out here struggling!

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 1:18:24 PM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| David Williams | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Strongly oppose

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 1:50:07 PM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Alex Akui | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Strongly opposed

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 2:16:35 PM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Leslie J. | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Committee members, please defer or amend this measure. While it's intent to assist those of low or no income may be commendable, it is unclear whether taxpayer funds are being used to assist fellow citizens, or instead to assist those who are in our State illegally. Please amend or defer this measure to show our Aloha to fellow citizens in need. Mahalo!

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 2:45:46 PM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Susan Chang | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Oppose bill

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 2:51:12 PM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Lesha Mathes | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

No. No money to support people who are not citizens! Try putting money towards our actual citizens. We don't take care of our own citizens. How dare you try and take money from your own citizens!

LATE

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 3:27:49 PM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Ronelle Andrade | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose SB 853

LATE

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 3:37:10 PM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Silvana Dean | Individual | Support | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Registered Voter of 96815. During these times we need to use all tools at our disposal to make sure immigrants are not further subjected to harm and displacement. I fully support this bill.

LATE

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 4:34:51 PM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Susan Duffy | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Establishing an immigration trust fund to serve illegal aliens is an irresponsible use of taxpayer dollars and an unfair burden on hardworking citizens. Our government's priority should be to uphold the rule of law and ensure that resources are directed toward legal residents, struggling families, and communities in need. Providing financial assistance to those who have entered the country unlawfully incentivizes illegal immigration and undermines the efforts of those who follow the legal process. Public funds should be used to improve education, healthcare, and infrastructure for law-abiding residents rather than rewarding illegal activity. This proposal not only disregards the rights of taxpayers but also sets a dangerous precedent that weakens our nation's immigration laws.

LATE

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 5:00:58 PM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| Darren Clemen | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair and Members of the Committee,

I submit this testimony in **strong opposition** to SB853, which seeks to establish the Immigration Services Trust Fund within the Office of Community Services. While the bill purports to support immigration-related matters, it is an unconstitutional overreach of state authority and an unjustifiable misallocation of taxpayer funds.

1. Federal Preemption of Immigration Law

The **U.S. Constitution** explicitly grants Congress **exclusive authority over immigration law** under **Article I, Section 8, Clause 4**, which empowers Congress "to establish a uniform Rule of Naturalization." Immigration enforcement and legal representation fall strictly within **federal jurisdiction**, as reinforced by **Arizona v. United States (2012)**. This bill directly conflicts with federal authority by creating a state-managed program to intervene in immigration affairs, exposing the State of Hawaii to potential legal challenges and federal preemption issues.

2. Violation of the Equal Protection Clause (Fourteenth Amendment)

SB853 creates a **dangerous precedent** by selectively allocating **state taxpayer dollars to non-citizens**, while many U.S. citizens in Hawaii struggle to obtain legal aid, housing, and other critical services. This disparate treatment violates the **Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment**, which mandates that states **apply laws equitably to all persons within their jurisdiction**. Prioritizing non-citizens over taxpaying residents is not only discriminatory but also fundamentally unfair.

3. Unconstitutional Use of State Funds Under the Public Purpose Doctrine

The use of public funds must serve a **legitimate public purpose** that benefits all residents. Funding legal representation and immigration services for non-citizens, particularly in federal proceedings, is **not** a constitutionally sound or fiscally responsible use of state resources. The Hawaii State Constitution requires that public expenditures be used for the benefit of its citizens, and this bill fails to meet that standard.

4. Financial and Policy Mismanagement

Hawaii is already grappling with **budget deficits, a housing crisis, and underfunded public services**. It is unconscionable to divert limited resources to provide **free legal representation and immigration assistance** for non-citizens while struggling citizens and veterans remain underserved. SB853 is a **reckless misuse of taxpayer dollars** and an insult to hardworking Hawaii residents who rightfully expect their government to prioritize their needs.

Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above, I urge this committee to **reject SB853 in its entirety**. It is **unconstitutional, fiscally irresponsible, and unjust**. This bill undermines federal immigration law, discriminates against taxpaying residents, and misuses public funds in a way that **directly contradicts the best interests of the people of Hawaii**.

I respectfully request that you **vote against this measure** in defense of **constitutional integrity, fiscal responsibility, and the fair treatment of all residents**.

Mahalo for your time and consideration.

LATE

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 5:40:49 PM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Anne Kamau | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose SB853. Please do not use any taxpayer funds to support anything to do with illegal immigrants or non-citizens of America. Instead, use that funding for American citizens who need housing, food to eat, healthcare, etc.

LATE

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 5:54:13 PM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Lorna Cockett | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Those applying for immigration must come in willing and able to support themselves as with other countries. There is no need to establish any immigration trust fund. If they are low-income requiring assistance now, then these are unable to support themselves in our country.

So a firm NO to SB853.

LATE

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 9:09:00 PM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Malia Baker | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

I oppose supporting illegal aliens. Let's help our native Hawaiians first. Help our families who are from Hawaii first!

LATE

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 9:18:46 PM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|--------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Eric Apaka | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

No trust fund for illegals!!!

LATE

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/6/2025 10:19:19 PM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Reina Loughlin | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Our state's focus, responsibility, and resources should be on our people of this state. Legal residents.

LATE

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/7/2025 12:49:29 AM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|----------------|--------------|--------------------|-----------|
| Joanna Wheeler | Individual | Oppose | In Person |

Comments:

Dear Sirs:

I am compelled to oppose SB853, which raises significant ethical and medical concerns.

Hawaii is currently facing critical local issues that demand our immediate attention and resources. One of the most pressing is the escalating crisis of drug addiction, particularly with the deadly impact of fentanyl. Our state has seen a sharp rise in fentanyl related deaths, with reports indicating that in 2020, there were 57 deaths associated with this drug, a stark increase from the previous year. The funds proposed for this trust fund could be better utilized in combating this epidemic, providing much-needed addiction treatment, prevention programs, and support for those affected by this crisis.

I strongly urge you to vote against SB853. It is crucial that we allocate our state's resources responsibly, focusing on initiatives that address the immediate and severe needs of our community, like the fight against drug addiction and the prevention of lives lost to fentanyl. By prioritizing local issues that directly impact the health and safety of our legal residents, we can make a meaningful difference in our community well being.

Sincerely,
Joanna Wheeler
Registered Voter
Fathers and Mothers for Children Kauai Chapter

LATE

SB-853

Submitted on: 2/7/2025 12:30:48 PM

Testimony for LBT on 2/7/2025 3:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Testify |
|------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| Jeffrey F Mizuno | Individual | Oppose | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Text