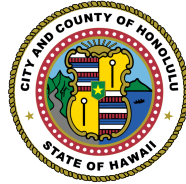


**DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES  
KA 'OIHANA LAWELAWE KAIĀULU  
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

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RICK BLANGIARDI  
MAYOR  
MEIA



ANTON C. KRUCKY  
DIRECTOR  
PO'O  
AEDWARD LOS BANOS  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
HOPE PO'O

**TESTIMONY OF ANTON C. KRUCKY  
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES**

**BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEES ON HUMAN SERVICES & HOMELESSNESS AND  
HEALTH**

**Thursday, March 19, 2026, 9:30 AM  
Conference RM 329 and Via Videoconference**

**TO:** Rep. Lisa Marten, Chair, Rep. Ikaika Olds, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee on Human Services, and Rep. Gregg Takayama, Chair, Rep. Sue L. Keohokapu-Lee Loy, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee on Health

**RE:** SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 2803, SD 1

The Department of Community Services (DCS), City and County of Honolulu (City), **strongly supports Senate Bill 2803 SD 1**, particularly the provisions appropriating funding for the Homeless Outreach and Navigation for Unsheltered Persons (HONU) program, the A'ala Respite (AMR) program, and the expansion of the kauhale initiatives.

The City greatly values its partnership with the State in addressing homelessness, which remains one of the most complex challenges facing our community. The HONU and AMR programs have become critical components of O'ahu's crisis response system, helping connect unsheltered individuals with immediate services, stabilization resources, and pathways to housing through leveraged triage that prioritizes the most urgent needs efficiently and compassionately. These are just two successful programs that advance a coordinated, data-driven and compassionate response that prioritizes stabilization, treatment, and long-term housing outcomes for individuals experiencing homelessness.

These programs play an essential role in reducing strain on emergency medical systems, improving public health and safety outcomes, and providing compassionate, trauma-informed engagement for individuals experiencing homelessness. Equally important, these programs recognize the humanity and dignity of each individual served, ensuring outreach efforts are culturally responsive, respectful, and centered on building trust with individuals who often face complex medical, behavioral health, and social challenges.

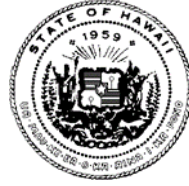
Together, the joint City and State investments have made measurable progress in expanding system capacity and improving successful placements into shelter and housing. Between Fiscal Years 2024 and 2025, the City and its partners achieved an increase of 937 additional beds compared to Fiscal Years 2022–2023, that include specialized beds and services that address the root causes of homelessness.

An appropriation of \$8,000,000 to support these programs is vital to sustaining and strengthening this collaborative work, while an additional \$10,100,000 will help this network that will allow both the City and State gain functional control over this complex social issue.

The City appreciates the Legislature's recognition that addressing homelessness requires strong partnerships and shared responsibility across jurisdictions.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **strong support** of this measure.

**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



**RYAN I. YAMANE**  
DIRECTOR  
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

**JOSEPH CAMPOS II**  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**  
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA LAWELAWE KANAKA  
Office of the Director  
P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

**TRISTA SPEER**  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

March 18, 2026

TO: The Honorable Representative Lisa Marten, Chair  
House Committee on Human Services & Homelessness

SUBJECT: **SB 2803 SD1 – RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS.**

Hearing: March 19, 2026, 9:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 329 & Videoconference, State Capitol

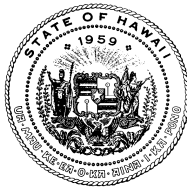
**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the bill's intent and offers comments on the request to submit a plan to reorganize and consolidate homeless services and establish a data collection office. DHS defers to the State Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions (SOHHS) regarding the proposed reporting requirements and appropriations for Kauhale and the office's administrative expenses.

DHS is pleased to report that SOHHS established quarterly meetings with the Homeless Program Office (HPO), Hawai'i Housing Finance and Development Corporation (HHFDC), and Hawai'i Public Housing Authority (HPHA) to ensure that the State's response to homelessness is coordinated.

The bill requires the submission of a draft consolidation plan and timeline prior to the Regular Session of 2027 and a final consolidation plan and timeline prior to the Regular Session of 2028. DHS will need time to fully assess and develop a comprehensive plan and may likely require more than the allotted six months to consider available options. As such, DHS emphasizes that the report and plan must be flexible, focusing on the "timeline for the reorganization, as well as recommendations" for individual components.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.

JOSH B. GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII  
KE KIA'ĀINA O KA  
MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I



KATHERINE AUMER, PhD  
COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON  
LUNA HO'OMALU O KA PAPA

**STATE OF HAWAI'I  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO  
STATE COUNCIL ON MENTAL HEALTH**  
*P.O. Box 3378, Room 256  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96801-3378*

**STATE COUNCIL ON MENTAL HEALTH  
Testimony to the  
House Committee on Human Services and Homelessness  
and  
House Committee on Health  
In SUPPORT of S.B. 2803 SD1  
RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS**

**March 19, 2026 9:30 a.m., Room 329 and Video**

**CHAIRPERSON**

Katherine Aumer, PhD

**1<sup>st</sup> VICE CHAIRPERSON**

Kathleen Merriam, LCSW CSAC

**2<sup>nd</sup> VICE CHAIRPERSON**

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**EX-OFFICIO:**

Marian Tsuji, Deputy Director

Behavioral Health Administration

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doh.scmhchairperson@

Chairs Marten and Takayama, Vice Chairs Olds and Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and Members of the Committees:

HRS §334-10 established the State Council on Mental Health (“Council”) as a 21-member body. It advises on resource allocation, statewide needs, and programs affecting more than one county. It advocates for adults with serious mental illness, children with emotional disturbances, and individuals with co-occurring substance abuse disorders. Members represent mental health providers and recipients, students, youth, parents, and family members. State agency representatives from mental health, judiciary, housing, Medicaid, social services, vocational rehabilitation, and education serve the Council. Members also include representatives from the Hawaii Advisory Commission on Drug Abuse and Controlled Substances and county service area boards.

Most Council members support this measure, which aims to strengthen governance and reporting to accelerate progress toward ending homelessness statewide. To advance this shared goal, the Council emphasizes that homelessness is not only a housing issue, but also a health and poverty issue.

For individuals with serious mental illness and co-occurring behavioral health conditions, long-term housing stability depends on whether placements are appropriately matched to each person’s level of care and support needs. Recovery occurs along a continuum of care, and that continuum must be paired with a corresponding continuum of housing

solutions. Appropriate placement based on service needs is essential to achieving and sustaining recovery.

Past Point-in-Time counts and related data indicate a significant population experiencing chronic homelessness alongside behavioral health needs, demonstrating that placement alone is not always sufficient to support long-term housing stability.

To strengthen this measure, the Council respectfully offers the following amendments to SD1:

**• On page 2, lines 8–10, add:**

Establishing a plan for data sharing and collaboration between the consolidated entity and continuums of care, including a continuum of housing solutions aligned with the continuum of behavioral health care needs;

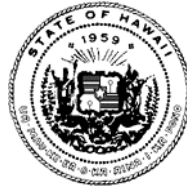
**• On page 3, lines 12–15, add:**

Performance metrics to evaluate the State's performance on homeless services, housing, care coordination, and other needed services to end homelessness in the State, including whether placements are appropriately matched to service needs;

These additions help ensure that strengthened governance and reporting systems measure not only the number of placements made, but whether those placements support long-term housing stability, improved health outcomes, and sustained recovery.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



RYAN I. YAMANE  
DIRECTOR  
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TRISTA SPEER  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'ŌKELE

March 18, 2026

TO: The Honorable Representative Lisa Marten, Chair  
House Committee on Human Services & Homelessness

FROM: Jun D. Yang, Coordinator on Homelessness

SUBJECT: **SB 2803 – RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS**

Hearing: March 19, 2026, Time 9:30 a.m.  
Conference Room 329 & Via Videoconference, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions (SOHHS) appreciates the intent of this bill and offers comments. This bill requires the Department of Human Services (DHS) to submit a reorganization plan to the legislature to consolidate SOHHS with the Homeless Programs Office (HPO), and amends existing reporting requirements under Section 346-389, Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS). The S.D. 1 changed the sums appropriated to the department for the Homeless Outreach and Navigation for Unsheltered persons (HONU) program and the A'ala Medical Respite programs, the administration of the Hawai'i Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH) and SOHHS operating expenses, and general obligation bonds for the Kauhale Initiative and related capital improvement projects to unspecified amounts. The S.D. 1 also requires DHS to submit a draft consolidation plan and timeline prior to the commencement of the 2027 legislative session and a final consolidation plan and timeline prior to the commencement of the 2028 legislative session.

SOHHS appreciates the legislature's support for critical programs for unsheltered individuals on O'ahu and the administrative expenses required to manage these programs.

Approximately 70% (4,494 individuals) of individuals experiencing homelessness during the 2024 PIT Count resided on O'ahu.

The HONU program is a mobile, low-barrier triage program designed to navigate unsheltered individuals to other appropriate settings, including shelters, kauhale, permanent housing, family reunification, and relocation. The program has recently expanded its capacity to serve approximately 60-80 individuals at any time, and serves approximately 230 individuals each quarter. The A'ala Medical Respite program includes capacity for up to 62 individuals, including individuals requiring 24-hour supervision due to medical needs. The program combines intensive medical respite beds with a surrounding kauhale village to provide residents with a place to recover from health issues and work toward independence. The model is based on recommendations from the first medical respite kauhale at Pūlama Ola, a temporary program that operated outside of Washington Place from May through December 2023. The program has served over 245 individuals since July 2024. Appropriations pursuant to this bill will support the ongoing operations of these programs through State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2027, with the potential to further extend if cost savings are realized. SOHHS respectfully requests a sum of \$8,000,000 to support both programs through SFY 2027.

The appropriation of funds for costs related to the HICH and other office administrative functions will allow SOHHS to continue its statewide policy and planning mandates, including facilitating HICH meetings and producing reports, continuing the development of a data clearinghouse and related reporting, and monitoring existing programs. SOHHS respectfully requests a sum of \$308,000 to support the HICH and office administrative expenses through SFY 2027.

The appropriation of general obligation bonds will support the development of additional or expanded kauhale sites, including potential locations in central and leeward O'ahu to address unmet housing needs. For a description of current and planned kauhale projects on all four major islands, see the [Act 309, Session Laws of Hawai'i \(SLH\) SFY 2026 Q2 Report on Kauhale and 'Ohana Zones Programs](#). The creation of additional kauhale sites is consistent with recommendations in SOHHS's [Comprehensive Needs Assessment](#), conducted pursuant to Act 309, SLH 2025. Increasing the inventory of deeply affordable, low-barrier residential facilities where people experiencing unsheltered homelessness can heal from trauma and transform

their lives will improve future housing stability and upward mobility. SOHHS respectfully requests a sum of \$10,100,000 in general obligation bonds to support the development of additional or expanded kauhale sites.

SOHHS defers to DHS on the timeframe to develop a reorganization plan to consolidate SOHHS and HPO. We appreciate the legislature's consideration of the need for additional time for DHS to prepare a plan and timeline for consolidation. SOHHS remains committed to leading the State's efforts to implement innovative solutions to ending homelessness in Hawai'i.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.