



**STATE HEALTH PLANNING
AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH - KA 'OIHANA OLAKINO

JOSH GREEN, MD
GOVERNOR OF HAWAII
KE KIA'ĀINA O KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII

KENNETH S. FINK, MD, MGA, MPH
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April 6, 2026

TO: HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Representative Chris Todd, Chair
Representative Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair
Honorable Members

FROM: John C. (Jack) Lewin, MD, Administrator, SHPDA, and Sr. Advisor to
Governor Josh Green, MD on Healthcare Innovation

RE: SB 2557-SD1-HD1 -- RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS

HEARING: Tuesday, April 7, 2026 @ 2:00 pm; Conference Room 308

POSITION: SUPPORT with COMMENTS

Testimony:

SHPDA strongly supports SB 2557-SD1-HD1, with comments.

This bill is intended to strengthen accountability and transparency for the Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions by clarifying and expanding its reporting requirements to the Legislature. To support effective legislative oversight, this bill requires consistent reporting on sheltered and unsheltered homelessness counts, housing placements, kauhale performance, and detailed contract and coordination activities tied to reducing homelessness statewide. Some reporting occurs now, but SHPDA believes the data is not yet complete.

This bill benefits the State by creating a clearer, more consistent way to measure what's working and what needs to change, so resources can be directed to approaches that actually move people into stable housing. By requiring more information on kauhale operations, and contract performance outcomes, the bill supports better program management and continuous improvement rather than decisions based on anecdotes. These added details could help policymakers compare strategies over time and across communities, identify service and housing inventory gaps, and make more informed budget and policy choices to reduce homelessness.

In closing, this bill moves Hawai'i toward a results-driven approach to addressing homelessness by ensuring decision-makers have reliable, comparable information to guide improvements. With clearer reporting on program operations participant outcomes, and contractor performance, the Legislature can better target

SB 2557-SD1-HD1: testimony of SHPDA (2026), continued

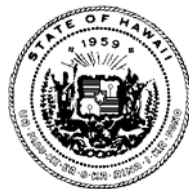
resources, strengthen what works, and course-correct where needed. We defer to DHS and other state agencies involved in homelessness and houseless populations on the specifics, details and costs associated to this bill.

Thank you for hearing SB 2557-SD1-HD1.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

■ -- Jack Lewin, MD, Administrator, SHPDA

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



RYAN I. YAMANE
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'ŌKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'ŌKELE

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA LAWELAWE KANAKA
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TRISTA SPEER
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'ŌKELE

April 6, 2026

TO: The Honorable Representative Chris Todd, Chair
House Committee on Finance

FROM: Jun D. Yang, Coordinator on Homelessness

SUBJECT: **SB 2557 S.D. 1, H.D. 1 – RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS**

Hearing: April 7, 2026, Time 2:00 p.m.
Conference Room 308 & Via Videoconference, State Capitol

AGENCY'S POSITION: The Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions (SOHHS) appreciates the intent of the bill and provides comments. The purpose of this bill is to clarify reporting duties and responsibilities for SOHHS relating to: the number of people experiencing sheltered and unsheltered homelessness; the number of people placed into permanent housing arrangements; additional information regarding Kauhale project contracts and plans or proposals to enhance the Kauhale project; and actions and outcomes made by SOHHS to coordinate with other public and private sector organizations to reduce the number of people experiencing homelessness in the state. The bill adds new or clarified reporting requirements to the existing annual reports due to the legislature. The S.D. 1 and the H.D. 1 clarified and added further reporting requirements.

SOHHS's annual reports required by Sections 346-381 and 346-381, Hawai'i Revised Statutes (HRS) and Act 309, Session Laws of Hawai'i (SLH) are available on the Department of Human Services (DHS) at <https://humanservices.hawaii.gov/reports/>. Additional information relating to the activities of the Hawai'i Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH), including

presentations and published reports, is available at <https://homelessness.hawaii.gov/hich/hich-reports/>.

The Point-in-Time (PIT) Count, conducted by the Continuum of Care (CoC) organizations for O‘ahu and the neighbor island counties, is an important tool to measure homelessness at any given time. The 2024 PIT Count identified approximately 6,392 individuals experiencing homelessness statewide, an increase of approximately 2.7% (166 individuals) since 2023, excluding households residing in Non-Congregate Shelter (NCS) programs on Maui. Approximately 70% (4,494 individuals) of individuals experiencing homelessness during the 2024 PIT Count resided on O‘ahu. While the number of individuals experiencing homelessness on O‘ahu increased by approximately 12% (466 individuals) from 2023 to 2024, homelessness in the counties of Hawaii, Maui, and Kauai decreased by a combined 14% (300 individuals.) SOHHS remains committed to implementing and advancing innovative solutions to ending homelessness in Hawai‘i.

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 Finance
IN SUPPORT OF S.B. 2557 SD1 HD1
RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS
April 7, 2026, 2:00 p.m., Room 308 and Video

Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, and Committee members:

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 improve reporting, accountability, and progress toward ending homelessness statewide. To advance this shared goal, the Council underscores 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, recovery and stability depend on placements that match each person’s level of care and support needs. Recovery occurs along a continuum of care that must be paired with a corresponding continuum of housing solutions. Placement aligned with service needs is essential to achieving and sustaining recovery.

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Past Point-in-Time counts, and related data show a significant number of individuals experiencing chronic homelessness with behavioral health needs, indicating that placement alone may not support long-term stability.

To meet the goals of this measure, the Council suggests that the annual report should clearly, in partnership with relevant agencies, provide information about people experiencing homelessness who also have serious mental illness and co-occurring behavioral health conditions. The report could include data about placement type and exits, level of care, and housing outcomes over time. Improving the report in this way will give a clearer view of how the system works, help find service gaps, and guide investments towards lasting reductions in homelessness.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

SB-2557-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/2/2026 5:47:43 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Sara Lenzer Medeiros	PABEA	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in strong support of SB 2557. Although I am a member of the PABEA board, these comments do not necessarily represent the views of the executive office on aging.

I represent West Hawai'i, I live in Kona. The comments I am making apply to every community Of vulnerable seniors.

The most important things having to do with a study of homeless situations at a state government level, brings several things to mind. We are hopeful that this office on homeless will...

1. Advocate for currently funded homeless services. The

legislature has been very generous in past years to study this.

Coordination between nonprofits and the counties seems vital if we

are to find real solutions.

2. Build support for system review/asset mapping by state and

county what's available for unsheltered at risk seniors on each

Island. Specifically to evaluate where gaps exist and how they can be filled. Perhaps a resolution? A request to these agencies to

conduct an internal review? The gaps are very real, and present real

problems for vulnerable seniors and their families, just looking for

help.

3. Support "no wrong door" by additional funds for training of

those in direct contact currently at risk seniors. Not just here is

some information...you are on your own...

4. Cultivate a supportive, sensitive and dignified environment in

our communities regarding unsheltered and at risk seniors.

On Hawai'i Island, and I assume at the other islands as well there are quite a few services available for seniors, but there exists many gaps. I have found talking with my contacts who are "grass roots" kind of people that there is a lot of reluctance to get help partly because of not knowing what to do. And of course, the stigma of asking for help.

We know you are such a great advocate for seniors, and ask for your support of this bill.



www.AlohaILHawaii.org

Apr 7, 2026

MISSION

Aloha Independent Living Hawaii (AILH) dedicated to providing independent living programs and services for persons with disabilities in Hawaii.

We work together with the community and consumers to improve the quality of life through individual choices and access to services.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Roxanne U. Bolden

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The Honorable Chris Todd, Chair
House Committee on Finance
The Thirty-Third Legislature
State Capitol
State of Hawaii
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

SUBJECT: Support for SB2557 SD1 HD1 – Relating to Homelessness

Chair and Members of the Committee:

Aloha Independent Living Hawaii (AILH) is a Center for Independent Living serving disabled people statewide. Disabled people are significantly over-represented in Hawaii's homeless population, and when data and accountability are weak, it is harder to ensure that public investments actually reduce homelessness and expand truly independent, community-based living options.

SB2557 SD1 HD1 strengthens the duties of the Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions by requiring annual reporting on the number of sheltered and unsheltered individuals, housing placements into permanent, supportive, and independent living arrangements, and detailed information about contracts, kauhale outcomes, and inter-agency coordination. From an Independent Living perspective, these reporting requirements help ensure that substantial general funds and bond funds already appropriated to the office are tied to measurable reductions in homelessness, better use of kauhale, and clearer pathways to permanent housing and independent living for disabled people and other highly impacted groups.

From a Finance perspective, SB2557 SD1 HD1 does not create a new program or major new cost; instead, it improves oversight and performance metrics so the Legislature and public can see whether existing homelessness spending is effective, transparent, and coordinated. Better



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Roxanne U. Bolden

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Scott Suzuki
Sheila Castaneda
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data on placements, service gaps, and contract outcomes will support more evidence-based budget decisions in future years and help avoid duplicative or ineffective expenditures.

We respectfully urge the Committee on Finance to pass SB2557 SD1 HD1 to strengthen accountability for homelessness investments and ensure that public dollars move more people, including disabled residents, into stable, independent housing.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Mahalo,

Roxanne Bolden
Executive Director

SB-2557-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2026 11:16:08 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Tasman Kekai Mattox	50501 Hawaii and General Strike Hawaii	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing in support of SB2557. Our unhoused comrades are in need of greater support from the wider community and we would all benefit from more clear and consistent measurements of what is working and what isn't when it comes to housing support and relief. Hopefully the clearer guidelines of this measure will assist us all in finding our roles in addressing this crisis.

SB-2557-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 7:48:29 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jillian Anderson	Waikiki Neighborhood Board	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

The Waikiki Neighborhood Board SUPPORTS SB2557, and on behalf of our community, urges its passage by the House Committee on Finance.

Despite a growing amount of resources being allocated to addressing homelessness, unfortunately the problem continues to worsen in many communities, including Waikiki. The passage of SB2557 would provide our state with valuable data to determine what initiatives are proving effective and which are not. Further, the requirement to report coordination between the Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions with county, state, or federal agencies, and private or nonprofit organizations, will allow us to have a better idea of where we may be experiencing gaps or where we have found the opportunity to merge duplicative efforts.

Mahalo for your strong consideration of this measure and the opportunity to support its merits.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Rep. Chris Todd, Chair
Rep. Jenna Takenouchi, Vice Chair

HEARING:
Tuesday, April 7, 2026 at 2:00 pm
Via Videoconference and Conference Room 308

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 2557, SD1, HD1 - RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS.

Aloha Chair Todd, Vice Chair Takenouchi, Rep. Miyake for my Maui district, Rep. Yamashita of Maui, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Christine Andrews. I am an attorney licensed in Hawaii for over 25 years and a long-term resident of Wailuku, Maui. I am also a founding member of the EPA Maui Coalition. I write you today in **strong support of SB 2557, SD1, HD1**, which requires the Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions to make an annual report on the number of sheltered and unsheltered homeless individuals and on housing placement; requires the Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions to annually report to the Legislature on contracts and plans or proposals to enhance kauhale projects; requires the Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions to annually report to the Legislature on coordination between the office and any county, state, or federal agencies, or private or nonprofit organizations.

I do not have long-term expertise with homelessness or homelessness, but through my relationships with friends engaged in that work on Maui, I do feel that the testimony by the March 2, 2026 testimony by the Department of Human Services Coordinator on Homelessness related to Point-in-Time (PIT) Count was a little reductive and not reflective of the issue of chronic homelessness or the experience of community organizations here on Maui serving that population.

For the layperson, I found an article published by the Sahan Journal related to homeless data issues in the work of Hennepin County (Minneapolis), Minnesota to be really instructive¹. The article highlights that point-in-time data does not adequately capture the homeless population, which is fluid. Hennepin County has shifted to a by-name list, which allows them to track specific individuals and their needs. The by-name list is compiled from a Homeless Management Information that each county uses to track client profiles, shelter stays, referrals and housing eligibility. This list is also of people who seek or take part in county services, so it misses the chronically homeless who may live in encampments. The article highlights that encampments, where people remain in community and visible to outreach workers, include a population that it is important to measure, and that clearing encampments is a harmful practice that may mean that these populations are not adequately counted or served.

The article about the experience in Hennepin County really highlighted for me the importance of real data collection and need for coordination and communication between state and county governments and local nonprofit and outreach workers so that the homeless population can be adequately quantified and their needs appropriately addressed. The importance of data in the equation is why I request your **support of SB 2557, SD1, HD1**.

Mahalo,

Christine Andrews, JD
Wailuku, Maui

¹ Shubhanjana Das and Katrina Pross, "In 2023, Hennepin County vowed to end chronic homelessness by now. What happened?", Sahan Journal, December 15, 2025. Available at: <https://sahanjournal.com/housing/hennepin-county-end-chronic-homelessness-2025-pledge-update/>

SB-2557-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2026 10:23:25 PM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Comments	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, COMMENT NO KAUAHALE ON DHHL LANDS

2557 SB RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS

SB-2557-HD-1

Submitted on: 4/6/2026 9:40:14 AM

Testimony for FIN on 4/7/2026 2:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Noelle Lindenmann	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Chair, Vice Chair, and Committee Members:

I am submitting testimony in support of SB2557.

Our unhoused comrades are in need of greater support from the wider community and we would all benefit from more clear and consistent measurements of what is working and what isn't when it comes to housing support and relief. Hopefully the clearer guidelines of this measure will assist us all in finding our roles in addressing this crisis.

Mahalo for this opportunity to provide testimony.

Noelle Lindenmann, Kailua-Kona



ALA MOANA – KAKA’AKO NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD NO. 11

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION • 925 DILLINGHAM BOULEVARD SUITE 160 • HONOLULU, HAWAII, 96817
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Tuesday, April 7, 2026

TO: the Senate Committee on Judiciary (JDC)

Hearing: Monday, April 7, 2026, 10:15 a.m.

FROM: The Ala Moana-Kaka’ako Neighborhood Board No. 11

RE: Testimony IN SUPPORT of SB2557 SD1 HD1, RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS

Aloha, Chair Rhoads, Vice-Chair Gabbard, and members of the Committee -

The Ala Moana-Kaka’ako Neighborhood Board No.11 **strongly supports SB2557 SD1 HD1, RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS.**

The Ala Moana - Kaka’ako area continues to sustain an elevated amount of homeless people. Everyone who comes through our neighborhood can see the problem, such as if you are visiting Ala Moana Regional Park, driving down Ala Moana Blvd, waiting at a bus stop on Kapiolani, having a bite to eat someone at SALT in Kaka’ako, etc.

The best way our neighborhood can advocate for better solutions to help the homeless in our community is to have good data. SB2557 is a good step in the right direction to getting that data. But we are pleased to see the bills also require the Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions to offer solutions. Simply looking the other way is not enough and does not help the homeless or housed residences. We need to do more, and this bill helps do it.

We respectfully urge you to pass SB2557 SD1 HD1.

Dale VanderBrink

2nd Vice Chair, Ala Moana-Kaka’ako Neighborhood Board No.11