

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
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KE KIA'ĀINA



RYAN I. YAMANE
DIRECTOR
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

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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
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TRISTA SPEER
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

February 12, 2026

TO: The Honorable Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and

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

Hearing: February 25, 2025, 10:56 a.m.
Conference Room 211 & 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 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 plan by January 1, 2027, to reorganize and consolidate SOHHS and HPO into one office; establish a data collection office within the consolidated entity; and other requirements. 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.

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TRISTA SPEER
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KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

February 24, 2026

TO: The Honorable Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair
Senate Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Jun D. Yang, Coordinator on Homelessness

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

Hearing: February 25, 2026, Time 10:56 a.m.
Conference Room 211 & Via Videoconference, State Capitol

AGENCY'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 bill also appropriates the following sums to the department: \$8,000,000 for contracts with the City and County of Honolulu for the Homeless Outreach and Navigation for Unsheltered persons (HONU) program and the A'ala Medical Respite program; \$308,000 for the administration of the Hawai'i Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH) and SOHHS operating expenses; and \$10,100,000 in general obligation bonds for the Kauhale Initiative and related capital improvement projects.

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.

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.

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 defers to DHS on the timeframe to develop a reorganization plan to consolidate SOHHS and HPO. 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.

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

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

**BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Wednesday, February 25, 2026, 10:56 AM
Conference RM 211 and Via Videoconference**

TO: Sen. Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair, Sen. Sharon Y. Moriwaki, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means

RE: SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 2803

The Department of Community Services (DCS), City and County of Honolulu (City), **strongly supports Senate Bill 2803**, particularly the provisions appropriating funding for the Homeless Outreach and Navigation for Unsheltered Persons (HONU) program, the A'ala Medical 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. 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, which includes specialized beds and services that address the root causes of homelessness.

The proposed appropriation of \$8,000,000 to support these programs is vital to sustaining and strengthening this collaborative work, while the \$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.

SB-2803

Submitted on: 2/23/2026 5:32:09 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/25/2026 10:56:00 AM

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

Comments:

I, Johnnie-Mae L. Perry, Oppose 2803 SB RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS.

Reasons: May NOT be related to this SB, but fyi Reso-26-37 CM Tommy Waters, Write-Off \$1,282,606.70 Dept of Customer Service. HONU Program.

TOO MANY HOMELESS NON-PROFIT IN WAI'ANAE FOR OVER 20+ YEARS AND GROWING! What was temporary was NOT.

DOE DIVERTED COMMUNITY LIASON POSITIONS 2 OUTSIDE OF WAI'ANAE TO ADDRESS HOMELESS CHILDREN.

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH HOMELESS IN 96792.

DECADE RESIDENTS ALONG FARRINGTON WHY - BEACH FRONT, THIRD COUNTRY LIVING!

MILLIONS OF DOLLARS, HOMELESS ONLY INCREASE IN 96792 AND FUNDING IS CHASED BY NON-PROFITS!