

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

February 17, 2026

TO: The Honorable Senator San Buenaventura, Chair  
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services

FROM: Jun D. Yang, Coordinator on Homelessness

SUBJECT: **SB3276 – RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS**

**Hearing:** February 18, 2026, Time 1:00 p.m.  
Conference Room 225 & Via Videoconference, State Capitol

**AGENCY'S POSITION:** The Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions (SOHHS) supports this bill. The purpose of this bill is to appropriate funds for the 'Ohana Zones program, including \$5,000,000 for a medical respite program in Honolulu and \$3,000,000 for the Homeless Outreach and Navigation for Unsheltered persons (HONU) program, and \$308,960 for the operating expenses of SOHHS. The bill also appropriates \$250,000 to the University of Hawai'i to conduct a comprehensive survey on the statewide status of homelessness.

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 to serve up

to 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 SOHHS office operating expenses will allow SOHHS to continue its statewide policy and planning mandates, including facilitating Hawai'i Interagency Council on Homelessness (HICH) meetings and producing reports, continuing the development of a data clearinghouse and related reporting, and monitoring existing programs.

SOHHS defers to the University of Hawai'i regarding the comprehensive survey on the statewide status of homelessness.

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



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## ‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

### Legislative Testimony

### Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services  
Wednesday, February 18, 2026 and 1:00 p.m.

By  
Parwinder Grewal, Dean  
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience  
and  
Vassilis Syrmos, PhD  
Interim Provost  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

#### SB 3276 – RELATING TO HOMELESSNESS

Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair McKelvey, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on SB 3276 relating to homelessness which appropriates funds to the Department of Human Services for the funding of a medical respite program in Honolulu and the Homeless Outreach and Navigation for Unsheltered Persons Program under the Ohana Zones Program, and for the expenses of the Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions. Appropriates funds to the University of Hawai'i to conduct a survey on statewide homelessness.

SB 3276 includes much-needed funds of \$8 million to support medical respite, outreach, and navigation support. These efforts will help our most vulnerable individuals obtain health care, housing, and services that will improve their lives. When we stabilize the conditions of those experiencing homelessness, we also reduce tensions in the community and realize a net savings in taxpayer dollars.

Regarding Section 3, University of Hawai'i College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resilience (UH) comments that funding for a UH study rather than a comprehensive survey will better address data gaps and will enable stakeholders to answer high priority, actionable issues. The measure as written does not define what constitutes a "comprehensive survey." Replacing "survey" with "study" would enable the use of the most appropriate methodologies to capture the full scope of homelessness beyond existing Point-In-Time (PIT) counts and Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data.

Additionally, a truly comprehensive analysis of the statewide status of homelessness requires examining cross-system utilization—including interactions with law enforcement, courts, and healthcare—to identify intervention points and cost-saving opportunities that service-based data alone cannot. However, accessing and integrating data across systems requires establishing complex data-sharing protocols and engaging in multi-agency collaboration. A multi-year time frame with an increased appropriation would be necessary for this type of study. The appropriation in SB 3276 will support statewide community assets.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

**SB-3276**

Submitted on: 2/16/2026 8:57:23 AM

Testimony for HHS on 2/18/2026 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Shelby "Pikachu" Billionaire	Testifying for Kingdom of The Hawaiian Islands & Ohana Unity Party	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

I fully support his bill and you should as well, to help alleviate poverty and look for solution to teach people how to build their own home and survive!

Love JESUS

**SB-3276**

Submitted on: 2/17/2026 5:57:22 AM

Testimony for HHS on 2/18/2026 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lila Mower	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

.

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

222 NORTH SCHOOL STREET • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96817  
PHONE: (808) 768-7762 • FAX: (808) 768-7792 • WEBSITE: [honolulu.gov/dcs](http://honolulu.gov/dcs)

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 SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES  
**Wednesday, February 18, 2026, 01:00 PM**  
**Conference RM 225 and Via Videoconference**

TO: Sen. Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair, Sen. Angus L.K. McKelvey, Vice Chair, and  
Members of the Committee on Health and Human Services

RE: SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 3276

The Department of Community Services (DCS), City and County of Honolulu (City), **strongly supports** Senate Bill 3276 which appropriates funding for the Homeless Outreach and Navigation for Unsheltered Persons (HONU) program and the A'ala Respite (AMR) program.

The City greatly values its existing partnership with the State in addressing homelessness, which remains one of the more complex challenges facing our community. The HONU and AMR programs have become critical components of O'ahu's homeless response network, helping connect unsheltered individuals with immediate services, medical respite, stabilization resources, and pathways to housing.

Since its inception in 2019, HONU has helped thousands of people, over half of whom transitioned from HONU, into other services and facilities, including permanent housing. Similarly, AMR has significantly reduced the strain on the island's emergency medical system by providing a safe and stable environment for homeless individuals who are medically vulnerable and in need of medical care. AMR provides a highly cost-effective, medically-proficient alternative as compared to costly hospital and emergency room visits.

The proposed combined appropriation of \$8,000,000 to support these programs is vital to sustaining and strengthening the City's collaborative work with the State to date. Together, the two 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.

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