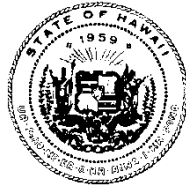


**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



**HAKIM OUANSAFI**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**BARBARA E. ARASHIRO**  
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STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I  
**HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY**  
1002 NORTH SCHOOL STREET  
POST OFFICE BOX 17907  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96817

IN REPLY PLEASE REFER TO:

26:OED

Statement of the  
**Hawaii Public Housing Authority**

Before the  
**House Committee on Human Services & Homelessness**  
and  
**House Committee on Health**

Thursday, April 16, 2026  
9:45 AM – Room 329, Hawaii State Capitol

In consideration of  
**SCR 160 / SR 151**

**URGING THE HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY, DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES' HOMELESS PROGRAMS OFFICE, STATEWIDE OFFICE ON HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING SOLUTIONS, AND HAWAII HOUSING FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION TO CREATE A HOUSING LADDER PROGRAM TO HELP INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES GRADUATE INTO UNSUBSIDIZED HOUSING.**

Honorable Chair Marten, Chair Takayama, Vice Chair Olds, Vice Chair Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and Members of the House Committee on Human Services & Homelessness and House Committee on Health:

The Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) supports SCR 160 / SR 151, which calls for DHS, HPHA, SOHHS, and HHFDC to collaboratively develop a housing ladder program to help eligible households transition from subsidized to stable, unsubsidized housing. The resolution emphasizes improving upward mobility through coordinated, system-level strategies such as financial counseling, workforce development, transitional support, and private-sector partnerships.

HPHA agrees with this holistic approach and remains committed to working with our sister agencies to create a housing ladder program to help individuals and families strengthen financial capacity, support upward mobility, and graduate into unsubsidized housing statewide.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony and for your continued commitment to addressing Hawaii's housing needs.



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

April 14, 2026

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

FROM: Jun D. Yang, Coordinator on Homelessness

SUBJECT: **SCR 160 – URGING THE HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY, DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES' HOMELESS PROGRAMS OFFICE, STATEWIDE OFFICE ON HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING SOLUTIONS, AND HAWAII HOUSING FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION TO CREATE A HOUSING LADDER PROGRAM TO HELP INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES GRADUATE INTO UNSUBSIDIZED HOUSING.**

Hearing: April 16, 2026, Time 9:45 a.m.  
Conference Room 329 & Via Videoconference, State Capitol

**AGENCY'S POSITION:** The Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions (SOHHS) supports this resolution and offers comments. This resolution urges the Department of Human Services (DHS) Homeless Programs Office (HPO), the Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA), SOHHS, and the Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation (HHFDC) to collaboratively develop a housing ladder program that assists eligible households in moving from subsidized housing into stable, unsubsidized housing. The collaborating agencies are encouraged to solicit feedback from other state departments and agencies that may be able to assist with the housing ladder program, and shall submit a report of findings and recommendations, including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of 2027.

This resolution recognizes the continuing need to improve upward mobility for households participating in state housing programs and highlights the importance of coordinated strategies across agencies, including financial counseling, workforce development, transitional support, and partnerships with private housing providers. Providing households with access to wraparound services that promote financial self-sufficiency and increased responsibility for housing costs is critical to ensuring the most appropriate use of limited subsidized housing resources.

As the office responsible for developing and testing innovative solutions to ending homelessness across the state, SOHHS's housing and service resources are primarily targeted at unsheltered households with very limited, if any, financial resources. Often, these households are diagnosed with physical or behavioral health issues that limit their ability to afford market rate housing or to live independently without ongoing financial and supportive services. Furthermore, recovery from the trauma associated with homelessness and the conditions resulting in homelessness can be a long-term process that requires the availability of appropriate housing and service resources at all tiers of the housing ladder.

While the demand for affordable housing at all levels remains high, SOHHS and its partners strive to create housing pathways for households to "graduate" from homeless programs to housing resources with lower levels of subsidy and supportive services whenever appropriate. For example, SOHHS and the HPHA partner to promote access to public housing and Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) waitlist openings for formerly homeless participants in kauhale and other temporary housing programs. The HPHA also offers local preference points for households experiencing homelessness who are added to the public housing and HCV waitlists. Programs offered by the HPHA are often most appropriate for formerly homeless households who have stabilized enough to not require intensive supportive services but are unable to afford market rate rents due to disability or other factors that affect household income. SOHHS, DHS, and HHFDC will continue to collaborate and prepare for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Section 811 Supportive Housing Program, which would provide additional supportive housing resources to vulnerable households.

SOHHS's kauhale projects also emphasize the creation of opportunities for residents to achieve higher levels of self-sufficiency, develop tenancy and life skills, and contribute to their communities wherever possible. For example, residents at Ho'okahi Leo receive paid work opportunities to perform security services, reducing project operating costs. Residents at Kīpūola Kauhale work with project staff to develop individualized economic mobility plans that may include obtaining employment, participating in a workforce development program, and applying for affordable housing opportunities. The project partners with local businesses and industries to connect residents with gainful employment and apprenticeship opportunities, while allowing residents to build savings as their income increases. SOHHS is continuing to incorporate opportunities for residents to build independence at future kauhale sites, such as including community cooking facilities that encourage residents to prepare their own meals and participate in the upkeep of shared spaces.

SOHHS is committed to continuing to partner with public and private sector partners to improve housing outcomes for people experiencing homelessness and housing instability. For additional information regarding the housing ladder and examples of housing resources, see the [Act 309 \(Session Laws of Hawai'i, 2025\) Comprehensive Needs Assessment of Homeless Services, Temporary Housing, and Permanent Housing](#). Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this measure.



## **SCR160 Upgrade ladder for housing to independent housing (House)**

### COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & HOMELESSNESS

Rep. Lisa Marten, Chair

Rep. Ikaika Olds, Vice Chair

### COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Rep. Gregg Takayama, Chair

Rep. Sue L. Keohokapu-Lee Loy, Vice Chair

Thursday, Apr 16, 2026 9:45: Room 329 Videoconference

### **Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition Supports SCR160:**

*ALOHA CHAIR, VICE CHAIR, AND DISTINGUISHED COMMITTEE MEMBERS. My name is Alan Johnson. I am the ad hoc leader of the Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition (HSAC), a statewide organization for substance use disorder and co-occurring mental health disorder prevention and treatment agencies and recovery-oriented services such as stabilization crisis, harm reduction and supportive housing.*

**Complex patients who have a combination of substance use disorders, mental health disorders and chronic physical health conditions can achieve independent living with the proper scientific approach.**

1. **Connect complex patients with short term evidenced-based behavioral health services** that simultaneously treat substance abuse, mental health issues and chronic disease condition in one setting.
2. **Graduate to case management** who understands treatment and motivational interviewing techniques to help individuals continue with insurance covered medical and needed behavioral health treatments.
3. **Engage in temporary professionally managed transition homes** run by evidenced-based behavioral health programs for individuals to learn about finances, job skills, find employment, and connect with families.
4. **Develop self-help support systems** with like-minded individuals to help with sustaining recovery or minimizing relapse in substance/mental/physical condition.

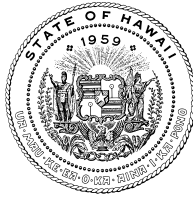
**With scientifically proven behavioral health practices, individuals can obtain independence in housing and find meaningful purpose in life.** For individuals with multiple complex patient disorders, recovery can result in stable conditions with professionally managed transition (temporary) housing leading to permanent independent living, which is essential to health, safety, and sustained recovery for the entire community.

We appreciate the opportunity to respond and are available for questions.



**JOSH GREEN, M.D.**  
GOVERNOR

**SYLVIA LUKE**  
LT. GOVERNOR



**DEAN MINAKAMI**  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## **STATE OF HAWAII**

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM

### **HAWAII HOUSING FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION**

677 QUEEN STREET, SUITE 300

HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813

FAX: (808) 587-0600

Statement of

### **DEAN MINAKAMI**

Hawaii Housing Finance and Development Corporation

Before the

## **HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES & HOMELESSNESS**

**AND**

## **HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH**

April 16, 2026 at 9:45 a.m.

State Capitol, Room 329

In consideration of

### **SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 160**

**URGING THE HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY, DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES' HOMELESS PROGRAMS OFFICE, STATEWIDE OFFICE ON HOMELESSNESS AND HOUSING SOLUTIONS, AND HAWAII HOUSING FINANCE AND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION TO CREATE A HOUSING LADDER PROGRAM TO HELP INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES GRADUATE INTO UNSUBSIDIZED HOUSING.**

Chairs Marten and Takayama, Vice Chairs Olds and Keohokapu-Lee Loy, and members of the Committee.

HHFDC **supports** Senate Concurrent Resolution 160, which urges the Department of Human Services (DHS), Homeless Programs Office; Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA); Statewide Office on Homelessness and Housing Solutions (SOHHS); and HHFDC to collaboratively develop a housing ladder program that assists eligible households in moving from subsidized housing into stable, unsubsidized housing.

This resolution recognizes the continuing need to improve upward mobility for individuals and families participating in state housing programs, and highlights the importance of coordinated strategies across agencies, including financial counseling, workforce development, transitional support, and partnerships with private housing providers. HHFDC appreciates this holistic approach and agrees that a coordinated system-level strategy best supports long-term housing stability for Hawaii residents.

HHFDC already operates several programs that align with the resolution's intent, including financing and supporting developments that provide a range of affordability levels, enabling residents to move up the housing ladder. We are also working to initiate several more such programs, including a Rent-to-Own Program that will enable households to transition from

renters to homeowners, allowing them to build equity and potentially move into a market-rate unit. Additionally, HHFDC is already collaborating with DHS in preparation to apply for the HUD Section 811 Supportive Housing Program, which, if awarded, would expand supportive housing options and promote stability through the transition toward higher levels of independence. HHFDC recognizes the diversity of circumstances across Hawaii's households; therefore, we are responding with programs that can fit needs across various levels of the housing ladder.

HHFDC affirms its commitment to continuing to work closely with DHS, HPHA, and SOHHS to identify programmatic opportunities that support upward mobility, strengthen resident financial capacity, and improve access to affordable market-rate housing statewide.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.