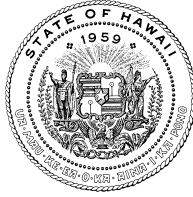


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR

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

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HOUSING

AND

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

March 30, 2026 at 1:00 p.m.

State Capitol, Room 225

In consideration of

**SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 160 / SENATE RESOLUTION 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.**

Chairs Chang and San Buenaventura, Vice Chairs Hashimoto and McKelvey, and members of the Committee.

HHFDC **supports** Senate Concurrent Resolution 160 / Senate Resolution 151, 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.

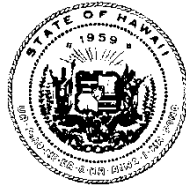
HHFDC already operates several programs that align with the resolution's intent, including financing and supporting developments that provide a range of affordability levels, enabling residents to move up the housing ladder. We are also working to initiate several more such

programs, including Rent-to-Own Programs 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 residents' financial capacity, and improve access to affordable market-rate housing statewide.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



HAKIM OUANSAFI
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

BARBARA E. ARASHIRO
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

STATE OF HAWAII
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I
HAWAII PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY
1002 NORTH SCHOOL STREET
POST OFFICE BOX 17907
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IN REPLY PLEASE REFER TO:

26:OED

Statement of the
Hawaii Public Housing Authority

Before the
**Senate Committee on Housing
and
Senate Committee on Health and Human Services**

Monday, March 30, 2026
1:00 PM – Room 225, 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 Chang, Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Hashimoto, Vice Chair McKelvey, and Members of the Senate Committee on Housing and Senate Committee on Health and Human Services:

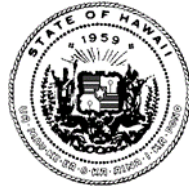
The Hawaii Public Housing Authority (HPHA) supports SCR 160 / SR 151, which calls for DHS, HPHA, SOHHS, and HHFDC to collaboratively develop a housing ladder program to help eligible households transition from subsidized to stable, unsubsidized housing. The resolution emphasizes improving upward mobility 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'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
Office of the Director
P. O. Box 339
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

TRISTA SPEER
DEPUTY DIRECTOR
KA HOPE LUNA HO'ŌKELE

March 29, 2026

TO: The Honorable Senator Stanley Chang, Chair
Senate Committee on Housing

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

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: March 30, 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 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.

SR-151

Submitted on: 3/28/2026 8:47:51 PM

Testimony for HOU on 3/30/2026 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Lila Mower	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support SCR160 and SR 151.