
A BILL FOR AN ACT

MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO REPAIR EMPTY STATE HOUSING UNITS AND
TO PROVIDE RENTAL SUBSIDIES FOR LOW-INCOME UNITS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE SILVER LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The Silver Legislature finds that the lack of
2 affordable housing is a primary cause of homelessness.
3 Currently, there are estimated to be over 6,000 homeless in
4 Hawaii on any given day, and over 14,600 last year who were
5 homeless at one point or another. In the past 4 years, the
6 number of homeless in Hawaii has nearly doubled.

7 Families are losing their homes at unprecedented rates, and
8 are being forced to live a life of poverty. Many have poor
9 access to medical services, difficulty finding work, and paying
10 for food and child care. As a result, children do not receive
11 the proper care, immunizations, and nourishment needed to
12 sustain a healthy quality of life. Additionally, their
13 physical, emotional, cognitive, social, and behavioral
14 developments are all negatively affected. Many homeless
15 children who end up in the foster care system, or who experience
16 long-term homelessness, often end up being homeless themselves
17 when they reach adulthood.

1 Many homeless suffer extreme hardships such as a loss of
2 self-esteem, behavioral problems, a lack of education, becoming
3 victims of violence and rape, becoming institutionalized,
4 deteriorating in both mental and physical health, and some
5 cases, ending up in death. Twenty five to thirty percent suffer
6 from chronic mental illness, thirty five to forty percent suffer
7 from alcohol and drug abuse, and a growing percentage become HIV
8 positive from the hard life they live on the streets.

9 There are about 12,000 individuals each year who seek help
10 from the Housing and Community Development Corporation of Hawaii
11 (HCDCH), many of whom are denied due to lack of HCDCH resources.
12 With over 9,000 people on the waiting list for housing, HCDCH
13 has stopped accepting applicants. The average waiting period is
14 estimated to be anywhere from 2-7 years; in the mean time, many
15 people are suffering in homelessness.

16 The Silver Legislature believes that to prevent many of the
17 problems associated with homelessness, the State must make more
18 housing available to low-income families.

19 SECTION 2. There is appropriated out the General Revenues
20 \$8 million to HCDCH to:

- 21 (1) Repair empty state housing units; and
22 (2) Provide rental subsidies for low-income individuals.

23 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2006.