

**RES22-195
Testimony**

MISC. COMM. 326

BUDGET

BUDGET Meeting

Meeting Date: Aug 24, 2022 @ 09:00 AM

Support: 2

Oppose: 0

I wish to comment: 0

Name: Robert Van Tassell	Email: diane.terada@catholiccharitieshawaii.org	Zip: 96822
Representing: Catholic Charities Hawaii	Position: Support	Submitted: Aug 22, 2022 @ 09:39 AM

Name: Zhizi Xiong	Email: alohadivinedesign@gmail.com	Zip: 96817
Representing: Self	Position: Support	Submitted: Aug 24, 2022 @ 08:53 AM

Testimony:

Dear Chair, vice chair and members of the committee,

I'm testifying in strong support of the resolution as a concerned disabled citizen.

Catholic Charities is a part of the largest private network of social service organizations in the US. Catholic Charities offers much needed programs and services statewide, serving 40k individuals each year. Catholic Charities Housing Development Corporation addresses the needs of affordable housing in Hawaii.

According to what this resolution is proposing, the lease is to provide housing for those with special needs. Those with special needs are amongst the most marginalized and most vulnerable of our society. It is essential to support these efforts. Those with special needs are not able to advocate for themselves. But special needs people are not stupid or inferior to others. Special needs people have the right to accessible & affordable housing in the community.

According to the Hawaii Disability Rights Center and Fair Housing Act, discrimination against a disabled person is prohibited, and at the same time the disabled person has to abide by the housing laws. In the news, in a waikiki building, they weren't fixing the elevator therefore it was inaccessible for the disabled person. There were individuals with disabilities and he or she couldn't access their unit. This is a classic example of inaccessible housing and it is a right being violated.

The resolution and the content of the lease is is very thoughtful and considerate of special needs and disabled people and so as a disability rights advocate, I support it. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAI'I

RE: RESOLUTION 22-195: TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF AUTHORIZING THE LEASE OF CITY PROPERTY TO CATHOLIC CHARITIES HAWAI'I FOR SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING

TO: The Honorable Calvin K.Y. Say, Chair
& Members of the Committee on Budget

FROM: Rob Van Tassell, President and CEO
Catholic Charities Hawai'i

Hearing: **Wednesday, August 24, 2022, 9:00 a.m., City Council Chamber**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony **IN SUPPORT** of Resolution 22-195 –
Authorizing the Lease of City Property to Catholic Charities Hawai'i for Special Needs Housing.

Catholic Charities Hawai'i supports the provision of affordable rental housing inventory in our state. The Kunawai Small Group has operated at the City property located at **710 Kunawai Lane, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96817 (TMK: (1) 1-7-037:044)** since 1988 as an affordable permanent housing option for low to moderate income individuals, age 62 and older.

Our Housing Assistance Program (HAP) provides the oversight of this project, which provides a low-cost housing option for senior adults. This shared housing option provides private bedrooms for each of five (5) senior adults, with common areas for shared use and care. This is one of two City properties leased by Catholic Charities Hawai'i to provide an affordable housing option for senior adults. Each tenant pays rent on a sliding scale basis and shares in the cleaning of common areas (kitchen, bathroom, etc.) used.

Sixty-five (65) percent of HAP clients have income below the Federal poverty level (currently \$15,630/year for a 1-person household). Many must wait years for housing they can afford and often must move multiple times in order to avoid homelessness before they are able to find an affordable unit that they can safely live out their remaining years. The Kunawai Small Group Home provides this type of safe and affordable housing option for senior adults.

We ask that you support the lease of this property to Catholic Charities Hawai'i to continue providing this low cost housing option for senior adults. Thank you for your consideration of this Resolution.



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