



Chair Stanley Chang
Vice-Chair Dru Mamo Kanuha
Senate Committee on Housing
Monday, March 15, 2022, 1:00 PM
Written & Oral Testimony

RE: **Support of HB1752 HD3 With Amendments** - Housing Choice Voucher

Dear Chair Chang, Vice-Chair Kanuha & Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of the Chamber of Sustainable Commerce in support of HB1752 HD3 with amendments described below. As business owners who believe in strengthening our economy without hurting employees, communities and the environment, we urge this committee to pass a version of this bill that makes it illegal to discriminate against tenants who have housing subsidies while supporting landlords who do the right thing.

Section 8 tenants are armed with the full faith and credit of the government; the landlord is guaranteed payment whether a tenant loses their part-time job or is laid off due to a global pandemic. Section 8 pays even more rent than most landlords are collecting from non-section 8 tenants; a review of apartment buildings for sale will confirm this: most listings include rental income which is always less than the amount they would collect if every unit was rented according to the Section 8 payment chart. From a business perspective, Section 8 tenants should be highly sought after.

But this is not the case. Some Section 8 voucher holders wait years to get the voucher only to be loose it after 90 days because they cannot find a landlord willing to accept it. Whether or not there is animus on the landlords' part is less relevant that the discriminatory impact it has on women with children and people with disabilities. We have laws that prohibit discrimination on the bases of sex, familial status and disability because we need them; allowing landlords to continue discriminating against tenants because of a Section 8 voucher is a big loophole.

Depending on the ratio between the number of inspectors and number of units needing inspection, it could take less than a week to have an inspection done. With technology, like FaceTime, inspectors can have the landlord "walk" the inspector through a unit and test the smoke detectors, check appliances and view the general condition of the unit without going in person. Instead of two weeks, this bill should direct that inspections be done within one week.

Hawaii Legislative Council	Kim Coco Iwamoto AQuA Rentals, LLC Honolulu	Elle Cochran Maui Surfboards Maui	Russel Ruderman Island Naturals Hilo / Kona	Joell Edwards Wainiha Country Market Kauai	Maile Meyer Na Mea Hawaii Honolulu
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