

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 18 2021

RE: S.B. No. 1135
S.D. 1

Honorable Ronald D. Kouchi
President of the Senate
Thirty-First State Legislature
Regular Session of 2021
State of Hawaii

Sir:

Your Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection, to which was referred S.B. No. 1135 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO RENTAL DISCRIMINATION,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose and intent of this measure is to create a new chapter on "source of income" discrimination in rental transactions, including definitions and enforcement remedies by direct civil action.

Your Committee received testimony in support of this measure from the Department of Human Services, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Hawai'i Civil Rights Commission, League of Women Voters of Hawaii, Hawai'i Health and Harm Reduction Center, Catholic Charities Hawai'i, St. Michael the Archangel Parish, Hawaii Appleseed Center for Law & Economic Justice, Imua Alliance, Neighborhood Place of Puna, and two individuals. Your Committee received testimony in opposition to this measure from the Hawai'i Association of REALTORS.

Your Committee finds that, prior to the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic, Hawaii had a housing shortage at all price points. Many residents have been economically impacted by the pandemic and are facing evictions, pending the expiration of the eviction moratorium, due to their inability to pay rent. Consequently, additional individuals and families are looking for more



affordable housing, and low-level income households will likely be further pushed out of the market. Residents with Section 8 vouchers have the added burden of finding an available rental that meets Section 8 program minimums. Many landlords in Hawaii, however, advertise "no Section 8" and discriminate against prospective tenants that have rental assistance vouchers. This measure, by creating a statutory prohibition against discrimination based on the source of income for rental payments, will promote greater access to stable housing for marginalized individuals and families. This measure will further bring Honolulu's rental market into alignment with other major metropolitan areas that already ban these discriminatory practices.

Your Committee has amended this measure by making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 1135, as amended herein, and recommends that it pass Second Reading in the form attached hereto as S.B. No. 1135, S.D. 1, and be referred to your Committees on Judiciary and Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on
behalf of the members of the
Committee on Commerce and
Consumer Protection,



ROSALYN H. BAKER, Chair



