



## **SUMMARY OF PUBLIC TESTIMONY**

Public hearings on the FY 2010-2011 PHA Annual Plan were held March 15, 2010 on Oahu, Kauai, Maui and at two locations on the Big Island. Nine people gave verbal testimony and one submitted written comments. The following is a summary of testimony on provisions of the draft PHA Plan.

### **Changes to Waitlist Preference**

Several people commented in opposition to changing the homeless preference to require that the applicant be in a shelter, in addition to the current requirement that they be following a service plan. The following points were stated:

- Islands other than Oahu do not have extensive shelter capacity, and some people cannot get in.
- The service plan alone could be used to teach applicants the things they need to be good tenants.
- Many people living in vehicles or in a relative's home or yard already possess the disciplines necessary to be good tenants
- People with less than perfect ability to manage their money are precisely the ones that public housing is meant to help.
- One person thinks the preference for working families (already in the 2009 Plan) should be implemented quickly
- One person stated that homeless people have difficulty in staying on the wait list, since they are unable to get mail from HPHA, and are sometimes purged from the list. He suggested that an "inactive" list be established so that when they do contact HPHA they can be reinstated to the active wait list.
- One person asked that the wait list be made public so that the public can tell whether HPHA is actually going in the correct order; he commented that there is no control on the process since it is internal.

### **Change from Geographic to Site-Based Wait lists**

3 people testified against converting to site-based waiting lists. The current system should be improved to fill units faster. Speakers did not think site based lists would result in filling units faster.

### **Suitability Checks on Applicants Prior to Placement**

The proposal to conduct suitability checks in the form of credit checks and home visits the applicants current (non-public housing) home drew several comments.

- One person thinks that credit checks on low income people will not help; they do not often have good credit, but public housing is intended for them.
- Credit checks will be discriminatory against low income people
- Home visits are an invasion of privacy



### **Setting Standards for Repair Orders and Type-C Unit Repairs**

The standard set by the Board in the HPHA Goals and Objectives is: no more than 24 hours for emergency repairs and no more than 25 days for non-emergency work orders. For Type C units, the standard is a maximum of 270 days. Two people testified that those standards are too long, and that orders should be abated more quickly. Type C units should be fixed more quickly, since annual inspections are conducted and problems can be identified at that time. One person stated that the goals are good but management does not come close to meeting those repair order standards.

### **Standardize House Rules**

Most testifiers commented that house rules should be different where different circumstances exist. A high rise, for example, could ban barbeques, but they should not be banned in a ground floor duplex with a yard. Testifiers suggested that fire department rules should govern barbeques. One person said that house rules are applied in a discriminatory manner, and should also match lease agreement provisions.

### **Home Ownership**

One person testified in support of HPHA establishing home ownership programs. One person testified that looking at home ownership is discriminatory against those who cannot afford to buy homes.

### **Assess AMP Structure in Light of Asset Management**

One person supported looking at whether AMPs are unfairly disadvantaged by virtue of their residents' incomes, or age of buildings.

### **RAB and Public Hearings**

One person submitted testimony saying there are insufficient communication about who is on RAB, and what RAB's comments on the PHA Plan are. That person asked that HPHA do a better job of publicizing the PHA Plan and public hearings.

### **Requests For Additions To The PHA Plan**

One person suggested that HPHA implement a Representative Payee service in order to help residents manage their funds; this would improve rent payments and avoid evictions. Another suggestion was that HPHA accept electronic payments for rent.