

STAND. COM. REP. NO.

106

Honolulu, Hawaii

FEB 09 2007

RE: S.B. No. 912

Honorable Colleen Hanabusa  
President of the Senate  
Twenty-Fourth State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2007  
State of Hawaii

Madam:

Your Committee on Public Safety, to which was referred S.B. No. 912 entitled:

"A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO PUBLIC SAFETY,"

begs leave to report as follows:

The purpose of this measure is to further the rehabilitation of incarcerated offenders, better prepare them for reentry into society, and to help empower and heal the victims of the offender's actions.

Specifically, this measure appropriates funds for each year of the 2007-2009 fiscal biennium to expand the restorative circles pilot program, currently in place at the Waiawa and women's correctional facilities, to correctional facilities statewide.

Testimony in support of this measure was submitted by the Department of Public Safety; the Hawaii Paroling Authority; Community Alliance on Prisons; TJ Mahoney & Associates' Ka Hale Ho'ala Hou No Na Wahine; and three individuals.

Your Committee finds that the restorative circles program, based on restorative justice methodology, is an effective means of rehabilitation and a transformative process in which offenders restore their relationships with their families, their community, and their victims. It is also an effective healing methodology for the victims, empowering them to make decisions about how to repair the harm caused by their offenders.



Your Committee is proud to report that Hawaii is the world leader in intertwining restorative justice circles with reintegration planning, which is fitting for a culture that includes the practice of ho'oponopono. This innovative, voluntary rehabilitation program includes offenders, family members, mentors and, victims, in a safe, facilitated process that is ultimately healing to all who participate. First, there is a discussion about the offense, how to repair the harm, and how to move on. Then, when appropriate, the group assists the offender in developing a reintegration program consisting of suggestions regarding housing, employment, financial security, continuing education, and other ideas for staying physically and emotionally healthy. Of the thirty circles that have taken place, there has been a one hundred per cent satisfaction rate reported by the one hundred fifty participants.

Your Committee finds that the expansion of this pilot program is merited by its success, important to the public interest, and that a minimum appropriation of \$200,000 for each year of the 2007-2009 fiscal biennium should be considered.

As affirmed by the record of votes of the members of your Committee on Public Safety that is attached to this report, your Committee is in accord with the intent and purpose of S.B. No. 912 and recommends that it pass Second Reading and be referred to the Committee on Ways and Means.

Respectfully submitted on  
behalf of the members of the  
Committee on Public Safety,

  
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WILL ESPERO, Chair



