

TJ MAHONEY & ASSOCIATES

Ka Hale Ho`āla Hou No Nā Wāhine

The Home of Reawakening for Women

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COMMITTEE Ways and Means: Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair
Finance: Representative Marcus R. Oshiro, Chair
DATE, TIME Saturday, March 8, 2008; 9:00 a.m.
PLACE Hawaii State Capitol Auditorium
RE **Grants-In-Aid Informational Briefing**

LATE

Good morning Chairs Baker and Oshiro and members of the committees. My name is Lorraine Robinson. I am the Executive Director of TJ Mahoney & Associates, Ka Hale Ho`āla Hou No Nā Wāhine, a transitional reentry program for women exiting prison. I've served in this capacity for over 12 years and prior to that as a social worker at the Women's Community Correctional Center. I am here to ask for your support for second year funding in the amount of **\$95,273** for computer instruction, enrichment and community activities, and `ohana/cultural services for the residents of Ka Hale Ho`āla Hou No Nā Wāhine. All of these services were previously piloted through private funding. We now consider these services essential for the women in our program and need funding to sustain these critical program components. We serve approximately 100 women exiting prison annually. Our society benefits tremendously both socially and economically when these women are able to successfully reenter our communities. The majority of the women are mothers and the majority of them have minor children. When the mothers are able to succeed, the odds are greatly increased for interrupting the intergenerational cycle of trauma, addiction, crime and incarceration. Specifically, the services include:

Computer Instruction: *"We are in the computer age, it is a changing world, and it has been passing me by during my incarceration."*

- Residents learn computer hardware basics and software applications (Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Access and Internet Explorer) from a professional computer instructor.
- Without the ability to sustain themselves economically, female offenders are extremely vulnerable to recidivism and relapse. If they can attain computer literacy, they have a much better chance of securing employment and earning a living wage when they are released.

Enrichment & Community Service: *"These opportunities help me to give back and be a part of society and open my mind to different activities besides 'partying.' They allow me to see a whole different world."*

- Through classes, guest speakers, service project, arts and cultural events, residents learn about the many possibilities for healthy, pro-social pursuits in the community.
- The women have positive interactions with community members, increasing their sense of belonging in the community and promoting greater public understanding about offenders.

`Ohana/Cultural: *"To step up to the plate and maintain my kuleana, not telling people what to do but being of service to others, helped me grow. Having people believe in me, that I could be a leader, allowed me to believe in myself."*

- Initially funded by the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, our `ohana/cultural component provides opportunities for residents and staff to reconnect with the values and practices of the host culture of Hawaii.
- Based on mutual trust and cooperation, the `ohana environment increases resilience, promotes leadership and engenders a greater sense of responsibility and accountability.
- The women bring these values and skills home to their families, contributing to healthy family relationships and reducing the potential for delinquency among the children of offenders.