

LATE
HB 2007 HD 1



HB 2007 RELATING TO CORRECTIONS
House Committee on Human Services & Housing

Date: February 12, 2008

Time: 2:00pm

Room: 423

The Office of Hawaiian Affairs **supports HB 2007** with amendments to conduct a financial and management audit of each commissary located in Hawaii, out-of-state, and private prison facilities where Hawaii inmates are held.

There are many unanswered questions as to the safety, emotional and financial well-being of our prisoners. We have received complaints from family members who strongly feel that our current prison system needs dire restructuring that impede the prisoner's livelihood and safety. Note that close to 40% of the inmates are of Native Hawaiian descent. Approximately 50% of males, and 60% of females are doing time for non-violent crimes.

Hawaii's quality of care for prisoners have resulted in serious injury, medical conditions and deaths as seen in Otter Creek and Kentucky. Prisoners are not afforded access to rehabilitation programs or drug treatment. This neglected population appears vulnerable to the institution that cares for them. The passage of HB 2007 will allow an audit to be conducted and reflect the results what is taking place within our prison system.

The performance audits should also include the quantity and dollar amount of psychotropic medications and rehabilitation services used within prisons. Further, this audit should include feedback from the family members that visit their loved ones in prison. Access to visit a loved one and to cultivate and maintain a familial relationship is also burden by emotional and financial hardships.

Mahalo nui loa for the opportunity to present testimony.