

**COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY & MILITARY AFFAIRS**  
**Rep. Cindy Evans, Chair**  
**Rep. Sharon E. Har, Vice Chair**  
**Thursday, February 7, 2008**  
**Room 309 at 8:45 am**

## LATE TESTIMONY

### **SUPPORT INTENT, BUT OPPOSE MEASURE: HB 2945 RELATING TO PRISONS**

Aloha Chair Evans, Vice Chair Har and Members of the Committee:

My name is Carrie Ann Shiota, and while I support the intent of HB 2945, I oppose the measure. My experiences as a former Public Defender and Civil Rights Enforcement Attorney, and current staff member of a reentry program on Maui have shaped my advocacy efforts to promote accountability and transparency within our correctional system, and improving how individuals are prepared in prison for successful transition into the community.

While I agree with the general proposition that incarcerated persons who receive program and employment opportunities in prison prior to release are less likely to return to prison, research has demonstrated that not all programs are alike. For example, the Department of Corrections in Washington works closely with the Washington State Institute for Public Policy to study whether their programs are “evidence based” – proven to reduce recidivism. Similarly, it is important for independent evaluators to examine the effectiveness of various PSD and private prison correctional programs and policies in reducing recidivism. Otherwise, we may be mandating and funding correctional programs that have the opposite effect – and actually increase rates of recidivism.

Rather than mandating participation in programs and work opportunities in prison, I support legislation and policies that provide incentives for program and work participation. An earned time credit program would provide additional incentives for program and work participation, and good behavior. In addition, an earned time credit program would help to reduce overcrowding.

Another problem with the proposed bill is that it does not take into safety considerations (i.e. protective custody, etc.) that may preclude an individual from participating in in-facility programs.

Finally, integrated case management does not mean mandating programs. It means developing a personalized re-entry plan for each person that identifies their strengths, challenges and reentry barriers. It means that the plan should accompany the individual no matter where he or she is incarcerated or supervised in the community. It means providing holistic re-entry training to Case Managers, Counselors, Adult Correctional officers and all persons who work inside and with the prison population.

Mahalo for this opportunity to submit testimony in opposition to HB 2945.

Sincerely,  
Carrie Ann Shiota, Esq.  
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