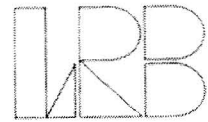


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LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU
State of Hawaii
State Capitol
415 S. Beretania Street, Room 446
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Written Testimony

HCR139

REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU TO CONDUCT A STUDY ON INMATE REENTRY PROGRAMS THAT HAVE BEEN OR ARE PLANNED TO BE IMPLEMENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COMMUNITY SAFETY ACT OF 2007

Testimony by the Legislative Reference Bureau
Ken H. Takayama, Director

Presented to the House Committee on Public Safety

Thursday, April 2, 2009, 9:30 a.m.
Conference Room 309

Chair Hanohano and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on House Concurrent Resolution No. 139. The Bureau takes **no position** either for or against the measure, but offers the following **comments**:

1. The measure requests the Legislative Reference Bureau to study reentry programs that have been or are planned to be implemented by the Department of Public Safety.
2. From a general standpoint, the study requested in this measure appears to be manageable. If the Legislature really wants us to do this study, we will do it to the best of our ability.
3. The staff of the Bureau have no particular background in corrections generally, much less in inmate reentry programs.
4. Consequently, as a practical matter, any or at least most information contained in the study will likely need to come from the Department of Public Safety.

Thank you very much for this opportunity to testify.

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE ON PRISONS

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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

Rep. Faye Hanohano, Chair

Rep. Henry Aquino, Vice Chair

Thursday, April 2, 2009

9:30 AM

Room 309

STRONG SUPPORT

HCR 139 - LRB Study on the Implementation of Act 8/Community Safety Act of 2007

PBSTestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov

Aloha Chair Hanohano, Vice Chair Aquino and Members of the Committee!

My name is Kat Brady and I am the Coordinator of Community Alliance on Prisons, a community initiative working to improve conditions of confinement for our incarcerated individuals, enhance our quality of justice, and promote public safety. We come today to speak for the 6,000+ individuals whose voices have been silenced by incarceration, always mindful that more than 2,000 of those individuals are serving their sentences abroad, thousands of miles from their homes and loved ones.

HCR 139 requests the Legislative Reference Bureau to conduct a study on inmate reentry programs that have been or are planned to be implemented by the Department of Public Safety in accordance with the Community Safety Act of 2007.

Community Alliance on Prisons stands in strong support of this measure. PSD was required under Act 8 to submit a report on their progress in implementing this law, but failed to do so. The department did, however, submit a three-page report to the 2009 Legislature. The first page was the cover, the second page addressed Part I Section 7(c) of the law concerning the return of out-of-state inmates, page three of the report addresses Part 2, Section 7 concerning inmate transition and reentry into the community and addresses the \$1,820,000 allocated for a day reporting center, which PSD did not want. Finally the last paragraph on page three addresses Act 8, Special Session, Part 7, Section 21 - Inmate Reentry into the Community. Here is what that one paragraph says:

*The Department of Public Safety (PSD) testified during the last two legislative sessions that it had existing reentry programs prior to the implementation of Act 8. **In addition to all the programs already identified in this report**, PSD is currently planning both new programs and expansion of already existing programs, with no additional funding as the majority of funds provided by Act 8 lapsed back into the General Fund.*

Despite this statement: ***In addition to all the programs already identified in this report....*** There are NO EXISTING REENTRY PROGRAMS IDENTIFIED in this report or in either of its two attachments.

This is exactly why we need an independent review of what reentry programs exist or are planned to implement the Community Safety Act of 2007. We are not getting the straight story from PSD and, as policymakers, you need to know the impact of the policies you enact. This kind of obfuscation should not be acceptable by the Legislature or the community.

It is great that HCR 139 mandates partnering with the community to foster successful reentry. This is crucial in an individual's return home. Hawai'i is slated to receive \$750,000 from the Second Chance Act and had a meeting of service providers on March 31st to discuss the grant because they must partner with the community. We know that \$750,000 is a drop in the bucket for what is needed, but in these tough economic times, it is great that Hawai'i can expand transition beds, a need they have stated, despite their testimony in opposition to every measure calling for increasing the number of transition beds.

HCR 139 also calls for a cost analysis of implementing performance indicators (which should be minimal since PSD should be collecting that data already) as data collection is a crucial component of best practices for corrections administrators.

The Legislature and the community, who pick up the enormous tab for corrections, need accountability and transparency at PSD - this independent look will provide a window into what is really happening at PSD concerning the successful reentry of our people exiting incarceration.

Community Alliance on Prisons urges the committee to pass this measure so that we will have an independent look at what is happening regarding the implementation of the Community Safety Act of 2007.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY

Rep. Faye Hanohano, Chair

Thursday, April 2, 2009

9:30 AM

Room 309

SUPPORT : HCR 139 – http://www.capitol.hawaii.gov/session2009/bills/HCR139_.pdf

REQUESTING THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE BUREAU TO CONDUCT A STUDY ON INMATE REENTRY PROGRAMS THAT HAVE BEEN OR ARE PLANNED TO BE IMPLEMENTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COMMUNITY SAFETY ACT OF 2007.

RESOLUTION #HCR 139

PBSTestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov

do not follow the ideas of others, but learn to listen to the voice within your heart. your body & mind becomes clear & calm & realizes the oneness of All things.

Lynnette Mau

www.LynnetteMau.com

www.WordsOfPeace.org