

JAN 23 2009

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO COMMUNITY REINTEGRATION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. Research has demonstrated that women tend to
2 follow different pathways to prison, which often involve
3 unresolved traumatic experiences that have led to substance
4 abuse in attempts to self-medicate. There is a vast body of
5 research that also shows that incarceration is not an effective
6 method to deal with the addiction faced by women being held for
7 illegal drug use. The root problems that led to such
8 destructive behavior must be addressed to successfully break the
9 cycle of substance abuse, crime, and incarceration. But,
10 currently, there is a lack of adequate programs that can help
11 incarcerated women face these challenges and assist them in
12 successfully transitioning back into the community.
13 Unfortunately, the great majority of incarcerated women will be
14 released into the community without the necessary skills and
15 tools for a successful transition.

16 In recent years the number of incarcerated women has
17 increased at an alarming rate. The department of public safety
18 hired Criminal Justice Institute, Inc., to conduct a



1 reclassification of all Hawaii inmates. The resulting report:
2 "*Classification - systemic approach to sound correctional*
3 *management,*" was provided to the legislature in January 2008,
4 noting that 84 per cent of incarcerated women are classified as
5 nonviolent. The report projected that women inmates who are
6 eligible for community reintegration services included:

- 7 (1) 55.2 per cent of female jail inmates;
- 8 (2) 47.8 per cent of female prison inmates held in-state;
- 9 and
- 10 (3) 22.2 per cent of female prison inmates held out of
11 state.

12 The purpose of this Act is to require the department of
13 public safety to determine the number of women who are eligible
14 for reintegration into the community and contract with gender-
15 responsive community services providers to assist women in
16 successfully transitioning to the community.

17 SECTION 2. The department of public safety shall determine
18 the number of women who are eligible for reintegration into the
19 community and contract with gender-responsive community services
20 providers with an array of services to assist women in
21 successfully transitioning to the community, including:

- 22 (1) Family reunification;



- 1 (2) Employment;
- 2 (3) Educational opportunities; and
- 3 (4) Housing.

4 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
 5 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
 6 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2009-2010 to
 7 determine the number of women who are eligible for reintegration
 8 into the community and contract with gender-responsive community
 9 services providers with an array of services to assist women in
 10 successfully transitioning to the community.

11 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of
 12 public safety for the purposes of this Act.

13 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2009.

14

INTRODUCED BY: Rosalyn H. Pele
Jill
Carol McKeown
Michelle N. Sedini
Erzanne Chun Oalland



Report Title:

Community-based Reintegration Program

Description:

Requires the Department of Public Safety to develop a plan to use current funding resources to improve community-based programs to assist female offenders in transitioning from prison back into the community.

