

LATE TESTIMONY

Testimony for House Committee on Economic Revitalization, Business, & Military Affairs

Hearing scheduled: Tuesday, March 23, 2010; 08:30 a.m.; Room 312

Measure #: HR200

Support

Copies needed: 2

March 18, 2010

Rep. Angus L.K. McKelvey, Chair
Rep. Isaac W. Choy, Vice Chair
Committee on Economic Revitalization, Business, & Military Affairs
State Capitol, Conference Room 312
415 S. Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: **HR200** Regarding Veterans Court and Advisory Committee

Honorable Chair McKelvey, Vice Chair Choy, and EBM Committee Members:

My name is Donna Charron. I am writing as a licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (MFT), member of the Hawaii Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (HAMFT), and as a concerned citizen.

I strongly support the convening of a committee to identify at which point Veterans, returning Reservists, and National Guard members will enter the justice system; and how best to address their needs; including the development of a Veterans Court.

Since approximately 120,000 military veterans and 40,000 active duty military live in Hawaii; and since there has been an unprecedented rate of utilization and re-deployment of members of the United States armed forces, Reserves, and Hawaii National Guard in Afghanistan and Iraq since September 11, 2001; and since recent research confirms that a significant number of soldiers (as many as one in five) will return home from war with a combat related mental health condition such as post traumatic stress disorder; and since we know substance use/abuse is a concern among military personnel and their families; and since it is estimated that one in three homeless persons has served in the United States military, I am supporting the request for the Chief Justice of the Hawaii Supreme Court to convene a committee to identify at which point Veterans, returning Reservists, and National Guard members enter the justice system, and how best to address their needs, including the development of a Veterans Court.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna M Charron, MFT