

LATE TESTIMONY

TESTIMONY ON

SR 90 and SCR 191, Requesting the Hawai'i Paroling Authority to Establish a HOPE Parole Pilot Program.

**Committee on Public Safety
Representative Faye P. Hanohano, Chair
Representative Henry J.C. Aquino, Vice Chair**

**Thursday, March 29, 2010
State Capitol**

Representative Hanohano, Representative Aquino and Members of the Committee:

I am Dr. Kevin Kunz, a Big Island physician licensed in Hawaii and practicing in Kona for 30 years. I have been certified in the medical specialty of Addiction Medicine for 15 years, and this is my primary clinical focus. Working in the field of addiction treatment I have become very familiar with the impact of drugs on crime and social disruption. My testimony today is as a concerned citizen and physician, and as the Vice-President of Friends of HOPE, a Hawaii non-profit supportive of HOPE Probation and its' expansion.

I have several other professional activities that give me knowledge and expertise in the arena of probation and parole, and the significant the role of alcohol and drugs in criminal behavior. I am the past President of the Hawaii Society of Addiction Medicine, a past Director of the American Society of Addiction Medicine, and the current President of the American Board of Addiction Medicine.

I am speaking in favor of these bill.

This bill will allow the Hawai'i Paroling Authority to establish a two-year pilot parole modification project and provide interim and final reports to the 2011 and 2012 Legislature in 2011. As such, it builds on the success of HOPE Probation, as a model that works without the establishment of a huge infrastructure.

The success of HOPE Probation, which has now undergone a rigorous and published scientific review, has already saved Hawaii tens of thousands of dollars, and helped hundreds of men and women remain in the community, as contributing members, while simultaneously cutting crime and assisting these probationers in avoiding the use of illegal drugs, particularly, methamphetamine. The success of HOPE probation is undeniable. Currently many national organizations and individual states are considering replicating this Hawaii model program.

You may be surprised to learn that the HOPE Probation model has several key elements that are used in programs that treat physicians and airline pilots with alcohol and drug issues. Namely, very close monitoring, and if there are irregularities, swift consequences. Most people believe that this already goes on in the probation system, that if a probationer misses an appointment, misses a drug test, or has a positive drug test, that immediate action is taken. In Hawaii, this is the case only for probationers enrolled in HOPE Probation. And guess what, the success rate of these men and women is the same or better than physicians that are also monitored in this way. The results of HOPE Probation are being reviewed across the country by addiction experts, as a new and successful model to treat not just probationers, physicians and airline pilots, but the average citizen as well. HOPE Probation works; it saves money, saves families and better serves the public safety than standard probation. Let's expand it from the probation population to the parole population.

Please give positive consideration to SR 90 and SCR 191..

Thank you for the opportunity to make these comments.

Signed

Kevin Kunz, M.D., M.P.H., FASAM

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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY & MILITARY AFFAIRS

Sen. Will Espero, Chair

Sen. Robert Bunda, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY AND GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS

Sen. Brian Taniguchi, Chair

Sen. Dwight Takamine, Vice Chair

Monday, March 29, 2010, 10:00 a.m.

Room 016

SRCR 191/SR 90 – Establishing HOPE Parole — STRONG SUPPORT

Aloha Chairs Espero and Taniguchi and members of your Committees,

I serve on the state's Corrections Population Management Commission as the representative of the Hawaii community. While the Commission is ineffectual, it remains my responsibility to speak on matters that relate to its purpose and mandate.

HOPE Probation is a shining star in the state's effort to reduce recidivism and the prison population overall. Its successes are undeniable; its strategy is based on common sense; and its tactics are replicable. Yes, probationers and parolees are different in some respects. What is not different, however, is the need to think and act in different ways during these very different and difficult times.

I strongly urge you to use HOPE Probation as a model for HOPE Parole, addressing the concerns of PSD as you do so.

Thank you very much.

aloha, Peter Gellatly