
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY TO DETERMINE THE
FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING AN EARNED-TIME PROGRAM FOR
HAWAII'S NON-VIOLENT AND LOW-LEVEL DRUG OFFENDERS.

1 WHEREAS, at least 31 correctional jurisdictions use an
2 incentive system that rewards inmates for positive behavior
3 while incarcerated; and
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5 WHEREAS, these incentive systems reward inmates with
6 "earned-time credits"; and
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8 WHEREAS, these credits are earned when the inmate
9 participates in prison programs or activities, including but not
10 limited to education, substance abuse treatment, or vocational
11 training; and
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13 WHEREAS, earned-time credits are a proven model that offers
14 selected inmates a shortened prison stay if they complete
15 educational, vocational, or rehabilitation programs that boost
16 their chances of successful reentry into the community and the
17 labor market; and
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19 WHEREAS, the opportunity to earn sentence credits provides
20 a significant incentive to prisoners who currently are penalized
21 for misconduct but rarely rewarded for positive efforts; and
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23 WHEREAS, awarding earned-time credits is a common
24 correctional practice nationally; and
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26 WHEREAS, there is no evidence that permitting earned-time
27 credits presents a risk to public safety; and



1 WHEREAS, permitting earned-time credits does not require
2 the release of any particular prisoner, make institutional
3 management more difficult, or interfere with the discretion of
4 the parole board; and
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6 WHEREAS, earned-time credits would provide the Department
7 of Public Safety with a useful tool for managing institutional
8 behavior and promoting participation in rehabilitative programs;
9 and
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11 WHEREAS, earned-time credits could significantly reduce the
12 State's prison population, reduce the population of Hawaii
13 inmates serving sentences on the United States mainland, and
14 save taxpayers money; and
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16 WHEREAS, the rehabilitation of inmates is an important step
17 in the process of enabling inmates to successfully reenter the
18 community; and
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20 WHEREAS, the Department of Public Safety has testified that
21 more than 30 percent of the men incarcerated on the United
22 States mainland are classified as community custody; and
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24 WHEREAS, a report released by the National Conference of
25 State Legislatures in July 2009, stated that earned-time helps
26 states reduce the corrections budget burden and allows funds
27 saved to be invested in programs that reduce recidivism and help
28 build safe communities; and
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30 WHEREAS, instituting an earned-time credit program can
31 accomplish the goals of bringing those incarcerated on the
32 United States mainland back home, saving money by reinvesting
33 correctional dollars from incarceration to community programs,
34 and keeping local money circulating in the local economy; now,
35 therefore,
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37 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
38 Twenty-sixth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
39 of 2011, the Senate concurring, that the Department of Public
40 Safety is requested to determine the feasibility of establishing
41 an earned-time program for Hawaii's non-violent and low-level
42 drug offenders incarcerated in Hawaii and on the mainland based
43 upon a study of earned-time credit programs established under
44 the laws of other jurisdictions; and



1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Public Safety
2 is requested to report its findings and recommendations,
3 including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature no later
4 than 20 days prior to the convening of the Regular Session of
5 2012; and

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7 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
8 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to Governor, Director of
9 Public Safety, and Chairperson of Hawaii Paroling Authority.

