

# LATE TESTIMONY

## *A* the Drug Policy *Action* Group

A sister organization of the Drug Policy Forum of Hawai'i  
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*Dedicated to safe, responsible, and effective drug policies since 1993*

TO: House Committee on Public Safety and Military Affairs

FROM: Pamela Lichty, MPH  
President

DATE: February 3, 2011, 8:30 a.m., room 309

RE: H.B. 142 RELATING TO CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES – **IN  
SUPPORT**

Aloha Representative Aquino and members of the Committee. My name is Pam Lichty and I'm testifying on behalf of the Drug Policy Action Group.

We are in strong support of this measure.

In 2002 the Hawaii State Legislature passed ACT 161 that aimed to divert non-violent drug offenders into treatment in lieu of incarceration. Unfortunately there was no funding attached to that measure; the language was weakened in subsequent sessions and the law was never fully implemented.

Nonetheless the rationale for diversion programs is even stronger now than it was nine years ago. Many states, including Texas quite recently, have gone this route as fiscal crises have forced re-examination of state policies on drugs, incarceration and the **real** costs of such policies.

The one amendment we would make is to include criminologists and/or other policy researchers into the list of stakeholders with whom to consult.

We urge this Committee to pass this bill on with a strong recommendation for passage.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.