

A the Drug Policy
Action Group

A sister organization of the Drug Policy Forum of Hawai'i
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LATE

Dedicated to safe, responsible, and effective drug policies since 1993

TO: Senate Committee on Ways and Means

FROM: Pamela Lichty, MPH
President

DATE: March 1, 2011, 9:20 a.m., room 211

RE: S.B. 1358, S.D. 1 RELATING TO PUBLIC SAFETY – **IN STRONG SUPPORT**

Aloha Senators Ige, Kidani and members of the Committee. My name is Pam Lichty and I'm testifying in support of this measure on behalf of the Drug Policy Action Group.

The bill under consideration today, to re-open Kulani Correctional Facility, offers a wealth of opportunities for the community. It could offer a way to return some two hundred community custody inmates from Arizona right away. It could be used as a space to reopen their highly regarded sex offender treatment program and/or they could use the space for innovative re-entry programs for prisoners who will soon be returning to our communities.

Any or all of these uses would help effectuate the stated goals of the Governor to return our prisoners from facilities on the U.S. mainland. They could also serve to lower the costs to our public safety program by housing prisoners, who are suitable, in more appropriate and less costly minimum security facilities.

Thank you for hearing this measure and thank you for permitting us to testify today.

To: The Honorable David Y. Ige, Chair
The Honorable Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair
Senate Ways and Means Committee

From: Laura Robertson, President and CEO
Edwina Minglana, Director of Employment Services
Goodwill Industries of Hawaii, Inc.

Date: February 28, 2011

Re: **Testimony in Support of S.B. 1358, SD1 – Relating To Public Safety**

Goodwill Industries of Hawaii, Inc. (Goodwill) is among the largest human service non-profit organizations in Hawaii. Our mission is to help people find and succeed in employment. Last year, we served over 13,000 people statewide and placed 1,667 people into jobs in our community; serving 1,290 previously or currently incarcerated individuals. Goodwill has fifty (50) years of experience assisting people who have employment barriers find jobs and gain self-sufficiency. Our Job Connections program in Hilo primarily assists male offenders referred by the Department of Public Safety.

Goodwill supports SB1358, SD1 which urges the Department of Public Safety to develop a plan to reopen the Kulani correctional facility, implement transfers, and house newly sentenced individuals by 12/1/2011.

Prior to its closure, the inmates at Kulani correctional facility was instrumental in identifying services needed for male offenders to successfully transition back into the community. Specialized services included life skills, job readiness training, and job placement.

Re-opening the Kulani correctional facility supports Hawaii's efforts to expand services to incarcerated persons with the goal of reducing recidivism and thereby strengthening the local community. Increasing the availability of statewide services will ensure that every individual receives necessary employment and life skills training to overcome multiple barriers and successfully transition back to the local community.

We appreciate the opportunity to present testimony on this important bill.

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Testimony by:

Jolene Molinaro

SB1358

Tuesday, February 15, 2011

2:45 pm

Rm 224

In Support of SB 1358 Relating to Public Safety/ Kulani Correctional Facility

Dear Senator Espero and Committee Members:

My name is Jolene Molinaro, and I would like to submit testimony in strong support of SB 1358 regarding the reopening of Kulani Correctional Facility. As an ex-offender, I know how important it is for a person who is released from prison to have a strong support network, which hopefully begins while still incarcerated. This is much easier to achieve when the inmate has access to their family members and friends who reside in the community in which the inmate will be released to. Successful reentry requires the smoothest transition as possible and being incarcerated thousands of miles away from any familiar contacts and family members alienates prisoners in many ways. Since the facility already exists, it would be a waste and a shame not to utilize it to keep Hawaii's inmates at home where their children and support systems reside.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jolene Molinaro

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COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Sen. David Ige, Chair

Sen. Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair

Tuesday March 1, 2011

Room 211

9:20 a.m.

SB 1358 SD1 - PLAN FOR REOPENING KULANI

Strong support

Aloha Chair Ige, Vice Chair Kidani and Members of the Committee,

I strongly urge you to do all that you can to re-open Kulani Prison, which was a model institution within the State. Surrounded by pristine rainforest, looked after by inmates, this facility offered substance abuse treatment, sex abuse treatment, an auto mechanics certification course, 19 different work lines and even, at one time, a working ranch.

In order to fulfill the mission of the Department of Public Safety, we must do all that we can to rehabilitate offenders, so that when they do eventually return to society, they have the most personal recovery and job skills possible in order to succeed, and not turn back to crime.

Kulani prison, under the charge of Warden MacDonald was the best prison facility within our state. It was a shame that it was shut down, however that mistake can now be rectified with its reinstatement.

Please consider using this existing facility, which will give beds to several hundred out-of-state inmates. Bringing inmates back to Hawai'i will decrease recidivism and ease the strain on inmate's families.

Mahalo for considering my testimony.

Netra Halperin, M.A. (psychology)

Kihei, Hawai'i

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 28, 2011 8:22 PM
To: WAM Testimony
Cc: Da80m8@aol.com
Subject: Testimony for SB1358 on 3/1/2011 9:20:00 AM

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Testimony for WAM 3/1/2011 9:20:00 AM SB1358

Conference room: 211
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Jolie Ann L. Salas
Organization: Individual
Address:
Phone:
E-mail: Da80m8@aol.com
Submitted on: 2/28/2011

Comments:

Dear you honorable Senators,
I am writing in favor, and full support of SB 1358. Returning Kulani Correctional Facility to the Department of public Safety will allow as many as 200 inmates the opportunity to return home and continue or start programs that they are not offered at mainland facilities as well as be close to family. As a former Correctional Officer for 4 years, my experience has been that when you have an inmate who is housed in Hawaii and is able to correspond with family, through letters and visits, they become more sensitive to write ups and disciplinary action and want to be a better person, when we receive inmates who have been housed in Arizona, or a mainland facility for a few years, where there are few to no programs, they tend to have lost that feeling of belonging and connection to family and friends, and have a less sensitivity to cares and concerns of write-up and privileges taken away, these inmates tend to have a "I don't care attitude" verses the "I'll try to do better attitude". I hope that you and your colleagues will work together in pushing this bill forward and return Hawaii inmates home.

Much Mahalo,

Jolie-Ann L. Salas