

# SB 2866

## **RELATING TO COMPREHENSIVE OFFENDER REENTRY SYSTEM**

### *Description:*

Establishes the Offender Reentry Office within the Department of Public Safety to address the goals of chapter 353H, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

NEIL ABERCROMBIE  
GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII  
**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY**  
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TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 2866  
RELATING TO COMPREHENSIVE OFFENDER REENTRY SYSTEM

by  
Jodie F. Maesaka-Hirata, Director  
Department of Public Safety

Senate Committee on Public Safety, Government Operations, and Military Affairs  
Senator Will Espero, Chair  
Senator Michelle N. Kidani, Vice Chair

Tuesday, February 21, 2012, 2:45 PM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 224

Chair Espero, Vice Chair Kidani, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Public Safety (PSD) strongly support Senate Bill (SB) 2866 that amends Section 353H, Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS), to create a centralized Offender Reentry Office to oversee and monitor reentry functions and delete references to offender reentry responsibilities from Section 353-10, HRS. The Offender Reentry Office will specialize in designing, monitoring, and evaluating programs and services to reduce recidivism prevent further victimization and enhance public safety.

The Offender Reentry Office staff works with and assists departmental staff and community providers to prepare sentenced offenders transitioning to the community through programs and activities that best reflect evidence based programming for inmates. A variety of programs and services are essential during

an offender's transition to the community. These services target risk need assessments, criminogenic areas, vocational preparedness, victim services, and quality assurance. As a result of these programs and services an offender transitioning to the community from a correctional center/facility will acquire the appropriate skills and treatment to reenter the community and reduce recidivism.

In conclusion, PSD strongly supports the passage of SB 2866, which would centralize reentry functions in the Department. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

# COMMUNITY ALLIANCE ON PRISONS

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## COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS, & MILITARY AFFAIRS

Sen. Will Espero, Chair

Sen. Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair

Tuesday, February 21, 2012

2:45 p.m.

Room 224

### SUPPORT SB 2866 with Amendment - ESTABLISHING REENTRY OFFICE

Aloha Chair Espero, Vice Chair Kidani and Members of the Committee!

My name is Kat Brady and I am the Coordinator Community Alliance on Prisons, a community initiative promoting smart justice policies for more than a decade. This testimony is respectfully offered on behalf of the 6,000 Hawai'i individuals living behind bars, always mindful that almost 1,800 individuals are serving their sentences abroad, thousands of miles away from their loved ones, their homes and, for the disproportionate number of incarcerated Native Hawaiians, far from their ancestral lands.

SB 2866 establishes the Offender Reentry Office within the Department of Public Safety to address the goals of Chapter 353H, HRS.

Community Alliance on Prisons supports this measure. Reentry assistance is crucial to prevent recidivism and the community plays a vital role in the successful transition of an individual from institutional to community life.

Community Alliance on Prisons, therefore, respectfully offers the following amendment by adding a new component to SECTION 2, The offender reentry office shall:

- (9) Work closely and collaborate with community partners (organizations, businesses, and concerned citizens).

Successful reentry can only happen when the community is prepared and involved; it does not happen in a vacuum. Partnering with community organizations, churches, businesses and concerned citizens will enrich reentry services by seeking mentors and employers ready to partner with individuals leaving the custody of PSD, many of whom are suffering from PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder).

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.



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

February 21, 2012

To: Senator Will Espero, Chair  
Senator Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair and  
Members of the Committee on Public Safety, Government Operations, and Military Affairs

From: Jeanne Y. Ohta

RE: SB 2866 Relating to Comprehensive Offender Reentry System  
Hearing: February 21, 2012, 2:45 p.m., Room 224

Position: Support

The Drug Policy Forum of Hawai'i writes in support of SB 2866 Relating to Comprehensive Offender Reentry System to address the goals of HRS §353H.

DPFH supports efforts to implement a comprehensive reentry system as comprehensive services are important to reduce recidivism and to enable successful transition back into the community. Successful reentry of those leaving prison also improves public safety.

We urge the committee to pass this measure. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.