COMMUNITY ALLIANCE ON PRISONS

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COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS
Sen. David Ige, Chair
Sen. Michelle Kidani, Vice Chair
Thursday, April 4, 2013
9:50 a.m.
Room 211

STRONG SUPPORT FOR SCR 67 SD1/SR 35 SD1 – Residential Reentry Center & Day Reporting Program

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

My name is Kat Brady and I am the Coordinator of 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 5,800 Hawai`i individuals living behind bars, always mindful that approximately 1,500 Hawai`i 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.

SCR 67 SD1/SR 35 SD1 encourages the department of public safety to seriously consider the establishment and implementation of a stand-alone reentry center in Honolulu for recovering low-risk criminal offenders, which may include residential and day-reporting program options.

Community Alliance on Prisons is in support of this measure.

The Federal Bureau of Prisons has used Residential Reporting Centers (RRCs) to assist those exiting federal prison in their successful transition back to their communities. In a statement before the U.S. Sentencing Commission[1], former BOP Director Harry Lappin said:

> *"Inmates who are released through RRCs are more likely to be gainfully employed and therefore less likely to recidivate as compared to inmates who are released from a prison directly to the community. We have recently begun to place inmates at low risk for recidivism (based on their age, criminal history and other criminogenic factors) and with few reentry needs (housing, employment, family ties) directly into home confinement wherever possible, allowing us to allocate the RRC beds to those with a need for the services and structure provided in that environment."*

[1] Statement of Harley G. Lappin, Director, Bureau of Prisons before U.S. Sentencing Commission, Regional Hearing on the State of Federal Sentencing, Austin Texas, November 20, 2009 http://www.ussc.gov/AGENDAS/20091119/Lappin.pdf

Since BOP has found that not every individual needs the more intensive services of the Residential Reentry Center, the inclusion of the Day Reporting Program is an important element for those who could be placed on home confinement so that the Residential Reporting Center beds could be used for those needing more structure.

One concrete proposal for cutting expenditures on incarceration would be to reduce the number of non-violent offenders in prison and jail by half (with no change in the incarceration rates for violent offenders).[2]

Since Hawai`i's correctional facilities are bursting with non-violent/low risk drug offenders, and since we know that 98% of incarcerated persons will return to the community one day, it is wise to invest in reentry/reintegration services in the interest of public safety.

Please support SCR 67 SD1/SR 35 SD1 as a strategy that has proven successful in protecting public safety and assisting those making the transition from institutional to community life.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

[2] **The High Budgetary Cost of Incarceration**, John Schmitt, Kris Warner, and Sarika Gupta, June 2010, Center for Economic and Policy Research. http://www.cepr.net/documents/publications/incarceration-2010-06.pdf