



The Judiciary, State of Hawai'i

Testimony to the House Committee on Finance

Representative Sylvia Luke, Chair
Representative Scott Nishimoto, Vice Chair

Wednesday, February 25, 2015, 2:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

by
Sidney Nakamoto
Adult Client Service Branch Administrator
First Circuit

Bill No. and Title: House Bill No. 1005, House Draft 1 Making an Appropriation for the Veterans Treatment Court

Purpose: Appropriates funds to the judiciary and the prosecuting attorney to support the Veterans Treatment Court.

Judiciary's Position:

The Judiciary supports the intent of House Bill No. 1005, House Draft 1, and respectfully offers comments regarding only the proposed appropriation to the Judiciary for the Veterans Treatment Court (VTC).

House Bill No. 1005, House Draft 1 proposes an unspecified appropriation to support the Veterans Treatment Court (VTC). In this year's Judiciary's biennium budget request, House Bill 290 and Senate Bill 428, we have requested \$91,437 in FY 2016 and \$106,116 in FY 2017 to fund two Social Worker positions and equipment for its Veterans Treatment Court in the First Circuit. The Judiciary respectfully requests that our current budget request serve as the primary vehicle to move this important program forward.

The VTC was established in part as a result of House Concurrent Resolution (HCR) 278 HD 1, SLH 2010. HCR 278 requested that the Judiciary explore the development of a VTC. The VTC began in 2011 with a three year grant from the Federal Government to serve those individuals from any branch of the military reserves. Subsequently, in the 2012 session, the



House Bill No. 1005, House Draft 1 Making an Appropriation for the Veterans
Treatment Court
House Committee on Finance
Wednesday, February 25, 2015 2:00 p.m.
Page 2

Legislature authorized a Coordinator position, but did not fund it due to budget constraints at that time. The federal grant that currently funds the VTC's Coordinator position will terminate on September 30, 2015, therefore, it is crucial to the continuation of the VTC that this authorized Coordinator position receives permanent funding of \$40,959 in FY 2016 and \$56,202 in FY 2017. Funding and a position count for a permanent Probation Officer position are also requested so as to expand services and allow the court to enroll more felons and eventually those individuals convicted of misdemeanor crimes. The cost to fund the Probation Officer position, which includes equipment and software, is \$50,478 for FY 2016 and \$49,914 for FY 2017.

The VTC currently has 14 active clients and three being considered for admission. Providing permanent funding for the Coordinator and Probation Officer positions will allow for an increase to the number of veterans admitted to the program, improve public safety, and reduce recidivism and crime.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill No. 1005, House Draft 1.

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 1005 HD1
A BILL RELATING TO MAKING AN APPROPRIATION
FOR THE VETERANS TREATMENT COURT

PRESENTATION TO
THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

BY
BRIGADIER GENERAL ARTHUR J. LOGAN
ADJUTANT GENERAL
AND DIRECTOR OF THE HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY
February 24, 2015

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Nishimoto and Members of the House Committee on Finance:

I am Brigadier General Arthur J. Logan, State Adjutant General and the Director of the Hawaii Emergency Management Agency. I am testifying in **SUPPORT** of House Bill 1005 HD1.

The Veterans Treatment Court serves veterans who experience difficulties acclimating back into society after military service. Veterans who qualify must have cases in the Circuit Courts with misdemeanor or felony charges relating to mental health issues, including post-traumatic stress disorder, and substance abuse.

The Veterans Treatment Court emphasizes discipline and structure to support veterans through the process of recovery. The program includes mandatory attendance at treatment sessions and frequent and random testing for substance use. The court helps these veterans find housing and get job training. Veterans in the program are closely supervised and make regular court appearances to update their treatment.

The court pairs each veteran with a volunteer mentor – a fellow veteran from the same military branch. These mentors have an understanding of the difficulties these men and women face and help them through the recovery process.

If the veteran violates the terms of the program, then he or she is subject to immediate consequences and jail time to ensure accountability.

The Veterans Treatment Court has been a success since it began in 2013. The program's continuing success warrants funding to serve more veterans who deserve an opportunity to fully integrate back into society.

Thank you for allowing me to testify in **SUPPORT** of House Bill 1005 HD1.

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 1005 HD1
MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE VETERANS TREATMENT COURT

PRESENTED TO THE

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

BY

MR. RONALD P. HAN
DIRECTOR OF THE STATE OFFICE OF VETERANS SERVICES

February 25, 2015

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Nishimoto and Committee members:

I'm Ron Han, Director of the State Office of Veterans Services (OVS). I appreciate this opportunity **to support** House Bill 1005 HD1. This measure would appropriate funds to the judiciary and the prosecuting attorney of the City and County of Honolulu to support the Veterans Treatment Court in Hawaii.

The Veterans Treatment Court (VTC) under the leadership of First Circuit Court Judge Ed Kubo treated 12 defendants in its first year of operation. The need to fully fund full-time employment authorizations is paramount as more attorneys submit application for their clients to participate in the program.

This program has very low recidivism rates, has garnered successes in dealing with veterans for various issues, and has established viable monitoring links towards rehabilitation. Over 100 VTC's across the nation have experienced a reduced number of repeat offenders, thereby reducing our overall prison population.

We defer to the agency with direct responsibility for implementation of the Veterans' Treatment Court program.

The OVS supports the concepts and intent expressed in this measure as long as its implementation does not impact or replace the priorities set forth in the Executive Budget.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak on behalf of Hawaii's Veterans and their families.

DEPARTMENT OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

ALII PLACE
1060 RICHARDS STREET • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813
PHONE: (808) 547-7400 • FAX: (808) 547-7515

KEITH M. KANESHIRO
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY



ARMINA A. CHING
FIRST DEPUTY PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

**THE HONORABLE SYLVIA LUKE, CHAIR
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Twenty-Eighth State Legislature
Regular Session of 2015
State of Hawai'i**

February 25, 2015

**RE: H.B. 1005, H.D. 1; MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE VETERANS
TREATMENT COURT.**

Chair Luke, Vice Chair Nishimoto, and members of the House Committee on Finance, the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu ("Department") submits testimony in support of House Bill 1005, H.D. 1 with a technical amendment.

The purpose of House Bill 1005, H.D. 1 is to provide adequate funding for Veterans Court, including dedicated funding of \$65,000 for the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu to provide services for the program, as it requires us to assign a deputy prosecuting attorney to those Veterans Court cases and court appearances--a deputy who could otherwise be handling a 'regular' caseload and 'regular' courtroom, to spread out the caseload for our other deputies--and also requires a significant amount of work-hours from our support staff. To date, no additional funding has been provided for this added responsibility, from any source, and this has presented a significant hardship for our Department.

We kindly request a technical amendment on p. 1, lines 14-15 to read: "The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of the prosecuting attorney of the city and county of Honolulu for the purposes of this Act."

In order to maintain our Department's ongoing participation in Veterans Court, and for all of the foregoing reasons, the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu respectfully asks that House Bill 1005, H.D. 1 be passed with an appropriation of \$65,000 and our suggested technical amendment, to sustain its ongoing participation in Veterans Court. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

MITCHELL D. ROTH
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

DALE A. ROSS
FIRST DEPUTY
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY



655 KĪLAUEA AVENUE
HILO, HAWAII 96720
PH: (808) 961-0466
FAX: (808) 961-8908
(808) 934-3403
(808) 934-3503

WEST HAWAII UNIT
81-980 HALEKĪ ST, SUITE 150
KEALAKEKUA, HAWAII 96750
PH: (808) 322-2552
FAX: (808) 322-6584

OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 1005, HD1

A BILL FOR AN ACT MAKING APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE
VETERANS TREATMENT COURT

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Sylvia Luke, Chair
Rep. Scott Y. Nishimoto, Vice Chair

Wednesday, February 25, 2015, 2:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 308

Honorable Chair Luke, Vice-Chair Nishimoto, and Members of the Committee on Finance, the Office of the Prosecuting Attorney, County of Hawai'i submits the following testimony in support of House Bill No. 1005, HD1.

This measure Appropriates funds to the Judiciary and the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu to support the Veterans Treatment Court.

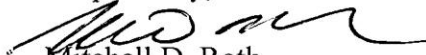
The Veterans Treatment Court (VTC) serves veterans who experience struggles acclimating back into society after their military service. Most veterans are strengthened by their military service, but combat experience has unfortunately left a growing number of veterans with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and Traumatic Brain Injury. The VTC emphasizes discipline and structure to support veterans through the process of recovery.

The VTC requires regular court appearances, mandatory attendance at treatment sessions, and frequent and random testing for substance abuse. Veterans respond favorably to this structured environment, given their past experiences in the Armed Forces. However, a few will struggle and it is exactly those veterans who need a VTC. This program is able to ensure they meet their obligations to themselves, the court, and their community.

Veterans Treatment Courts are tapping into the unique aspects of military and veteran culture and using it to the benefit of the veteran, who has volunteered to fight to protect our freedoms. Through these unique courts, those who served in our nation's Armed Forces are allowed to participate in the treatment court process with their fellow veterans, re-instilling a sense of camaraderie that they felt while in the military.

Accordingly, the Office of the Prosecuting Attorney, County of Hawai'i supports the passage of House Bill No. 1005, HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Roth', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mitchell D. Roth
Prosecuting Attorney
County of Hawai'i

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 1005 HD1, MAKING AN APPROPRIATION
FOR THE VETERANS TREATMENT COURT

PRESENTATION TO THE
COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

BY

CARSWELL J. ROSS, JR. Chief Master Sergeant, USAF. Ret.;
Counselor Emeritus, Office of Veterans' Services

Wednesday, February 25, 2015

Good afternoon Chair Silva Luke, Vice Chair Scott Nishimoto, and members of the committee on Finance. I **strongly support** this measure which seeks to provide funds to the Judiciary to support the Veterans Treatment Court. As a member of the Oahu Veterans Council we receive reports on the progress of veterans who are in the Treatment Court program. These reports demonstrate that the individuals involved with the program have had a life changing experience. Nationally, data indicates that the recidivism rate for Veterans Treatment Court participants is very low. This is a worthwhile program and it affords veterans with an opportunity to remember why they volunteered to serve in the Armed Forces.

Thank you for this opportunity to strongly support this measure.

FIN-Jo

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 24, 2015 2:59 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: acacosta84@live.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HB1005 on Feb 25, 2015 14:00PM*

HB1005

Submitted on: 2/24/2015

Testimony for FIN on Feb 25, 2015 14:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Christopher Acosta	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

LATE

House Committee on Finance

February 24, 2015

Testimony of Rene Berthiaume in Support of HB1005-HD1

Aloha Chair Luke and Vice Chair Nishimoto and members of the House Finance Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in SUPPORT of HB1005-HD1.

My name is Rene Berthiaume and I am member of the Veterans Treatment Court Advisory Committee that gives input and support to Judge Ed Kubo and Vet Court Staff. The first Vet Court in the country was set up in the courtroom of Judge Robert Russell in Buffalo, N.Y. and has since become a Specialty Court throughout the country. I have been involved in this effort since its inception. There is a major advantage to these courts. First they help our veterans who have run afoul of the law, return to being productive members of our community. They also avoid the very costly job of incarceration in our overburdened penal system. In addition it also has the very positive effect of reducing recidivism to almost zero in most jurisdictions around the country.

Again, I strongly Support this bill and look forward to its passage. I will be happy to answer any questions you might have.

Mahalo,

Rene Berthiaume



From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 24, 2015 3:43 PM
To: FINTestimony
Cc: sonnyfernand@msn.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HB1005 on Feb 25, 2015 14:00PM

HB1005

Submitted on: 2/24/2015

Testimony for FIN on Feb 25, 2015 14:00PM in Conference Room 308

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Stanley Y. Fernandez Sr.	Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States	Support	No

Comments: In support of HB1005. The Veterans Court has assisted in helping and supporting veterans that are suffering from PTSD and Traumatic Brain injury that have gotten themselves on the wrong side of the law, too many times because of their disease. In support of HB1005

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov