



*The Judiciary, State of Hawai‘i*

**Testimony to the House Committee on Judiciary**

Representative Karl Rhoads, Chair  
Representative Joy San Buenaventura, Vice Chair

Tuesday, February 17, 2015, 2:00 p.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 325

by  
Sidney Nakamoto  
Adult Client Service Branch Administrator  
First Circuit

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**Bill No. and Title:** House Bill No. 1005, House Draft 1 Relating to 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



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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  
A BILL RELATING TO MAKING AN APPROPRIATION  
FOR THE VETERANS TREATMENT COURT

PRESENTATION TO  
THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY

BY  
BRIGADIER GENERAL ARTHUR J. LOGAN  
ADJUTANT GENERAL  
AND DIRECTOR OF THE HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY  
February 17, 2015

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair San Buenaventura and Members of the House Committee on Judiciary:

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.

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.

DEPARTMENT OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY  
**CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

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**THE HONORABLE KARL RHOADS, CHAIR**  
**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY**  
**Twenty-Eighth State Legislature**  
**Regular Session of 2015**  
**State of Hawai`i**

February 17, 2015

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

Chair Rhoads, Vice Chair Buenaventura, and members of the House Committee on Judiciary, the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu ("Department") submits testimony in support of House Bill 1005.

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.

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 \$65,000 funding for our Department, to sustain its ongoing participation in Veterans Court. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

**LATE**

|               | Organization | Testifier Position | Present at Hearing |
|---------------|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Jasmine Ramos | Individual   | Support            | No                 |

Comments: I support the passage of HB 1005, HD1, making an appropriation to support our Military men and women who served on assignment in foreign countries to ensure our freedom. Our service men and women place their lives in harms way to protect our freedom and free trade throughout the world. In Hawaii the Military represents our second largest economic driver, just behind tourism, generating over \$10 billion a year for the state. The Veterans Treatment Court will identify the injury - evaluate, and provide relevant services to our wounded warriors working to heal them and get them back in our society with healthcare, counseling and employment referrals as well as referrals for transitional housing. For those reasons, I support Hb1005, HD1. It is a benefit to our state and shows our states commitment to the United States Military.