



*The Judiciary, State of Hawai‘i*

**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Ways and Means**

Senator Jill N. Tokuda, Chair  
Senator Ronald D. Kouchi, Vice Chair

Thursday, April 2, 2015, 9:00 AM  
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY ONLY**

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 Making an Appropriation for the Veterans Treatment Court

**Purpose:** Appropriates funds to the judiciary and the prosecuting attorney to support the Veterans Treatment Court. (HD1)

**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, House Draft 1, 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



House Bill No. 1005, House Draft 1 Making an Appropriation for the Veterans  
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individuals from any branch of the military reserves. Subsequently, in the 2012 session, the 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 21 active clients and nine 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 SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

BY  
BRIGADIER GENERAL ARTHUR J. LOGAN  
ADJUTANT GENERAL  
AND DIRECTOR OF THE HAWAII EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY  
April 2, 2015

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kouchi and Members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means:

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 WAYS AND MEANS

BY

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

April 02, 2015

Aloha Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kouchi 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 applications for their clients to participate in the program.

This program has a very low recidivism rate, 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**

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**THE HONORABLE JILL N. TOKUDA, CHAIR  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
Twenty-Eighth State Legislature  
Regular Session of 2015  
State of Hawai'i**

April 2, 2015

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

Chair Tokuda, Vice Chair Kouchi, members of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means, the Department of the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu ("Department") submits the following testimony in strong support of H.B. 1005, H.D. 1 with a suggested 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. This funding is necessary to allow our Department to assign a deputy prosecuting attorney to 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."**

Since the Judiciary first implemented Veterans Court in 2013, our Department has done its best to actively participate in this specialty court, in a concerted effort to provide veterans with the care they need, while also addressing their offenses and minimizing recidivism. However, in order to sustain our Department's 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 maintain its ongoing participation in Veterans Court. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.

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PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

**DALE A. ROSS**  
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## 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 WAYS AND MEANS

Sen. Jill N. Tokuda, Chair  
Sen. Ronald D. Kouchi, Vice Chair

Thursday, April 2, 2015, 9:00 a.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 211

Honorable Chair Tokuda, Vice-Chair Kouchi, and Members of the Committee on Ways and Means, the Office of the Prosecuting Attorney, County of Hawai'i submits the following testimony **and requested amendments** in support of House Bill No. 1005, HD1.

Although this measure appropriates funds to the Judiciary and the Prosecuting Attorney of the City and County of Honolulu to support the Veterans Treatment Court, it does not currently provide dedicated funding for this office's participation, nor does it require that this office be afforded sufficient funding to maintain our ongoing participation.

If the Committee is inclined to pass this Bill, we respectfully ask that it be amended to specifically provide funding for the Office of the Prosecuting Attorney, County of Hawai'i's involvement in Veterans Court.

Our office actively participates in this specialty court, in a concerted effort to provide veterans with the care they need, while also addressing their offenses and minimizing recidivism. However, this 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 can present a significant hardship for this office.

In order to maintain our ongoing participation in Veterans Court, and for all of the foregoing reasons, the Office of the Prosecuting Attorney, County of Hawai'i respectfully asks that House Bill 1005, HD1 **be passed and amended** to provide funding for our office, to sustain its ongoing participation in Veterans Court. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.