

SB 664

RELATING TO CORRECTIONS

Requires that every person newly hired as an adult corrections officer shall have, at minimum, a high school diploma

PSM, JDL

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GOVERNOR



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TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 664
RELATING TO CORRECTIONS

By
Nolan P. Espinda, Director
Department of Public Safety

Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military Affairs
Senator Will Espero, Chair
Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Vice Chair

Tuesday, February 3, 2015, 1:15 PM
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

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

The Department of Public Safety (PSD) supports Senate Bill (SB) 664. The requirement of a high school diploma for all newly hired Adult Corrections Officer Recruits (ACOR) will help ensure PSD is able to hire qualified applicants and further protect the safety and security of our facilities and the community. PSD has implemented a Civil Service examination for the ACOR position in an effort to ensure that qualified applicants are able to read and comprehend complex materials, and write proper reports. This Civil Service examination has resulted in a passing rate of approximately half of the ACOR applicants.

The current minimum qualifications for the ACOR allow for basic education requirement as "Graduation from High School"; however, the high school diploma requirement can be substituted with one (1) year of work experience requiring the ability to read, comprehend, and apply written directions. Additionally a high degree of verbal skills may be substituted for graduation from high school.

It has been difficult to measure and document ACOR applicants' ability to read, comprehend, apply written directions, or possess a high degree of verbal skills in lieu of a high

school diploma. The proposed high school diploma requirement will further support PSD in hiring quality ACORs and fulfilling our mission to uphold justice and public safety.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony.

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Sunday, February 01, 2015 9:17 AM
To: PSMTestimony
Cc: joel@pymis.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for SB664 on Feb 3, 2015 13:15PM

SB664

Submitted on: 2/1/2015

Testimony for PSM on Feb 3, 2015 13:15PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Joel dela Cruz	Individual	Support	No

Comments: This should be the bare minimum.

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SB664

Submitted on: 2/2/2015

Testimony for PSM on Feb 3, 2015 13:15PM in Conference Room 229

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kimi Palacio	Individual	Support	No

Comments: I support this measure because all jobs, especially State level employment, should require a high school diploma as a minimum education requirement. The job duties required for Adult Corrections Officers to complete are complex with an emphasis on mental capabilities. Although this type of career path may seem solely focused on physicality, it is understood by many (and proven with evidence-based research studies) that working in close quarters with incarcerated individuals can and will be mentally challenging. The State wage for this career is quite reasonable and much higher than minimum wage. There are many jobs in this State and throughout the nation that pay minimum wage and require their employees to have a high school diploma, or equivalent. It is completely unfair that those who do not meet this national workforce standard are able and allowed to obtain a State job that incorporates job duties and competencies obtained by those that, at minimum, graduated high school. This measure, regarding minimum education requirements, should apply to all State and County level jobs. These jobs entail duties that are responsible for overseeing governance in our State. If we, as a State, do not have minimum education requirements, it reflects very poorly on us. Does Hawaii not value education? This job, in particular, oversees the PUBLIC SAFETY in our State. That, in itself, should be the main reason why this measure is of high importance and should be passed.

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