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GOVERNOR



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No. \_\_\_\_\_

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 158  
ENCOURAGING THE CONTINUATION AND EXPANSION OF THE  
COMMUNITY-BASED WORK FURLOUGH PROGRAMS TO ASSIST FEMALE  
INMATES TRANSITION BACK INTO SOCIETY.

by  
Nolan P. Espinda, Director  
Department of Public Safety

Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs  
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair  
Senator Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

Friday, April 21, 2017; 8:00 a.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 312

Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Wakai, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Public Safety (PSD) **supports** House Concurrent Resolution (HCR) 158, which encourages the continuation and expansion of community-based work furlough programs to aid in the transition of female inmates back to the community. PSD has long recognized the importance of furlough programs for women and continues to apply its resources to the expansion of these programs.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony.

# COMMUNITY ALLIANCE ON PRISONS

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## COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL, AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

Sen. Clarence Nishihara, Chair

Sen. Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

Friday, April 21, 2017

8:00 am

Room 312

### STRONG SUPPORT - HCR 158 - MORE WORK FURLOUGH BEDS FOR WOMEN

Aloha Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Wakai 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 in Hawai`i for two decades. This testimony is respectfully offered on behalf of the almost 6,000 Hawai`i individuals living behind bars or under the “care and custody” of the Department of Public Safety. We are always mindful that more than 1,600 of Hawai`i’s imprisoned people 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.

Community Alliance on Prisons is in strong support of this measure. Most of the women imprisoned in Hawai`i are non-violent and the majority are mothers.

On a macro-level, relying on incarceration to reduce disorder can undermine the development of more informal means of social control, which are important to the long-term prevention of crime.<sup>1</sup>

Work furlough and extended work furlough are important strategies to help women with reentry and we urge the committee to support this resolution.

The highlights from a report<sup>2</sup> by the Vera Institute of Justice read,

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<sup>1</sup> INCARCERATION, SOCIAL CAPITAL, AND CRIME: IMPLICATIONS FOR SOCIAL DISORGANIZATION THEORY (1998)  
<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1745-9125.1998.tb01255.x/abstract>

<sup>2</sup> Overlooked: Women and Jails in an Era of Reform, Vera Institute of Justice, August 2016.  
<https://www.vera.org/publications/overlooked-women-and-jails-report>

*Women often become involved with the justice system as a result of efforts to cope with life challenges such as poverty, unemployment, and significant physical or behavioral health struggles. Most are jailed for low-level, nonviolent offenses.*

*Once incarcerated, women must grapple with systems designed primarily for men. As a result, many leave jail with diminished prospects for physical and behavioral health recovery, as well as greater parental stress and financial instability.*

Michelle Alexander, author of The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness, moderated a panel discussion titled *“Invisible Woman: The Experience of Women and Girls in the Era of Mass Incarceration”* at Union Theological Seminary, where she is now a visiting professor and encouraged the community to help bring women to the forefront of the justice movement by recognizing their unique and often invisible struggles. For example, one problem facing women is how incarcerated mothers experience stigma differently than fathers. Incarcerated mothers are thought to be careless and negligent, and this affects society’s perception of their families. Earlier this year, Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch said, *“We know that when we incarcerate a woman we often are truly incarcerating a family, in terms of the far reaching effect on her children, her community and her entire family network.”*<sup>3</sup>

Community Alliance on Prisons has received many letters from women and their families asking about work furlough as a way to help ease their reentry back to society and to facilitate the reintegration with their families once again.

Intergenerational imprisonment is a huge issue in Hawai`i. And it is an issue that can be addressed when we decide that rehabilitation works better than punishment in building safe, healthy and just communities.

We, therefore, urge the committee to support more work furlough programs for women.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

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<sup>3</sup> Understanding the Needs of Women in the Justice System, Kristi DiLallo Intern, Communications, December 2, 2016. <https://www.vera.org/blog/understanding-the-needs-of-women-in-the-justice-system>

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 20, 2017 3:05 PM  
**To:** PSMTestimony  
**Cc:** laurie.field@ppvnh.org  
**Subject:** \*Submitted testimony for HCR158 on Apr 21, 2017 08:00AM\*

**HCR158**

Submitted on: 4/20/2017

Testimony for PSM on Apr 21, 2017 08:00AM in Conference Room 312

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Laurie Field	Planned Parenthood Votes Northwest and Hawaii	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.

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**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 20, 2017 2:20 PM  
**To:** PSMTestimony  
**Cc:** kcoleman@ywcaoahu.org  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for HCR158 on Apr 21, 2017 08:00AM

**HCR158**

Submitted on: 4/20/2017

Testimony for PSM on Apr 21, 2017 08:00AM in Conference Room 312

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
kehaulani coleman	ywca o'ahu	Support	No

Comments: HCR158 (?) Measure Title: ENCOURAGING THE CONTINUATION AND EXPANSION OF COMMUNITY-BASED WORK FURLOUGH PROGRAMS TO ASSIST FEMALE INMATES TRANSITION BACK INTO SOCIETY. Report Title: Transitional programs for incarcerated women. The YWCA is currently the only community-based work furlough program. There are more women who are community ready than we can accommodate. Please support this resolution. Mahalo Kehaulani Coleman Director Economic Advancement Programs YWCA

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To: The Honorable Clarence Nishihara, Chair  
The Honorable Glen Wakai, Vice Chair  
Hawaii State Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs

Re: HCR 158 – Encouraging the Department of Public Safety to Continue and Expand its  
Community-based Work Furlough programs to Assist Formerly Incarcerated Female Inmates  
Transition Back into Society - SUPPORT  
Friday, April 21, 2017, 8:00AM -- Hawaii State Capitol, Rm. 312

Good morning Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Wakai, and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to share our testimony in **strong support of HCR 158**, which aims to reduce recidivism and ensure safer communities through the expansion of successful community-based work furlough programs for female offenders.

This resolution highlights the importance of gender-specific, work furlough programs that are integrated in the community, and identifies the need to address the various factors that contribute to and perpetuate female incarceration in our state.

**Expanding community-based work furlough programs is an investment in safer communities.**

Nationally, 50-60% of women offenders who complete community-based work furlough programs stay out of prison for two years. Studies on recidivism show that former offenders who are not re-incarcerated for at least two years after being released from their sentence are unlikely to recommit crimes.

Our state is at a crossroads in regards to incarceration policies. Currently, House Concurrent Resolution Taskforce 85 is investigating effective incarceration policies. The interim report issued by the taskforce gave several recommendations but the first is "the State should begin to transition from a punitive correctional system to a rehabilitative, restorative, and therapeutic system." Work furlough programs for women, like *Ka Hale Ho'āla Hou No Nā Wāhine* (The Home of Reawakening for Women), support this recommendation and several others made the taskforce.

Structured, community-based work furlough programs are necessary to **give women offenders the resources and skills to face the challenge of building a successful life after incarceration**. These programs provide women with the support necessary to sustain employment and advance in their careers. Participants in work furlough programs are also more likely to find and retain employment 3-6 months post-release. Community-based work furlough programs also serve to reduce the potential for delinquency among children of program graduates through targeted skill building for their mothers. As many women offenders are mothers, reducing recidivism in this group is critical to preventing an intergenerational cycle of crime.

The criminal justice system has traditionally focused on male offenders, the rate of female incarceration has grown rapidly in the past few decades. To address this issue, criminal justice professionals and decision makers should consider the need for gender specific policy in reducing recidivism in female offenders. Women become involved in criminal behavior for different reasons than men do, and the treatment of women offenders must be differentiated from treatment of male offenders.

An overview of female offenders in our State shows that the vast **majority are victims of trauma and violence, many are mothers or grandmothers, and disproportionately Native Hawaiian**. Studies also show that women's most common pathways to crime are based on experiences of physical abuse, poverty and substance abuse. To respond to these variables, our program is modeled to specifically serve women offenders in Hawaii and is trauma-informed, gender-responsive, and culturally-sensitive. In comparison to the national statistic, our program is significantly more effective in reducing recidivism.

Community-based work furlough programs for women offenders can be **efficient and cost-effective in the long-term**. A Washington-based study found their work furlough program saw a \$3.82 benefit per dollar of cost. A decrease in recidivism and re-incarceration will reduce the high cost of keeping offenders behind bars. It also reduces the financial and social costs the cycle of crime has on offenders' families and communities.

As a formerly incarcerated population rejoins the greater community, the State faces an increased challenge and responsibility of promoting offender success as a means of achieving greater public safety. We urge the committee to support this measure to continue and expand the efforts of the Department of Public Safety and effective programs like *Ka Hale Ho`āla Hou No Nā Wāhine* on empowering women to successfully transition from prison into the community.

Thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to provide testimony on this matter.

Kathleen Algire  
YWCA O'ahu Advocacy Coordinator



O'ahu

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To: The Honorable Clarence Nishihara, Chair  
The Honorable Glen Wakai, Vice Chair  
Hawaii State Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs

From: Noriko Namiki, Chief Executive Officer  
YWCA of O'ahu

Re: HCR 158 – Encouraging the Department of Public Safety to Continue and Expand its  
Community-based Work Furlough programs to Assist Formerly Incarcerated Female Inmates  
Transition Back into Society - SUPPORT  
Friday, April 21, 2017, 8:00AM -- Hawaii State Capitol, Rm. 312

Good morning Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Wakai, and members of the committee:

On behalf of YWCA O'ahu we thank you for the opportunity to share our testimony in **strong support of HCR 158**, which aims to reduce recidivism and ensure safer communities through the expansion of successful community-based work furlough programs for female offenders.

This resolution highlights the importance of gender-specific, work furlough programs that are integrated in the community, and identifies the need to address the various factors that contribute to and perpetuate female incarceration in our state.

**Expanding community-based work furlough programs is an investment in safer communities.**

Nationally, 50-60% of women offenders who complete community-based work furlough programs stay out of prison for two years. Studies on recidivism show that former offenders who are not re-incarcerated for at least two years after being released from their sentence are unlikely to recommit crimes.

Currently, YWCA O'ahu operates *Ka Hale Ho'āla Hou No Nā Wāhine* (The Home of Reawakening for Women), the only community-based work furlough program in the state for female offenders. The day our program became operational in July 2015, we were at capacity with a waiting list of participants. There is a demonstrated need to expand programs like ours that provide an integrated re-socialization and reentry process for women offenders transitioning into the community.

Although the criminal justice system has traditionally focused on male offenders, the rate of female incarceration has grown rapidly in the past few decades. To address this issue, criminal justice professionals and decision makers should consider the need for gender specific policy in reducing recidivism in female offenders. Women become involved in criminal behavior for different reasons than men do, and the treatment of women offenders must be differentiated from treatment of male offenders.



An overview of female offenders in our State shows that the vast **majority are victims of trauma and violence, many are mothers or grandmothers, and disproportionately Native Hawaiian.** Studies also show that women's most common pathways to crime are based on experiences of physical abuse, poverty and substance abuse. To respond to these variables, our program is modeled to specifically serve women offenders in Hawaii and is trauma-informed, gender-responsive, and culturally-sensitive. In comparison to the national statistic, our program is significantly more effective in reducing recidivism. **82.4% of the women we serve in our program successfully stay out of prison for at least two years.**

Structured, community-based work furlough programs are necessary to **give women offenders the resources and skills to face the challenge of building a successful life after incarceration.** These programs provide women with the support necessary to sustain employment and advance in their careers. Participants in work furlough programs are also more likely to find and retain employment 3-6 months post-release. Community-based work furlough programs also serve to reduce the potential for delinquency among children of program graduates through targeted skill building for their mothers. As many women offenders are mothers, reducing recidivism in this group is critical to preventing an intergenerational cycle of crime.

Community-based work furlough programs for women offenders can be **efficient and cost-effective in the long-term.** A Washington-based study found their work furlough program saw a \$3.82 benefit per dollar of cost. A decrease in recidivism and re-incarceration will reduce the high cost of keeping offenders behind bars. It also reduces the financial and social costs the cycle of crime has on offenders' families and communities.

As a formerly incarcerated population rejoins the greater community, the State faces an increased challenge and responsibility of promoting offender success as a means of achieving greater public safety. We urge the committee to support this measure to continue and expand the efforts of the Department of Public Safety and effective programs like *Ka Hale Ho`āla Hou No Nā Wāhine* on empowering women to successfully transition from prison into the community.

Thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to provide testimony on this matter.



Noriko Namiki  
Chief Executive Officer  
YWCA O'ahu

To: Hawaii State House Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental  
and Military Affairs

Hearing Date/Time: April 21, 2017, 8AM

Place: Hawaii State Capitol, Rm. 312

**Subject: Please Support HCR 158 Encouraging the continuation and expansion of community-based work furlough programs for women.**

Chair Nishihara, Vice Chair Wakai, and members of the committees,

I am writing in strong support of this concurrent resolution. In Hawaii, the majority of female offenders are incarcerated for committing non-violent crimes. Successful transition into society is crucial to reduce the cycle of crime among women offenders. Community-based work furlough programs are effective in reducing problems associated with reentry.

HCR 158 recommends the Department of Public Safety to continue and expand programs like the YWCA of Oahu's Ka Hale Ho ala Hou No Na Wahine program at its Fernhurst facility. Programs such as this one are proven to reduce recidivism and assist with reintegration. This program serves women throughout the state and currently, is the only community-based work furlough program in Honolulu.

Re-entry programs like Ka Hale Ho ala Hou No Na Wahine offer a nurturing and supportive setting for women to reintegrate into society and better prepare them for life outside of prison. Please support this resolution with your vote.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matthew Haley', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Matthew Haley

**From:** mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 20, 2017 3:53 PM  
**To:** PSMTestimony  
**Cc:** jeannine808@gmail.com  
**Subject:** Submitted testimony for HCR158 on Apr 21, 2017 08:00AM

**HCR158**

Submitted on: 4/20/2017

Testimony for PSM on Apr 21, 2017 08:00AM in Conference Room 312

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Jeannine Souki	Individual	Support	No

Comments: As a board member of the YWCA of Oahu, I am writing in strong support of this concurrent resolution. In Hawaii, the majority of female offenders are incarcerated for committing non-violent crimes. Many of them are mothers and are disproportionately Native Hawaiian. Successful transition into society is crucial to reduce the cycle of crime among women offenders. Community-based work furlough programs are effective in reducing problems associated with reentry. HCR 158 recommends the Department of Public Safety to continue and expand programs like the YWCA of Oahu's Ka Hale Ho ala Hou No Na Wahine program at its Fernhurst facility, which is integrated in a metropolitan community in Honolulu with multiple bus routes so women can easily commute to work and get access to services. This program serves women throughout the state and currently, is the only community-based work furlough program in Hawaii. The only other work-furlough program available to women is housed in the Women's Community Correctional Center in Kailua. Re-entry programs like Ka Hale Ho ala Hou No Na Wahine offer a nurturing and supportive setting for women to reintegrate into society and better prepare them for life outside of prison. Please support this resolution with your vote. Mahalo!

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