

LATE

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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

Sen. Clarence Nishihara, Chair

Sen. Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

Tuesday, January 30, 2018

1:15 pm

Room 229

SUPPORT/COMMENTS-SB 2696 - Tax Credits: Tech Cos. Hiring Formerly Incarcerated Persons

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 more than two decades. This testimony is respectfully offered on behalf of the approximately 5,500 Hawai'i individuals living behind bars or under the "care and custody" of the Department of Public Safety on any given day. We are always mindful that approximately 1,600 of Hawai'i's imprisoned people are serving their sentences thousands of miles away from their loved ones, their homes and, for the disproportionate number of incarcerated Kanaka Maoli, far, far from their ancestral lands.

SB 2696 provides an income tax credit for wages paid by a technology business owner to employees who were formerly in the custody of the department of public safety. The state used to provide tax credits for employers who hired people who were formerly incarcerated, but hasn't done that for many years. The federal government still does.

Community Alliance on Prisons supports giving employers tax credits for non-discriminative hiring so that people exiting incarceration can find work.

This bill, however is dependent upon the department providing programs so that people exit with enough skills to be employable by tech companies.

In other words, it is all well and good to offer tax credits to employers, but the state should be matching the credits to the skill development programs offered in correctional facilities.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

As we work to create light for others, we naturally light our own way.

Mary Anne Radmacher



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Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs
January 31, 2018, 2:45 p.m., Conference Room 229

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF
S.B. SB2696 – Relating to Taxation

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

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 2696. This bill would provide a unique opportunity for justice-involved people. Transitioning back into the community and finding employment is difficult and Senate Bill 2696 offers a way for employee and employer to benefit.

Federal tax credits for employing justice-involved people have been utilized for over 10 years. The type of employment available to those transitioning from incarceration often is low-wage work with little opportunity for professional development. Having a tax credit specifically tied to the technology industries offers a career instead of just a job. However, it would be more beneficial to have training for tech jobs prior to parole or release. Job-training while at a correctional facility and job placement once released would ensure the credit is utilized and the intentions of the credit succeed.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Senate Bill 2696.

Kathleen Algire
Director, Public Policy and Advocacy
YWCA O'ahu