



STATE OF HAWAII  
**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY**

919 Ala Moana Boulevard, 4th Floor  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

**NOLAN P. ESPINDA**  
DIRECTOR

**Cathy Ross**  
Deputy Director  
Administration

**Jodie F. Maesaka-Hirata**  
Deputy Director  
Corrections

**Renee R. Sonobe Hong**  
Deputy Director  
Law Enforcement

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

TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 2820  
RELATING TO  
MAKING AN EMERGENCY APPROPRIATION TO  
THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY.

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

Tuesday, January 30, 2018; 1:15 p.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 229

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

The Department of Public Safety (PSD) **strongly supports** Senate Bill (SB) 2820, which would allow PSD to continue to house the 248 Halawa Correctional Facility (HCF) inmates out-of-state while the critical HCF Security Electronics and Hardware Repairs and Improvements project (DAGS Job No. 12-27-5644) are completed this year.

This DAGS project encountered a significant delay and is now projected to be completed by the end of calendar year 2018. Funding of the temporary housing of the 248 HCF inmates was provided through December 2017 only, and PSD has requested additional funds for the current fiscal year budget to house these inmates for another six (6) months, through June 30, 2018. Thus, SB 2820 requests emergency funding in the amount of \$3,344,801 in general funds for PSD 808 – Non-State Facilities – to continue covering the housing costs for the HCF inmates until the end of 2018, when the project is completed.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony.





---

Aloha chair nishihara, vice chair wakai, and members of the Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs,

The Young Progressives Demanding Action – Hawai‘i **strongly oppose** SB 2820. The governor will claim this bill, which would fund the housing of 248 Halawa correctional facility (HCF) inmates in a private prison while HCF renovations (which are behind schedule because the state hired a bad contractor—what a surprise) are completed, is a necessary evil that we have no choice but to do. We believe the situation highlights not only the exorbitant cost of incarcerating inmates, whether in a state-owned or private prison, but also the poor policy of relying on incarceration as the primary form of punishment in our criminal justice system. We also believe that the solution to this problem lies not in emergency appropriations and the construction of new, \$600 million facilities to house more inmates, but in funding restorative justice programs, alternative rehabilitation programs—especially those tied to agriculture, land and identity, the expansion of parole programs, mental health and drug treatment programs, housing solutions, tax credits for low-income people and an increase in the minimum wage.

I know this is PSM, and you might say some of those things are not within your purview, but I mention them because we have got to start recognizing these societal problems as connected: poverty and crime; drug abuse and disconnection from land and identity. It is our belief that those 248 Halawa inmates can, and must, be housed here in Hawai‘i, and in a public facility. By advancing other criminal justice reform bills before you today and still others that have yet to see a hearing, we can reduce the population of our jails and prisons through programming and can, therefore, shelter our incarcerated population in our existing facilities.

At a cost of \$13,487 per inmate, to say nothing of the human cost, this bill represents the encapsulation of our problematic criminal justice system. And although it sounds like a necessity, we call upon the governor and the legislature to work together to find creative solutions to the immediate, 248-bed problem that keep our incarcerated people near their families, near the land they identify with, and out of the most egregious form of the prison industrial complex—the privately run prison. This is our

kuleana as a society. It is our recommendation, therefore, that this committee kill this bill immediately and do everything in its power to pass true reform legislation that will reduce the incarcerated population and free up beds in other facilities where these inmates may be temporarily housed until HCF is renovated.

Mahalo,

Will Caron  
Social Justice Action Committee Chair  
Young Progressives Demanding Action – Hawai‘i