
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO PRISONS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that Hawaii's prison
2 system houses many more inmates than it was designed to
3 accommodate. Hawaii has a population of approximately five
4 thousand six hundred inmates, costing the State about \$52,000
5 per inmate per year. Reducing recidivism by ten inmates would
6 save the State about \$520,000 annually. One reason the prison
7 system is overburdened is that 49.6 per cent of convicted felons
8 return to prison within one year of their release. However,
9 forty-three per cent of people who receive education in prison
10 are less likely to return.

11 The legislature further finds that in order to reduce
12 recidivism, several states have established programs that
13 include training and mentoring to give inmates an opportunity to
14 learn entrepreneurship, financial literacy, and business skills
15 that will facilitate their reentry into society. The Darden
16 School of Business and University of Virginia have partnered
17 with the Dillwyn Correctional Center to teach eligible and



1 willing inmates business skills to reduce recidivism.
2 Recidivism rates in Virginia are currently about twenty-three
3 per cent while the rate is seventy per cent nationally. Similar
4 programs have been established in other jurisdictions, including
5 the District of Columbia through the Georgetown University
6 McDonough School of Business, and New York through Columbia
7 Business School. An initial investment in this type of program
8 has the potential for enormous cost savings for the State.

9 The purpose of this Act is to establish a working group to
10 recommend a pilot program in Hawaii to reduce recidivism by
11 providing inmates with the skills necessary to succeed in the
12 workforce.

13 SECTION 2. (a) There is created within the department of
14 public safety a working group that shall study the feasibility
15 of establishing a pilot program to reduce recidivism. Members
16 of the working group shall be selected by the director of public
17 safety, who shall serve as chairperson, and shall include, at a
18 minimum, a representative of the University of Hawaii.

19 (b) In determining the feasibility of a pilot program, the
20 working group shall consider:



1 (1) A pilot program designed to reduce recidivism by
2 focusing on providing inmates with vocational
3 training, in addition to business, entrepreneurial,
4 and financial literacy education, to set a foundation
5 for the inmates to succeed after their release from
6 incarceration; and

7 (2) Whether the pilot program should be scalable,
8 beginning with a pilot cohort of individuals, and
9 expanded as appropriate.

10 (c) The working group shall submit a report of its
11 findings and recommendations, including any proposed
12 legislation, to the legislature no later than twenty days prior
13 to the convening of the regular session of 2021.

14 (d) The working group shall cease to exist on December 31,
15 2020.

16 SECTION 3. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2050.



Report Title:

DPS; Prisons; Recidivism; Working Group; Pilot Program

Description:

Establishes a working group within the department of public safety to study the feasibility of a pilot program to reduce recidivism, focusing on providing inmates with vocational training, in addition to business, entrepreneurial, and financial literacy education. Requires a report to the legislature. Effective 7/1/2050. (HD1)

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