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TESTIMONY ON SENATE BILL 599
RELATING TO THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM.

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, February 5, 2019; 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) acknowledges the intent of Senate Bill (SB) 599 and offers the following comments.

PSD has been an active participant, since 2002, with the State of Hawaii Judiciary, Departments of the Attorney General and Health, Office of the Public Defender, and Hawaii Paroling Authority, together with the City and County of Honolulu Department of the Prosecuting Attorney and Honolulu Police Department, in the Interagency Council on Intermediate Sanctions (ICIS), whose vision is "the reduction of recidivism and the prevention of future victimization by adult offenders."

Much of what is being suggested in SB 599 is already done by ICIS. In addition, Senate Bill 1424, which is being heard later this afternoon by this Committee, jointly with the Senate Committee on Government Operations, seeks to collapse the Reentry and Corrections Population Management Commissions into a single, independent oversight committee, charged with the responsibility to promote efficiency and provide greater opportunities for member participation in addressing very similar issues. PSD notes that the membership of the oversight committee may

be readily adjusted to include representatives of entities who are not already represented in the present Reentry and Corrections Population Management Commissions.

The Oversight Committee, as proposed in SB 1424, may easily utilize subcommittees formed under ICIS, to support the inquiry into specific issues and concerns. Further, as an entity of high-level policy makers, the ICIS group may serve to foster, guide, and support the efforts of the Oversight Committee.

Lastly, it is recommended that the appropriate funding be allotted for staffing, office space, and equipment for the establishment of the Oversight Committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony.

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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL & MILIARY AFFAIRS

Sen. Clarence Nishihara, Chair

Sen. Glenn Wakai, Vice Chair

Tuesday, February 4, 2019

1:15 pm

Room 229

SUPPORT INTENT w/ COMMENTS SB 599 – CRIMINAL JUSTICE ASSESSMENT COMMISSION

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 families of **ASHLEY GREY, DAISY KASITATI, JOEY O'MALLEY, JESSICA FORTSON AND ALL THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE DIED UNDER THE "CARE AND CUSTODY" OF THE STATE** as well as 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 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 Kanaka Maoli, far, far from their ancestral lands.

SB 599 establishes the Criminal Justice Assessment Commission within the Department of Public Safety to recommend methods that will promote collaboration among the state and county criminal justice entities. Appropriates moneys.

Community Alliance on Prisons supports the intent of this measure and appreciates the spirit of this bill. We surely recognize the need for a broad assessment of the criminal justice system.

OUR CONCERNS

Placing the Commission in one criminal justice agency. If it were placed in the Governor's office or the Attorney General's office, it would be more removed from a particular agency and that may help Commissioners see the larger context of social policies that send people through the criminal justice maze. This would be helpful to legislators as it will clearly show where the tears in the social fabric have gotten us and where we can start to repair the harms of some of our well-intended, yet harmful policies.

One Meeting a Year to Accomplish the Commission's Plan? The bill states that the Commission shall

- (1) Develop a strategic master plan to increase the integration and collaboration of the various state and county criminal justice entities for the purposes of: (A) Reducing correctional facility overcrowding; (B) Reducing recidivism; (C) Improving and expanding mental health and substance abuse treatment;

- (D) Reducing barriers to community integration of former inmates; and (E) Implementing the recommendations of other criminal justice task forces and commissions.
- (2) Gather and analyze relevant criminal justice-related statistics and information and make the information available to the governor and the legislature; and
 - (3) Recommend methods to maximize the benefit of relevant grants and other available funds from the federal government, including grants from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the United States Department of Health and Human Services.

This is a large task that we hope does not get bogged down. This is why we are concerned with the lack of meetings. To develop a good strategic plan, the Commission needs professional guidance to move the process along and keep it on track. It will take more than one meeting a year to develop a good strategic plan to take our criminal justice system into next century.

The Process Must Be Open to the Public. The community pays the price for our criminal justice system, not just economically, but socially. Please don't leave us out of the process, which to date has been a monologue. All good processes are inclusive, transparent, accountable, and open to ideas and opinions.

We are grateful that the Chair is working to reform the system and is doing some great "out of cell" thinking!

We urge the committee to pass this important measure.

SB-599

Submitted on: 2/2/2019 8:28:57 AM

Testimony for PSM on 2/5/2019 1:15:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alan Urasaki	Individual	Support	No

Comments: