

# OFFICE OF INFORMATION PRACTICES

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To: Senate Committee on Ways and Means

From: Cheryl Kakazu Park, Director

Date: April 5, 2022, 10:15 a.m.  
State Capitol, Conference Room 211 and Via Videoconference

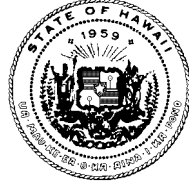
Re: Testimony on H.B. No. 1741, H.D. 1, S.D. 1  
Relating to Children and Family of Incarcerated Individuals

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Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this bill, which would establish a pilot visitation and family resource center at Waiawa Correctional Facility and would continue a working group to address visitation and support needs of children and families of incarcerated individuals. The Office of Information Practices (OIP) previously suggested a technical amendment, which was made in the S.D. 1 draft of this bill. OIP has no further concerns regarding this bill.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



CATHY BETTS  
DIRECTOR

JOSEPH CAMPOS II  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

April 4, 2022

TO: The Honorable Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senate Committee on Ways & Means

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **HB 1741 HD1 SD1 – RELATING TO CHILDREN AND FAMILY OF INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS.**

Hearing: April 5, 2022, 10:15 a.m.  
Via Videoconference, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports this measure, offer comments, and defers to the Department of Public Safety. The Department respectfully requests two additional amendments:

(1) a technical amendment to delete the second reference to the "department of human services," in Section 2, paragraph (d), on page 8, lines 9-10, as follows:

(d) The pilot visitation and family resource center shall be operated by a non-profit organization contracted by the department of human services in cooperation with ~~the department of human services,~~ the department of public safety, and other community stakeholders.

(2) the effective date of the entire Act be effective upon approval.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the bill requires the Department of Human Services to work with the Department of Public Safety, Family Reunification Working Group, and other entities serving children and families affected by parental incarceration to establish a pilot Visitation and Family Resource Center at Waiawa Correctional Facility on Oahu that has trauma-informed

professionals on its staff who serve as liaisons and hookele for families affected by incarceration. Requires the Department of Human Services to continue to lead a working group to address visitation and support needs of children and families of incarcerated individuals. Requires the working group to submit a report to the Legislature before the 2023 Regular Session. Appropriate funds to the Department of Human Services and Department of Public Safety for the establishment of the pilot Visitation and Family Resource Center at Waiawa Correctional Facility. Effective 7/1/3000. (SD1)

The HD1 amended the measure by:

- (1) Requiring the working group to determine the anticipated initial and annual costs to run a sustainable Pilot Visitation and Family Resource Center Program at Waiawa correctional facility on Oahu and include that cost in its report to the Legislature;
- (2) Changing the effective date to July 1, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (3) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

The Department appreciates the SD1 that amended the measure by:

- (1) Clarifying that the working group is exempt from part I of chapter 92, Hawaii Revised Statutes, rather than the entire chapter;
- (2) Appropriating \$305,000 to be expended by the Department of Human Services for the establishment of a pilot Visitation and Family Resource Center at Waiawa Correctional Facility on Oahu;
- (3) Appropriating \$115,000 to be expended by the Department of Public Safety for the establishment of a pilot Visitation and Family Resource Center at Waiawa Correctional Facility on Oahu; and
- (4) Making technical, nonsubstantive amendments for the purposes of clarity and consistency.

Increasing and supporting contacts and relationships between children and families with their incarcerated parents at the Waiawa facility will benefit multiple generations and are the first steps to improving the child's and family's overall well-being and the incarcerated individuals' return to society.

Here is a link to the HCR 205/SCR7 (2019) Report to the Legislature:

<https://humanservices.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Visiting-Centers-at-all-State-Correctional-Facilities.pdf>. The workgroup participants worked collaboratively over the summer of 2019 to address this long-standing and important social issue.

The recommended appropriation amounts in the HCR 205 Report were pre-pandemic estimates. Due to the pandemic, we continue to mitigate how we deliver services and plan to pay more for consumer and other goods. The cumulative price increase between 2019 and 2022 is approximately 10%. Reports are projecting cumulative price increases between 2019 and 2023 to reach 13.27% or higher. Therefore, DHS recommends appropriating general funds of \$115,000.00 to PSD and in the amount of \$305,000.00 to DHS.

As previously reported, PSD plans to improve existing facilities to be used for additional visitation activities. These funds will be used to purchase construction materials that will all be assembled and built by inmates. Waiawa will teach inmates involved in proper construction techniques and add value to the visitation center for inmates. In addition, the Department plans to use the funds to purchase additional social work and family support services for families at the time of arrest, during incarceration, and for support services once the incarcerated individual reenters the community. Visitation and support services would include additional navigation and advocacy support for family members and legal custodians; funds will also be allocated for evaluation.

The Department is committed to a multigenerational approach to ending poverty in Hawaii. It is well known that growing up with an incarcerated parent is an adverse early childhood experience that has a long-lasting impact on children into adulthood. DHS will continue to work with family members, community stakeholders, members and staff of the Legislature, the Office of Youth Services (OYS), the Department of Public Safety, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and other interested parties. It will take a committed community effort to address root causes to reduce the impact of incarceration on Hawaii's children and families, especially native Hawaiian families who are overrepresented in the criminal justice system.

DHS respectfully requests that any appropriation of general funds not replace budget priorities identified in the Executive Budget. It will take sustained investment by the Legislature to support this ongoing work to build a comprehensive and successful evidence-based approach to support families involved and impacted by the justice system.

We also ask for the Legislature's support for DHS administration measure SB3111/HB2143 Relating to Family Resource Centers. DHS, the Department of Education, the

Department of Health, and community providers are partnering to pilot a family resource centers network of school- and community-based family resource centers. If both measures pass, the Waiawa family resource center will be a part of the broader network of family resource centers. Family Resource Centers aim to provide support and services to families in familiar settings of their schools and communities, with people they trust.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



CRAIG K. HIRAI  
DIRECTOR

GLORIA CHANG  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

EMPLOYEES' RETIREMENT SYSTEM  
HAWAII EMPLOYER-UNION HEALTH BENEFITS TRUST FUND  
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE**  
P.O. BOX 150  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96810-0150

ADMINISTRATIVE AND RESEARCH OFFICE  
BUDGET, PROGRAM PLANNING AND  
MANAGEMENT DIVISION  
FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION DIVISION  
OFFICE OF FEDERAL AWARDS MANAGEMENT (OFAM)

**WRITTEN ONLY**

TESTIMONY BY CRAIG K. HIRAI  
DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF BUDGET AND FINANCE  
TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
ON  
HOUSE BILL NO. 1741, H.D. 1, S.D. 1

**April 5, 2022**

**10:15 a.m.**

**Room 211 and Videoconference**

RELATING TO CHILDREN AND FAMILY OF INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS

The Department of Budget and Finance (B&F) offers comments on this bill.

House Bill No. 1741, H.D. 1, S.D. 1, does the following: 1) requires the Department of Human Services (DHS) to work with the Department of Public Safety (PSD) and other entities to establish a pilot visitation and family resource center at Waiawa Correctional Facility (WCF) on O'ahu beginning August 1, 2022; 2) requires DHS to continue to lead a working group to address visitation and support needs of children and families of incarcerated individuals; 3) requires the working group to submit a report to the Legislature before the 2023 Regular Session; and 4) appropriates \$305,000 in general funds to DHS and \$115,000 in general funds to PSD for FY 23 for the establishment of a pilot visitation and family resource center at WCF.

B&F notes that, with respect to the general fund appropriations in this bill, the federal Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act requires that states receiving Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) II funds and Governor's Emergency Education Relief II funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and
- Higher education in FY 22 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

Further, the federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act requires that states receiving ARP ESSER funds must maintain state support for:

- Elementary and secondary education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for elementary and secondary education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19; and
- Higher education in FY 22 and FY 23 at least at the proportional level of the state's support for higher education relative to the state's overall spending, averaged over FYs 17, 18 and 19.

The U.S. Department of Education has issued rules governing how these maintenance of effort (MOE) requirements are to be administered. B&F will be working with the money committees of the Legislature to ensure that the State of Hawai'i complies with these ESSER MOE requirements.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.



**HB1741 HD1 Pilot Visitation and Resource Center for Families at Waiawa**  
**COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS**  
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair  
Tuesday Apr 5 2022 : 10:15 : Videoconference

**Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition Supports HB1741 HD1 SD1:**

*ALOHA CHAIR, VICE CHAIR AND DISTINGUISHED COMMITTEE MEMBERS. My name is Alan Johnson. I am the current chair of the Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition (HSAC), a statewide organization for substance use disorder and co-occurring mental health disorder treatment and prevention agencies.*

**Visitation and Resources are important because family visits** help families to stop the intergenerational cycle of alcohol and drug dependency:

- Visitation can help rebuild relationships to promote recovery for both the offender and their families, especially for children.
- Often families can help offenders to seek appropriate residential and outpatient programs for those who may have substance use disorders as well as co-occurring mental health disorders.
- Offenders and their families need reconciliations that can promote an opportunity to address their spiritual, physical, cultural and emotional needs.

This bill is important because according to the 2017 National Institute of Justice report<sup>1</sup>, **children of offenders are the “hidden victims”** facing a host of challenges and difficulties, stresses, and strains:

- Research demonstrates that the strength of the parent-child bond in healthy ways can play significant roles in the child’s ability to overcome these challenges.
- About 11% of children have a parent who was or is involved with criminal justice,
- Moreover, on the average, the mother is the primary support for the child,
- Children of incarcerated parents are 6-7 times more likely to be incarcerated themselves.

It is critical for our families that we promote recovery in many ways to ensure a successful re-entry for the offender that supports positive family growth.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony and are available for questions.

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<sup>1</sup> National Institute for Justice: 2017: Hidden Consequences: The Impact of Incarceration on Dependent Children: <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/hidden-consequences-impact-incarceration-dependent-children>



# HAWAII YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK

677 Ala Moana Boulevard, Suite 904 Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Phone: (808) 489-9549

Web site: <http://www.hysn.org> E-mail: [info@hysn.org](mailto:info@hysn.org)

Carole Gruskin, President

Judith F. Clark, Executive Director

Bay Clinic

Big Brothers Big Sisters Hawaii

Big Island Substance Abuse Council

Bobby Benson Center

Child and Family Service

Coalition for a Drug Free Hawaii

Collins Consulting, LLC

Domestic Violence Action Center

EPIC, Inc.

Family Programs Hawaii

Family Support Hawaii

Friends of the Children's Justice Center of Maui

Get Ready Hawai'i

Hale Kipa, Inc.

Hale 'Opio Kauai, Inc.

Hawaii Children's Action Network

Hawaii Health & Harm

Reduction Center

Ho'ola Na Pua

Kahi Mohala

Kokua Kalihi Valley

Kokua Ohana Aloha (KOA)

Maui Youth and Family Services

Na Pu'uwai Molokai Native

Hawaiian Health Care Systems

P.A.R.E.N.T.S., Inc.

Parents and Children Together (PACT)

PHOCUSED

PFLAG - Kona Big Island

Planned Parenthood of the

Great Northwest and

Hawaiian Islands

Residential Youth Services

& Empowerment (RYSE)

Salvation Army Family

Intervention Services

Sex Abuse Treatment Center

Susannah Wesley Community Center

The Catalyst Group

April 2, 2022

To: Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair,  
And members of the Committee on Ways and Means

## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 1741 HD 1 SD 1 RELATING TO CHILDREN AND FAMILY OF INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS

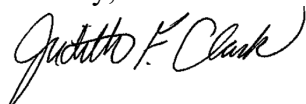
Hawaii Youth Services Network (HYSN), a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, supports HB 1741 HD 1 SD 1 Relating to Children and Family of Incarcerated Individuals.

Children of incarcerated parents experience grief and loss, similar to the experience of divorce or the death of a parent. Studies show that children of incarcerated parents are at increased risk of abuse or neglect, and more likely to have mental problems, and difficulty in school. Children of incarcerated parents are seven times more likely to enter the juvenile or adult correctional systems themselves. Regular visitation provides opportunities to sustain the parent-child bond while a parent is incarcerated, which can alleviate many of these problems.

Prisoners who have regular contact with their children benefit as well. They are less likely to violate prison rules and create trouble for prison authorities. They are more likely to take advantage of rehabilitation and educational opportunities while in prison. Regular contact with children increases the chances of successful reintegration into the community when a parent is released from prison.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Judith F. Clark, MPH  
Executive Director

**HB-1741-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/2/2022 4:54:46 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/5/2022 10:15:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b>   | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Alec Marentic       | Testifying for Hawaii<br>Association of School<br>Psychologists | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

The Hawaii Association of School Psychologists supports this legislation.

# COMMUNITY ALLIANCE ON PRISONS

P.O. Box 37158, Honolulu, HI 96837-0158

Phone/E-Mail: (808) 927-1214 / [kat.caphi@gmail.com](mailto:kat.caphi@gmail.com)



## COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Senator Donovan Delacruz, Chair

Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Tuesday, April 5, 2022

10:15 AM

### STRONG SUPPORT FOR HB 1741 - FAMILY VISITATION & RESOURCE CTR. @ WAIAWA

Aloha Chair Delacruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran 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 4,040 Hawai'i individuals living behind bars or under the "care and custody" of the Department of Public Safety or the corporate vendor as of March 28, 2022<sup>1</sup>. We are always mindful that 1,082 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.

Community Alliance on Prisons appreciates the opportunity to testify in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 1741 HD1 that continues the work with the Departments of Human Services, Public Safety, and the Family Reunification Working Group to create a Family Visitation and Resource Center at Waiawa Correctional Facility that was stalled because of COVID.

The Family Reunification Group, of which Community Alliance on Prisons is a proud member, is composed of community organizations, families, and concerned community members who have been working on this issue for several years. The group was brought together by Blueprint for Change and the Department of Human Services and we have been working with the Department of Public Safety to bring this to reality. The group issued a report that is available to review electronically at the Department of Human Services website, at: <https://humanservices.hawaii.gov/reports/legislative-reports/>.

In testimony before FIN on February 23, 2022, The Department of Human Services wrote: *"The recommended appropriation amounts in the HCR 205 Report were the prepandemic estimates. Due to the pandemic, we continue to mitigate the way we deliver services, in addition to paying more for consumer and other goods. The cumulative price increase between 2019 and 2022 is approximately 10%. Reports are projecting cumulative price increases between 2019 and 2023 to reach 13.27% or higher. Therefore, DHS recommends appropriating general funds of \$115,000.00 to PSD and in the amount of \$305,000.00 to DHS."*

Maintaining the connections of families and loved ones has been proven by 50 years of research. Visitation, mail, phone, and other forms of contact between incarcerated people and

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Public Safety Weekly Population Report.

<https://dps.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Pop-Reports-Weekly-2022-03-28.pdf>

their families have positive impacts for everyone – including better health, reduced recidivism, and improvement in school.

**There is probably no area of greater consensus in the field than regarding the effects of paternal incarceration on children’s behavioral and mental health problems.** Although no one dataset is ideally suited to consider these effects, and obstacles to causal inference remain, research using a range of datasets ties paternal incarceration to greater behavioral and mental health problems in children. **Although there is evidence for both externalizing and internalizing behavioral problems, evidence regarding externalizing and physically aggressive behaviors tends to be the strongest;** it also tends to suggest that male children are more affected in this domain than female children.

These behavioral and mental health indicators are tightly linked with school readiness, and, as a result, it is perhaps unsurprising that children with incarcerated fathers are less prepared to enter school than their peers. Yet children of incarcerated fathers face even more impediments to thriving in educational institutions after they set foot in the classroom. Having been incarcerated promotes withdrawal from educational institutions on the part of their parents. In conjunction with the stigma attached to paternal incarceration in the eyes of teachers, this leaves children of incarcerated fathers in triple jeopardy in schools – unprepared, with disengaged parents, and carrying the stigma of paternal incarceration. Given the strikes against them, it is no great surprise that children with incarcerated fathers are more likely to be held back in school, have lower cognitive functioning in middle childhood than their peers, and perform more poorly on a range of indicators of school success in high school.<sup>2</sup>

A 2014 study of incarcerated women found that those who had any phone contact with a family member were less likely to be reincarcerated within the five years after their release. In fact, phone contact had a stronger effect on recidivism compared to visitation, which the study also examined.

Of course, reduced recidivism is not the only benefit. A 2020 survey of incarcerated parents showed that **parent-child relationships improved** when they had frequent (weekly) phone calls.<sup>2</sup>

**Maintaining connections with loved ones IS a reentry strategy that helps ease the transition from institutional to community life and back to family.** Children are especially impacted by the incarceration of a parent as noted.

I remember when I first went into the women’s prison and witnessed mothers and daughters, sisters, cousins, aunties, and even grandmas, all serving time together. It made an indelible mark on my heart. A few years later Community Alliance on Prisons convened a group of families and the stories they shared have made the issue of maintaining connections a key part of our work.

**HB 1741 HD1 demonstrates a model collaboration of government agencies, community organizations, and concerned citizens working together to make the Family Visitation and Resource Center at Waiawa a reality. It is a replicable model for other projects.**

CAP urges the committee to pass this important family measure!

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<sup>2</sup> Assessing mass incarceration’s effects on families, HEDWIG LEE AND CHRISTOPHER WILDEMAN, SCIENCE • 14 Oct 2021 • Vol 374, Issue 6565 • pp. 277-281 • DOI: 10.1126/science.abj7777. <https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.abj7777>

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS  
Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

HEARING DATE: Tuesday, April 5, 2022

TIME: 10:15 a.m.

PLACE: Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

**SUPPORT FOR HB1741, HD1, SD1 (SSCR3445) RELATING TO CHILDREN AND FAMILY OF INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS**

**SUPPORT FOR HB1741 RELATING TO CHILDREN AND FAMILY OF INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS**

**Women's Prison Project strongly supports HB1741,HD1,SD1.** The negative impacts on children and families of incarcerated parents is well documented. Research also links the maintenance of parent child relationships with positive post release outcomes. Visitations need to occur in settings that are child friendly and not frightening or traumatizing to children.

The working group led by the Department of Human Services and established by House Concurrent Resolution No. 205 (2019) and Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 7 (2019) has made significant progress in identifying the needs of Hawaii's approximately 4,000 children affected by parental incarceration. Women's Prison Project strongly supports developing a non-threatening, child friendly visitation center at Waiawa correctional facility staffed by trauma informed professionals. We urge the legislature to appropriate the funds necessary to establish, develop, and implement the pilot visitation and family resource center through contracts with a non-profit organization experienced in working with children and families.

An inviting child visitation center will help to strengthen parent child bonds and reduce trauma and separation for children. Providing a child friendly visitation center that promotes the strengthening of family relationships will be an important move toward a more rehabilitative system that reduces recidivism.

Mahalo for considering our thoughts on this important bill.

Linda Rich for Women's Prison Project



Hawaii  
**Children's Action Network Speaks!**  
Building a unified voice for Hawaii's children

*Hawaii Children's Action Network Speaks! is a nonpartisan 501c4 nonprofit committed to advocating for children and their families. Our core issues are safety, health, and education.*

To: Senator Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Ways & Means

Re: **HB 1741 HD1 SD1-relating to children and family of incarcerated individuals**  
10:15 AM, April 5, 2022

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and committee members,

**On behalf of Hawaii Children's Action Network Speaks!, we are writing to support in STRONG support HB 1741 HD1 SD1, relating to children and family of incarcerated individuals.**

The lack of parental contact during incarceration is incredibly detrimental to the child and the family as a whole. It is a sad reality that collateral and misplaced punitive punishment falls on the children of incarcerated individuals. There is no reason a child should be denied a relationship with their parent simply because they are incarcerated.

The lack of visitation is counterproductive to the supposed goal of incarceration. If the goal of incarceration is to rehabilitate individuals so that they do not become incarcerated again, then we must consider the factors that play a role in recidivism. National data finds incarcerated individuals are less likely to recidivate and more likely to have a successful re-entry into society when they can maintain contact with their loved ones. The family acts as an important support system for individuals coming out of correctional facilities. Creating visitation centers staffed by social service professionals, families will be provided the opportunity to receive information and referral and resource linkage services, guidance and counseling, and wrap-around services.

Hawai'i should invest in this proposed a Family Visitation Center. We will be helping families sustain meaningful relationships through incarceration, and also save the state dollars in the future by reducing our prison population and welfare costs.

Thank you,

Kathleen Algire  
Director Early Learning and Healthy Policy



**Blueprint  
FOR Change**

*“Blueprint for Change develops and supports community-driven services that promote the well-being of children and families.”*

**TO: Senate Committee on Ways and Means**  
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz  
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

**FROM: Shayne Kukunaokalā Yoshimoto, Executive Director**

**RE: HB1741 HD1 DS1 - RELATING TO CHILDREN AND FAMILY OF INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS**

**POSITION: STRONG SUPPORT**

Tuesday, April 05, 2022, 10:15 AM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee!

My name is Shayne Kukunaokalā Yoshimoto and I am the Executive Director of Blueprint for Change, which is a non-profit organization with a strong track record for innovating and implementing effective support services that address the unique challenges facing Hawai‘i’s ‘ohana. The organization’s roots date back to 1994 when in response to a growingly overburdened Child Welfare System, the Hawai‘i State Legislature created the Child Welfare Services Reform Task Force for the purpose of developing a “Blueprint for reform in child protective services.”

After several years of rigorous evaluation, the Committee finalized the core elements of the Neighborhood Place model, and in 2000, Blueprint for Change (BFC) was formed and incorporated as a nonprofit organization to serve as the Department of Human Services, master contractor for Neighborhood Place services and to continue the Committee’s effort to improve the responsiveness of the State of Hawai‘i – Child Welfare System.

By maintaining fluid relationships between state agencies, local service providers and community advocates, Blueprint for Change and the Neighborhood Place Partnership is able to significantly improve the responsiveness of the state’s Child Welfare System while reducing instances of child abuse and neglect.

As part of the oversight of the (7) NP across the state, BFC collects Quarterly Activity Reports (QAR), which is designed to inform services, procedures, and practices moving forward. In 2013 the QAR were showing a significant increase in services delivered to families impacted by incarceration. This led BFC to explore this issue further. Thus, the creation of the Family Reunification Working Group (FRWG).

The FRWG which includes representatives from DHS, PSD, ACLU, Kamehameha Schools, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and a number of community-based non-profit organizations, gained support and interest through the Legislative Keiki Caucus and began meeting regularly to explore and advocate for solutions to problems encountered by children and families in the State who are affected by incarceration.

**The following are reasons for STRONG SUPPORT OF HB1741 HD1 SD1:**

- Family-friendly visitation centers will encourage families to stay in frequent contact with their significant others who are incarcerated;
- National data shows that incarcerated individuals who maintain regular contact with their children and families are less likely to recidivate when they reenter society;
- Having the visitation centers staffed by social service professionals will provide families with opportunities to receive information and referral and resource linkage services, guidance and counseling, wrap-around services to address issues relating to poverty, etc;
- Visitation centers could also be staffed with kupuna and Hawaiian cultural practitioners who could provide Native Hawaiian families with more relevant cultural counseling and problem-solving practices;
- The bill provides an opportunity to begin breaking the cycle of incarceration that is generational in some families;
- The bill provides all stakeholders with the opportunity to continue the conversation about how we break the cycle of incarceration and not only help families sustain themselves but also save the State millions of dollars in the future by reducing our prison population and welfare costs; and
- The State of California has successfully operated visitation centers like those being proposed by the bill for over thirty years. These centers are operated by a non-profit, social service organization called, Friends Outside.

I strongly urge the committee to pass HB1741 HD1 SD1. Mahalo a nui loa for the opportunity to testify.



**HB-1741-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/4/2022 9:04:40 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/5/2022 10:15:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b>                   | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Kathleen O'Dell     | Testifying for ?Ohana Support Network | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

**Senate Committee on Ways and Means**

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair

Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

**HB1741 HD1 SD1 - RELATING TO CHILDREN AND FAMILY OF INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS**

**STRONG SUPPORT**

Tuesday, April 05, 2022, 10:15 AM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee!

**The following are reasons for STRONG SUPPORT HB1741 HD1 SD1:**

- Family-friendly visitation centers will encourage families to stay in frequent contact with their significant others who are incarcerated;
- National data shows that incarcerated individuals who maintain regular contact with their children and families are less likely to recidivate when they reenter society;
- Having the visitation centers staffed by social service professionals will provide families with opportunities to receive information and referral and resource linkage services, guidance and counseling, wrap-around services to address issues relating to poverty, etc;

- Visitation centers could also be staffed with kupuna and Hawaiian cultural practitioners who could provide Native Hawaiian families with more relevant cultural counseling and problem-solving practices;
- The bill provides an opportunity to begin breaking the cycle of incarceration that is generational in some families;
- The bill provides all stakeholders with the opportunity to continue the conversation about how we break the cycle of incarceration and not only help families sustain themselves but also save the state millions of dollars in the future by reducing our prison population and welfare costs; and
- The State of California has successfully operated visitation centers like those being proposed by the bill for over thirty years. These centers are operated by a non-profit, social service organization called, Friends Outside.
- Further, a Vera Institute study, published in October 2012, found that “Incarcerated men and women who maintain contact with supportive family members are more likely to succeed after their release... Research on people returning from prison shows that family members can be valuable sources of support during incarceration and after release. For example, prison inmates who had more contact with their families and who reported positive relationships overall are less likely to be re-incarcerated.”
- According to research published in Western Criminology Review in 2006, “a remarkably consistent association has been found between family contact during incarceration and lower recidivism rates.”
- Correctional practices that “facilitate and strengthen family connections during incarceration” can “reduce the strain of parental separation, reduce recidivism rates, and increase the likelihood of successful re-entry,” according to a 2005 report by the Re-Entry Policy Council.
- According to the 2011 Vera Institute study, “Many family members also indicated that prison rules and practices – including searches, long waits, and inconsistent interpretations of dress codes for visitors – can be unclear, unpleasant, too restrictive, and even keep people from visiting again.”

We strongly urge the committee to pass HB1741 HD1 SD1. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

‘Ohana Support Network

Kathleen O'Dell, Co-Chair



Hawai'i

**LATE**

Committee: Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Hearing Date/Time: Tuesday, April 5, 2022 at 10:15 a.m.  
Place: Via Videoconference

***Testimony of the ACLU of Hawai'i in Support of H.B. 1741 HD1 SD1  
Relating to Children and Family of Incarcerated Individuals***

Dear Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Committee Members:

The American Civil Liberties Union of Hawai'i ("ACLU of Hawai'i") strongly **supports H.B. 1741 HD1 SD1**. This bill requires requires the Department of Human Services to work with the Department of Public Safety to establish a pilot visitation and family resource center at Waiawa correctional facility.

The ACLU of Hawai'i is committed to transforming Hawaii's criminal legal system and building a new vision of safety and justice. We advocate for the State to shift spending priorities away from mass criminalization and incarceration that disparately impacts Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders and Blacks, and low-income people towards health care, housing, education and human services in our communities. Simultaneously, we advocate for humane conditions of confinement, and comprehensive re-entry support services that starts from the first day of incarceration.

**The proposed pilot visitation and family resource center at Waiawa is based on an acknowledgement that the effects of incarceration ripples outward, straining families and placing unfair burdens on children.** This legislation aims to support families during a period of incarceration so that parents and children can maintain some degree of connection even through prison walls.

Decades of research conclusively demonstrates that family contact during incarceration provides many benefits, both during incarceration and the reentry period.<sup>1</sup> These include:

- reducing recidivism
- improving physical and psychological health
- improving behavior (reducing misconduct)
- improving family relationships

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<sup>1</sup> *Research roundup: The Positive Impacts of Family Contact for Incarcerated People and their Families*, Prison Policy Initiative (December 2021). [https://www.prisonpolicy.org/blog/2021/12/21/family\\_contact/#:~:text=In%202008%2C%20researchers%20found%20that,recidivism%20was%20defined%20as%20reconviction\).&text=Visitation%20is%20also%20correlated%20with%20adherence%20to%20prison%20rules.](https://www.prisonpolicy.org/blog/2021/12/21/family_contact/#:~:text=In%202008%2C%20researchers%20found%20that,recidivism%20was%20defined%20as%20reconviction).&text=Visitation%20is%20also%20correlated%20with%20adherence%20to%20prison%20rules.)

As noted by the R Street Institute, “Supportive family relationships can promote psychological and physiological health for incarcerated people and their loved ones, at a time when everyone’s health is otherwise deteriorating. When done well, visitation can ease anxiety in children and mitigate some of the impacts on strained interpersonal relationships. Serving families at this most critical period simply makes communities healthier.”<sup>2</sup>

In closing, we ask for your support of **H.B. 1741 HD1 SD1**. Encouraging family contact during incarceration strengthens family bonds and enhances community safety through reduced recidivism rates.

Sincerely,

*Carrie Ann Shirota*

Carrie Ann Shirota  
Policy Director  
ACLU of Hawai‘i

*The mission of the ACLU of Hawai‘i is to protect the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the U.S. and State Constitutions. The ACLU of Hawai‘i fulfills this through legislative, litigation, and public education programs statewide. The ACLU of Hawai‘i is a non-partisan and private non-profit organization that provides its services at no cost to the public and does not accept government funds. The ACLU of Hawai‘i has been serving Hawai‘i for over 50 years.*

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<sup>2</sup> The Importance of Supporting Family Connections to Ensure Successful Re-Entry, *R STREET SHORTS*, Emily Mooney and Nila Bala, October 2018.  
<https://www.rstreet.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Final-Short-No.-63-1.pdf>

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Date: April 5th, 2022

To: Senate Ways and Means Committee  
Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair  
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

From: Early Childhood Action Strategy

Re: Testimony in Support of HB1741 SD1 – Relating to Children and Families of Incarcerated Individuals

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Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS) is a statewide cross-sector collaborative designed to improve the system of care for Hawai'i's youngest children and their families. ECAS partners work to align priorities for children prenatal to age eight, streamline services, maximize resources, and improve programs to support our youngest keiki.

**ECAS strongly supports HB1741 SD1**, requiring the department of human services to work with the department of public safety and other entities to establish a pilot visitation and family resource center at Waiawa correctional facility on Oahu.

**National data shows that incarcerated individuals who maintain regular contact with their children and families are less likely to recidivate when they reenter society.** The State of California has successfully operated visitation centers like those being proposed by the bill for over thirty years.

HB1741 HD1 SD1 would do the following

- Encourage families to stay in frequent contact with their significant others who are incarcerated. This is especially important for children with incarcerated parents, who may be able to maintain relationships over the course of their lifetimes;
- Provide families with opportunities to receive information and referral and resource linkage services, guidance and counseling, wrap-around services to address issues relating to poverty, etc;
- Provide relevant cultural counseling and problem-solving practices from kupuna and Hawaiian cultural practitioners; and
- Provide an opportunity to break the cycle of incarceration and not only help families sustain themselves but also save the state millions of dollars in the future by reducing our prison population and welfare costs.

Mahalo for your continued support to improve the health, safety and well-being of our youngest keiki on their `ohana. We appreciate you supporting **HB1741 SD1**.

**HB-1741-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/2/2022 11:13:25 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/5/2022 10:15:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>            |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Dara Carlin, M.A.   | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony<br>Only |

Comments:

Stand in Support.

TO: The Honorable Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz  
Chair Senate Committee on Ways and Means  
Thirty First Legislature  
State Capitol  
State of Hawai'i  
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: HB 1741 Relating to Children and Families of Incarcerated Individuals

IN SUPPORT

Good Afternoon Senator Dela Cruz and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kirsten Freeman, and I am a master's in social work student at UH Mānoa acting as an individual. I want to thank you for including HB 1741 in the committee's agenda. I am testifying in support of this bill, which requires the Department of Human Services to work with the Department of Safety, Family Reunification Working Group, and other entities serving children and families affected by parental incarceration to establish a pilot Visitation and Family Resource Center at Waiawa Correctional Facility on O'ahu that has trauma-informed professionals on its staff who serve as liaisons and ho'okele for families affected by incarceration.

As a mother of two young sons whose father was incarcerated during their formative years, I often found it difficult to make it to visitation. To begin with it was incredibly challenging to catch several buses and then make the walk into the facility with two young children. This was all in hopes of arriving early enough to get in line before visits were closed for the day. If this happened we were turned away and told to come back again in the future. Over the years I visited various facilities where there were never any trauma informed professionals on staff and certainly no family resource center on site that could have provided services and support to myself or other families with children that were hoping to remain in contact with their loved one.

The reason why I am writing in support of HB 1741 is because I understand firsthand the importance and the impact of developing programs and implementing policies that promote the reunification of inmates and their families. This can be done by simplifying the visitation process for inmates with families, especially those with young children and by implementing policies and procedures focused on reunification. This would make the visitation process for families with children less stressful, less frightening and less traumatizing.

This is especially concerning because Hawai'i has an incarceration rate of 439 per every 100,000 people. This means that Hawai'i locks up individuals at a higher rate than almost any democracy on earth. In fact, over 6,900 of Hawai'i's residents are currently incarcerated (Prison Policy Initiative, 2021). Many of these individuals have families with children that are struggling

to keep a bond in place, because they know all too well once it is broken it can be difficult and even impossible to mend.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 1741.

Kirsten Freeman

Individual Masters Student at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, Thompson School of Social Work and Public Health



**HB-1741-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/4/2022 8:43:10 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/5/2022 10:15:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b>  | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Muriel M Keliioomalu | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

**Senate Committee on Ways and Means**

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair

Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

**HB1741 HD1 SD1 - RELATING TO CHILDREN AND FAMILY OF INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS**

**STRONG SUPPORT**

Tuesday, April 05, 2022, 10:15 AM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee!

**The following are reasons for STRONG SUPPORT HB1741 HD1 SD1:**

- Family-friendly visitation centers will encourage families to stay in frequent contact with their significant others who are incarcerated;
- National data shows that incarcerated individuals who maintain regular contact with their children and families are less likely to recidivate when they reenter society;
- Having the visitation centers staffed by social service professionals will provide families with opportunities to receive information and referral and resource linkage services, guidance and counseling, wrap-around services to address issues relating to poverty, etc;

- Visitation centers could also be staffed with kupuna and Hawaiian cultural practitioners who could provide Native Hawaiian families with more relevant cultural counseling and problem-solving practices;
- The bill provides an opportunity to begin breaking the cycle of incarceration that is generational in some families;
- The bill provides all stakeholders with the opportunity to continue the conversation about how we break the cycle of incarceration and not only help families sustain themselves but also save the state millions of dollars in the future by reducing our prison population and welfare costs; and
- The State of California has successfully operated visitation centers like those being proposed by the bill for over thirty years. These centers are operated by a non-profit, social service organization called, Friends Outside.
- Further, a Vera Institute study, published in October 2012, found that “Incarcerated men and women who maintain contact with supportive family members are more likely to succeed after their release... Research on people returning from prison shows that family members can be valuable sources of support during incarceration and after release. For example, prison inmates who had more contact with their families and who reported positive relationships overall are less likely to be re-incarcerated.”
- According to research published in Western Criminology Review in 2006, “a remarkably consistent association has been found between family contact during incarceration and lower recidivism rates.”
- Correctional practices that “facilitate and strengthen family connections during incarceration” can “reduce the strain of parental separation, reduce recidivism rates, and increase the likelihood of successful re-entry,” according to a 2005 report by the Re-Entry Policy Council.
- According to the 2011 Vera Institute study, “Many family members also indicated that prison rules and practices – including searches, long waits, and inconsistent interpretations of dress codes for visitors – can be unclear, unpleasant, too restrictive, and even keep people from visiting again.”

I strongly urge the committee to pass HB1741 HD1 SD1. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

Muriel Mililani Keliioomalu

**HB-1741-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/4/2022 9:15:44 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/5/2022 10:15:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Mary Ann Castro     | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee!

I am a graduate student for the social work program at UH Manoa.

**The following are reasons for STRONG SUPPORT HB1741 HD1 SD1:**

- Family-friendly visitation centers will encourage families to stay in frequent contact with their significant others who are incarcerated;
- National data shows that incarcerated individuals who maintain regular contact with their children and families are less likely to recidivate when they reenter society;
- Having the visitation centers staffed by social service professionals will provide families with opportunities to receive information and referral and resource linkage services, guidance and counseling, wrap-around services to address issues relating to poverty, etc;
- Visitation centers could also be staffed with kupuna and Hawaiian cultural practitioners who could provide Native Hawaiian families with more relevant cultural counseling and problem-solving practices;
- The bill provides an opportunity to begin breaking the cycle of incarceration that is generational in some families;
- The bill provides all stakeholders with the opportunity to continue the conversation about how we break the cycle of incarceration and not only help families sustain themselves but also save the state millions of dollars in the future by reducing our prison population and welfare costs; and
- The State of California has successfully operated visitation centers like those being proposed by the bill for over thirty years. These centers are operated by a non-profit, social service organization called, Friends Outside.
- Further, a Vera Institute study, published in October 2012, found that “Incarcerated men and women who maintain contact with supportive family members are more likely to succeed after their release... Research on people returning from prison shows that family members can be valuable sources of support during incarceration and after release. For example, prison inmates who had more contact with their families and who reported positive relationships overall are less likely to be re-incarcerated.”
- According to research published in Western Criminology Review in 2006, “a remarkably consistent association has been found between family contact during incarceration and lower recidivism rates.”

- Correctional practices that “facilitate and strengthen family connections during incarceration” can “reduce the strain of parental separation, reduce recidivism rates, and increase the likelihood of successful re-entry,” according to a 2005 report by the Re-Entry Policy Council.
- According to the 2011 Vera Institute study, “Many family members also indicated that prison rules and practices – including searches, long waits, and inconsistent interpretations of dress codes for visitors – can be unclear, unpleasant, too restrictive, and even keep people from visiting again.”

I strongly urge the committee to pass HB1741 HD1 SD1. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

**HB-1741-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/4/2022 9:53:05 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/5/2022 10:15:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Shy Helm            | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

**Senate Committee on Ways and Means**

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair

Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

**HB1741 HD1 SD1 - RELATING TO CHILDREN AND FAMILY OF INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS**

**STRONG SUPPORT**

Tuesday, April 05, 2022, 10:15 AM

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee!

**The following are reasons for STRONG SUPPORT HB1741 HD1 SD1:**

- Family-friendly visitation centers will encourage families to stay in frequent contact with their significant others who are incarcerated;
- National data shows that incarcerated individuals who maintain regular contact with their children and families are less likely to recidivate when they reenter society;
- Having the visitation centers staffed by social service professionals will provide families with opportunities to receive information and referral and resource linkage services, guidance and counseling, wrap-around services to address issues relating to poverty, etc;

- Visitation centers could also be staffed with kupuna and Hawaiian cultural practitioners who could provide Native Hawaiian families with more relevant cultural counseling and problem-solving practices;
- The bill provides an opportunity to begin breaking the cycle of incarceration that is generational in some families;
- The bill provides all stakeholders with the opportunity to continue the conversation about how we break the cycle of incarceration and not only help families sustain themselves but also save the state millions of dollars in the future by reducing our prison population and welfare costs; and
- The State of California has successfully operated visitation centers like those being proposed by the bill for over thirty years. These centers are operated by a non-profit, social service organization called, Friends Outside.
- Further, a Vera Institute study, published in October 2012, found that “Incarcerated men and women who maintain contact with supportive family members are more likely to succeed after their release... Research on people returning from prison shows that family members can be valuable sources of support during incarceration and after release. For example, prison inmates who had more contact with their families and who reported positive relationships overall are less likely to be re-incarcerated.”
- According to research published in *Western Criminology Review* in 2006, “a remarkably consistent association has been found between family contact during incarceration and lower recidivism rates.”
- Correctional practices that “facilitate and strengthen family connections during incarceration” can “reduce the strain of parental separation, reduce recidivism rates, and increase the likelihood of successful re-entry,” according to a 2005 report by the Re-Entry Policy Council.
- According to the 2011 Vera Institute study, “Many family members also indicated that prison rules and practices – including searches, long waits, and inconsistent interpretations of dress codes for visitors – can be unclear, unpleasant, too restrictive, and even keep people from visiting again.”

I strongly urge the committee to pass HB1741 HD1 SD1. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

**HB-1741-SD-1**

Submitted on: 4/4/2022 10:14:42 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/5/2022 10:15:00 AM

| <b>Submitted By</b> | <b>Organization</b> | <b>Testifier Position</b> | <b>Testify</b>         |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| Malia Peters        | Individual          | Support                   | Written Testimony Only |

Comments:

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith -Agaran, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Malia Peters. I am a parent of a child whose father was incarcerated 25 years ago. I strongly support HB 1741 HD1 SD1 relating to children and families of incarcerated individuals.

Twenty-five years ago our lives were forever changed when my ex-husband committed a horrible crime sentencing him to a 20 year prison sentence, which left my three-year-old son and I abruptly in a very difficult situation. While we understood the severity of his crime and prison sentence, we've had a long and challenging road ever since. Helping families of prisoners who are left behind has become a passion in my life, encouraging them that they too can overcome these challenging situations. My testimony is simply because of the difficulties I experiences when I went through this time in our lives, and I'd like to do anything possible to help families so they don't have to go through what we did with hopes they will have a higher chance of decreasing the cycle of incarceration.

There are various estimates of the number of children nationwide who have at least one parent that is incarcerated (over 2 million), and we are still working to grasp the number of families affected here in our State of Hawaii. Studies have shown that in terms of negative impacts on children, incarceration may be worse than the death of a parent or the divorce of parents. When a parent passes away or when parents divorce, families receive a lot of sympathy, love, compassion, and financial support. In Hawaii, to make a divorce official, families are required to attend "Kids First", a program to help families survive divorce. However, when a parent is sentenced to prison, there is no "program" or "class" to attend, and very often there is no sympathy, but instead a "stigma" that is attached to these children/spouses/families. Many family members witnessed or were the victim of the crime, and there is often no emotional or financial assistance. The surviving spouse, significant other, or grandparent is often the sole provider putting physical, emotional, mental, and financial strain on families.

Something more concerning is the evidence that children who have a parent in prison are more likely to become incarcerated themselves as teenagers or adults, thus continuing the "cycle of incarceration" that sadly becomes generational in some families.

Having been through this personally, I can tell you first-hand how difficult this experience was for my son and I. I never wanted to ask for help for fear that I would minimize the horrible crime that my husband had committed, and/or offend the victim and their family. I also didn't

ask for help because I was embarrassed to share why my husband was incarcerated. I was afraid that what he did would be a reflection on me and my own character. When I became desperate enough to seek assistance, I didn't know where to turn, and when I did try to apply for various types of assistance, we didn't qualify because I was working. My single income was not sustainable to support my son and I, which forced me to take a second job. My son now lost both his parents, had emotional anxieties, became mute, and we had no medical coverage to get him the emotional support he needed. We needed help to learn how to cope, how to explain our situation, and where to go to access the different forms of support we needed. It was a horrible thing to go through and it is only by the grace of God, the family I was blessed with, that I am able to stand strong today, with my son grown and by my side, sharing my story with each of you.

I cannot emphasize enough how much support at the initial time of and throughout incarceration could have made a tremendous difference for us. Waiting until they are about to be released to try to re-engage them with their families is too late. The time of incarceration was the most difficult. Countless hours are spent wastefully getting to the prison early to get your place in line and then waiting to be processed and granted entrance for our visit. It would be so productive to have a Visitation Center that could provide counseling services, resources to direct assistance, in addition to an area that provides educational toys, books, ipads etc. so that adults and children of various ages can pass the time in a positive, productive way with both receiving comfort and support simultaneously in a very intentional environment.

I would oppose any fear or concern that something like this would give an impression that prison is a "fun" place. There will need to be a firm reminder of the situation at hand, however, I still dream of the amazing difference this could have made for us when we were lost, alone, and feeling despair and hopelessness.

Without these basic support services that a Visitation Center could provide, we will miss the opportunity to be able to offer hope and opportunity to implement a new way reaching these families with the intent to decrease the unique circumstances families of this population of our society face. We need to reduce the cycle of incarceration and we should do whatever we can to seek out new ideas and opportunities to do so.

Please support HB1741 HD1 SD1. Mahalo nui to each of you for your service, and for your consideration of this letter of support.

With much aloha and blessings,

Malia Peters



**LATE**

Senate Committee on Ways and Means

Caleb Mantanona

Monday, April 4, 2022

Support for H.B. NO. 1741, RELATING TO CHILDREN AND FAMILY OF INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS.

My name is Caleb Mantanona. I am a local resident from Ewa Beach, O'ahu and an undergraduate student at the University of Hawai'i. I am an environmental and human rights activist in support of H.B. 1741 that creates a pilot program to create a visitation and family resource center at the Waiawa Minimum Security Center to keep incarcerated individuals socially connected to their children and families.

The following are reasons why I support of H.B. NO 1741:

- Family-friendly visitation centers will encourage families to stay in frequent contact with their significant others who are incarcerated;
- National data shows that incarcerated individuals who maintain regular contact with their children and families are less likely to recidivate when they reenter society;
- Having the visitation centers staffed by social service professionals will provide families with opportunities to receive information and referral and resource linkage services, guidance and counseling, wrap-around services to address issues relating to poverty, etc;
- Visitation centers could also be staffed with kupuna and Hawaiian cultural practitioners who could provide Native Hawaiian families with more relevant cultural counseling and problem-solving practices;
- The bill provides an opportunity to begin breaking the cycle of incarceration that is generational in some families;
- The bill provides all stakeholders with the opportunity to continue the conversation about how we break the cycle of incarceration and not only help families sustain themselves but also save the state millions of dollars in the future by reducing our prison population and welfare costs; and
- The State of California has successfully operated visitation centers like those being proposed by the bill for over thirty years. These centers are operated by a non-profit, social service organization called, Friends Outside.
- Further, a Vera Institute study, published in October 2012, found that "Incarcerated men and women who maintain contact with supportive family members are more likely to succeed after their release... Research on people returning from prison shows that family members can be valuable sources of support during incarceration and after release. For example, prison inmates who had more contact with their families and who reported positive relationships overall are less likely to be re-incarcerated."
- According to research published in Western Criminology Review in 2006, "a remarkably consistent association has been found between family contact during incarceration and lower recidivism rates."

- Correctional practices that “facilitate and strengthen family connections during incarceration” can “reduce the strain of parental separation, reduce recidivism rates, and increase the likelihood of successful re-entry,” according to a 2005 report by the Re-Entry Policy Council.
- According to the 2011 Vera Institute study, “Many family members also indicated that prison rules and practices – including searches, long waits, and inconsistent interpretations of dress codes for visitors – can be unclear, unpleasant, too restrictive, and even keep people from visiting again.

I strongly urge the committee to pass H.B. NO. 1741. Mahalo.

**LATE**

**Senate Committee on Ways and Means**

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair

Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

**HB1741 HD1 SD1 - RELATING TO CHILDREN AND FAMILY OF INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS**

**STRONG SUPPORT**

Tuesday, April 05, 2022, 10:15 AM

Aloha, Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and Members of the Committee!

**The following are reasons for STRONG SUPPORT HB1741 HD1 SD1:**

- Family-friendly visitation centers will encourage families to stay in frequent contact with their significant others who are incarcerated;
- National data shows that incarcerated individuals who maintain regular contact with their children and families are less likely to recidivate when they reenter society;
- Having the visitation centers staffed by social service professionals will provide families with opportunities to receive information and referral and resource linkage services, guidance and counseling, wrap-around services to address issues relating to poverty, etc;
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- The bill provides all stakeholders with the opportunity to continue the conversation about how we break the cycle of incarceration and not only help families sustain themselves but also save the state millions of dollars in the future by reducing our prison population and welfare costs; and
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- According to the 2011 Vera Institute study, “Many family members also indicated that prison rules and practices – including searches, long waits, and inconsistent interpretations of dress codes for visitors – can be unclear, unpleasant, too restrictive, and even keep people from visiting again.”

I strongly urge the committee to pass HB1741 HD1 SD1. Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

La Vonne Richardson  
67-229 A Kuhi Place  
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808.798.8553 / lavonne@blueprintforchange.org