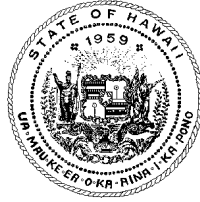


DAVID Y. IGE  
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No. \_\_\_\_\_

**TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 1778  
RELATING TO THE COMPREHENSIVE OFFENDER REENTRY SYSTEM.**

by  
**Max N. Otani, Director**

House Committee on Corrections, Military, and Veterans  
Representative Takashi Ohno, Chair  
Representative Sonny Ganaden, Vice Chair

Friday, February 4, 2022; 10:00 a.m.  
State Capitol, Room 430 & Via Video Conference

Chair Ohno, Vice Chair Ganaden, and Members of the Committee:

House Bill (HB) 1778 seeks to require the Department of Public Safety's (PSD) Offender Reentry Office to develop and implement a risk assessment tool specifically to assess the needs of female offenders and to provide a report to the Legislature regarding this matter.

The Department supports the intent of this measure and offers the following information on initiatives currently underway as its affirmation of that support. In recognition of the importance of addressing the specific needs of female offenders, PSD has completed the redescription of a Corrections Program Specialist II position assigned to the Reentry Coordination Office to be dedicated to work on the assessment, program, treatment, and reentry needs of female offenders.

Part of this CPS II's responsibilities will be review nationally well-regarded offender assessment instruments nationwide, including conducting research with the National Institute of Corrections (NIC), American Correctional Association (ACA), and other entities to help evaluate the effectiveness of the Level of Service Inventory – Revised (LSI-R) assessment instrument currently in use and

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to review other instruments to determine if more accurate and effective instruments specifically for female offenders may be available.

PSD has already made substantial progress towards accomplishing the purpose of HB 1778 and respectfully suggests that the measure may not be needed. The Department will be certain to include ongoing progress reports as a part of its Annual Report to the Legislature to include key performance indicators, provided under HRS 353G.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 1778.

COMMITTEE ON CORRECTIONS, MILITARY, & VETERANS  
Representative Takashi Ohno, Chair  
Representative Sonny Ganaden, Vice Chair

HEARING DATE: February 4, 2022

TIME: 10AM

Women's Prison Project is in **Strong Support of HB1778** RELATING TO THE COMPREHENSIVE OFFENDER REENTRY PROGRAM.

HB1778 mandates that the Department of Public Safety's Offender Reentry Office develop and implement a gender-responsive risk and needs assessment tool for use in transition planning for women reentering the community from incarceration.

Research over many years and in many states has identified women's pathways to crime, which are often quite different than those of men. These pathways to crime are not adequately identified by risk and needs assessment tools validated with male populations.

Women's pathways to incarceration, according to the Hawaii Judiciary's Criminal Justice Research Institute (CJRI), are often related to social and economic marginalization and include poverty, lack of education, lack of access to mental health and substance abuse treatment, histories of trauma including childhood abuse and domestic violence, parenting stress, and lack of access to safe and affordable housing.

These same factors are barriers to women's successful reentry and non-recidivism.

Property and drug related crimes, the majority of women's offenses, are often linked to poverty, dysfunctional relationships, and survival.

A 2018 study of women transitioning out of the Women's Community Correctional Center showed a recidivism rate of 51.3 percent, according to the Hawaii CJRI. Its review of women's pathways to crime suggest that recidivism could be reduced and the lives of women

and their families within our communities greatly enhanced by utilizing a validated gender responsive risk and needs assessment tool that would align assessment with women's pathway research to more accurately assess risk and identify women's needs and strengths.

The Women's Prison Project strongly supports this because an accurate assessment is critical for an effective transition plan that would reduce recidivism and result in healthier families and safer communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for considering our thoughts on this important issue. If you have further questions about WPP's support for this measure, contact Linda

Rich [lrich4@gmail.com](mailto:lrich4@gmail.com)

Mahalo for your public service.

Aloha, Lorenn Walker, JD, MPH

On behalf of the Women's Prison Project

**HB-1778**

Submitted on: 2/2/2022 1:11:38 PM

Testimony for CMV on 2/4/2022 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Ann S Freed	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Ohno and members,

I am in strong support of this measure. It is a step that seems long overdue in compliance with Hawai`i statute that requires the Department of Corrections to develop gender responsive reintegration programs.

Mahalo,

Ann S. Freed,

Life-time Feminist in Mililani

**HB-1778**

Submitted on: 2/2/2022 9:02:49 PM

Testimony for CMV on 2/4/2022 10:00:00 AM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Remote Testimony Requested</b>
Nikos Leverenz	Hawaii Health & Harm Reduction Center	Support	No

Comments:

Hawaii Health & Harm Reduction Center supports HB 1778.

HHHRC's mission is to reduce harm, promote health, create wellness, and fight stigma in Hawaii and the Pacific. We work with many individuals impacted by poverty, housing instability, and other social determinants of health. Many have behavioral health problems, including those related to substance use and mental health conditions. Many of our program clients and participants have also been deeply impacted by trauma, including histories of physical, sexual, and psychological abuse.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.