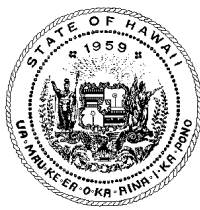


DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY
1177 Alakea Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

MAX N. OTANI
DIRECTOR

Maria C. Cook
Deputy Director
Administration

Tommy Johnson
Deputy Director
Corrections

Jordan Lowe
Deputy Director
Law Enforcement

No. _____

**TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2169
RELATING TO THE COMPREHENSIVE OFFENDER REENTRY SYSTEM.**

by
Max N. Otani, Director
Department of Public Safety

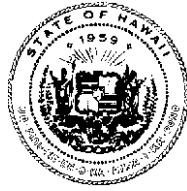
House Committee on Corrections, Military, and Veterans
Representative Takashi Ohno, Chair
Representative Sonny Ganaden, Vice Chair

Wednesday, February 2, 2022; 10:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 430 and Videoconference

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

The Department of Public Safety (PSD) has reviewed House Bill 2169, which amends section 353H-32, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to clarify that the Department of Public Safety's role is to work with the Department of Transportation and county Examiners of Drivers to assist inmates in procuring civil identification necessary to transition into the workforce, access social services, and secure housing, rather than to actually issue civil identification cards. PSD supports the intent of this measure, to clarify its role to work with the other agencies, rather than issue civil identification cards itself.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2169.



**STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII CORRECTIONAL SYSTEM OVERSIGHT COMMISSION**

February 2, 2022

TO: The Honorable Representative Takashi Ohno, Chair
House Committee on Corrections, Military, and Veterans

FROM: Mark Patterson, Chair, Hawaii Correctional System Oversight
Commission

SUBJECT: **HB 2169, Relating to the Comprehensive Offender Reentry System**

POSITION: SUPPORT in Part; OPPOSE in Part

Chair Ohno, Vice Chair Ganaden and Members of the Committee

The Hawaii Corrections System Oversight Commission was created by Act 179, SLH 2019, to provide independent oversight over our correctional system. The Commission's statutory responsibilities include monitoring and reviewing the comprehensive offender reentry program of the Department of Public Safety and ensuring that the comprehensive offender reentry system under chapter 353H is working properly to provide programs and services that result in the timely release of inmates on parole. [See Hawaii Revised Statutes 353L-3(b).]

We support the portion of the bill that clarifies the responsibilities of the various agencies. However, we oppose proposed amendment to HRS 353H-32.c, as it would place the onus on the inmate to request assistance in obtaining the documents.

When it passed legislation to require that the Department assist inmates to obtain identification documents, the Legislature in its wisdom has acknowledged that these documents are essential for navigating life in the digital age. Obtaining proper civil identification documents can be challenging, even for people in the free community. Imagine if you've been in prison – perhaps thousands of miles away from home – for years, with very limited contact with your home community and virtually no means to telephone or access the websites of the relevant agencies? The process of obtaining proper documents is complex enough that after years of diligent efforts by PSD, the issue has not yet been resolved.

The transition from the highly structured life in prison to independent life is hard enough. PSD, which by law is responsible for care and custody, should assure that every inmate leave prison with proper identification documents whether they ask for them or not.

Statement Before The
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON CORRECTIONS, MILITARY, & VETERANS

Wednesday, February 2, 2022

10:00 AM

Via Video Conference & Conference Room 430

in consideration of
HB 2169**RELATING TO THE COMPREHENSIVE OFFENDER REENTRY SYSTEM.**

Chairs OHNO, Vice Chair GANADEN, and Members of the House Corrections, Military, & Veterans Committee

Common Cause Hawaii provides comments on HB 2169, which amends section 353H-32, Hawaii Revised Statutes, to clarify that the Department of Public Safety's role is to work with the Department of Transportation and county Examiners of Drivers to assist inmates in procuring civil identification necessary to transition into the workforce, access social services, and secure housing, rather than issue civil identification cards.

Common Cause Hawaii is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, grassroots organization dedicated to reforming government and strengthening our representative democracy through voting modernization efforts such as adopting Automatic Voter Registration (AVR). AVR was passed by this Legislature in 2021 and signed into law as Act 126, SLH 2021.

Common Cause Hawaii provides comments inquiring as to how HB 2169 will interface, or if it will at all, with AVR, Act 126, SLH 2021. Common Cause Hawaii supports providing assistance to incarcerated individuals in procuring civil identification necessary to transition into the workforce, access social services, and secure housing.

Common Cause Hawaii is unclear as to how this assistance will interface with AVR or if it will at all. “[I]f a person is placed on probation or the person is paroled after commitment to imprisonment, the person may register and vote during the period of the probation or parole.” See <https://elections.hawaii.gov/voting/voters-with-a-felony-conviction/> (retrieved Jan. 31, 2022). AVR, Act 126, SLH 2021 provides an application for voter registration shall be part of the issuance of an identification card under Hawaii Revised § 286-303.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on HB 2169. If you have questions for me, please contact me at sma@commoncause.org.

Very respectfully yours,

Sandy Ma
Executive Director, Common Cause Hawaii

HB-2169

Submitted on: 2/1/2022 9:14:49 AM

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

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Linda Rich	Women?s Prison Project	Support	Yes

Comments:

Aloha Representative Ohno, Chair and Rep. Ganaden, Vice Chair and members of the Committee; Rep. Branc, Rep.Kobayashi, Rep.Kong, Rep. Morikawa, Rep. Tarnas, Rep.McDermott

My name is Linda Rich and I am testifying on behalf of Women’s Prison Project, in STRONG SUPPORT of HB 2169, mandating the Department of Public Safety to work with the Department of Transportation to assist persons transitioning from corrections facilities to the community to obtain a civil Identification card prior to transition.

The lack of an identification card is a serious barrier to reintegration back into the community. The wait time for an appointment to obtain an identification card can be quite long.

The Departments’ facilitation of this process can remove that barrier, making it easier for formerly incarcerated individuals to seek employment, housing and health and social services. Inability to access these basic needs is a risk factor for recidivism. In this time of COVID, identification cards must also be shown with one’s Vaccination card to enter many places. It is a basic need for all community members.

Thank you for considering the Women’s Prison Projects thoughts on this matter thoughts.

Linda Rich richl001@hawaii.rr.com



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 2169

TO: Chair Ohno, Vice Chair Ganaden, & Committee Members

FROM: Nikos Leverenz
Grants & Advancement Manager

DATE: February 2, 2022 (10:00 AM)

Hawai'i Health & Harm Reduction Center (HHRC) **strongly supports** HB 2169, which clarifies that the Department of Public Safety's role is to work with the Department of Transportation and county Examiners of Drivers to assist inmates in procuring civil identification necessary to transition into the workforce, access social services, and secure housing.

Ideally, the Department of Public Safety would engage in a range of pre-release planning to facilitate the procurement of identity documents, as well as provide linkage to post-release housing opportunities, medical care, and other available government support. However, current practice is to leave those released without adequate support. This dramatically increases the likelihood of joining the ranks of the unsheltered homeless.

HHRC Executive Director Heather Lusk currently serves as Board Chair of [Partners in Care O'ahu](#), a planning, coordinating, and advocacy alliance that develops recommendations for programs and services to fill needs within O'ahu's continuum of care for homeless persons. HHRC provides homeless outreach and housing placement navigation services in urban Honolulu and the Upper Windward Coast, including North Shore. Many of those we serve struggle with obtaining identity documents, including those who have been released from carceral facilities.

HHRC's mission is to reduce harm, promote health, create wellness, and fight stigma in Hawai'i 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.