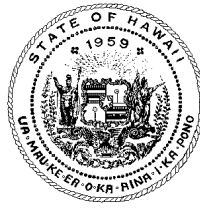


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**TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 2313
RELATING TO RISK AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR FEMALE OFFENDERS.**

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

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

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

House Bill (HB) 2313, seeks to require the Department of Public Safety (PSD) to develop a female pretrial risk and needs assessment tool and conduct these assessments to measure the female offenders' risks of flight, reoffending, or harming the community, considering factors important to women and women's specialized treatment needs.

PSD offers comments regarding this measure along with some insight. At present, the Department already has underway an initiative to address the assessment, treatment, and reentry needs of female offenders. Specifically, PSD has redescribed a Corrections Specialist II position within the Reentry Coordination Office (RCO) to be dedicated to addressing the needs of female offenders.

This CPS II will also review nationally-recognized offender assessment instruments, including pretrial assessment tools and conduct research with the National Institute of Corrections (NIC), American Correctional Association (ACA), and other entities in determining the effectiveness of PSD's current assessment

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instrument, Level of Service Inventory – Revised (LSI-R) to help determine if another more effective and accurate assessment instrument exists specifically for female offenders.

However, in order to develop, implement, and conduct a female-specific pretrial risk and needs assessment initiative, the Department will require substantial additional funding, which, as written, HB 2313 does not provide.

In light of PSD's progress in this area, the Department respectfully recommends that this measure be held in abeyance, as we move forward with initiatives currently underway.

Thank you for the opportunity submit testimony on HB 2313.

COMMITTEE ON CORRECTIONS, MILITARY, & VETERANS

Representative Takashi Ohno, Chair

Representative Sonny Ganaden, Vice Chair

HEARING DATE: February 4, 2022

TIME: 10 AM, Via Videoconference

SUPPPORT OF HB2313 RELATING TO RISK AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR FEMALE OFFENDERS

Chair Ohno, Vice Chair Ganaden, Members of the Committee

The Women's Prison Project in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB2313, RELATING TO RISK AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR FEMALE OFFENDERS.

HB2313 mandates that a pretrial gender-responsive risk and needs assessment tool be implemented that considers factors important to evaluate women's risk to reoffend and women's specialized treatment needs, such as rates of physical and sexual abuse prior to becoming an offender. This mandate aligns with the recommendations of the Department of Justice National Corrections Institute, The National Resource Center for Justice Involved Women and Hawaii's own Criminal Justice Research Institute (CJRI).

Research over several decades has validated that women's pathways to incarceration, their risk factors for recidivism and their rehabilitation needs differ from those of men and are not adequately identified or addressed by assessment tools that were originally developed for males in the justice system. For example, factors that may predict stability for men, such as

family relationships, are more complex for women dealing with domestic abuse or caregiving or parenting stress.

Researchers have noted that women may be over classified as high risk, and the needs critical for their rehabilitation may be overlooked when women specific issues are not considered.

This can result in a failure to match their needs and risk factors with appropriate classification and services.

In a recent review of research, the Hawaii CJRI identified women's pathways to incarceration overwhelmingly relate to social and economic marginalization. Sixty percent of the women in the study of the Women's Community Correctional Center had at least one child living with them prior to incarceration and seventy-five percent were mothers.

Parenting stress, lack of childcare, and the need as single mothers to support their family are among risks factors and needs not identified in non-gender responsive assessments. (*Erin Harbinson, PhD, Aerielle Reynolds, MS*).

The Women's Prison Project strongly supports HB2313 which will lead to more accurate identification of women's risk factors and needs which will result in more effective interventions and services for women in the state justice system.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for considering our thoughts on this important issue. If you have further questions regarding WPP's support of this measure, please contact me at lorenn@hawaii.edu.



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COMMITTEE ON CORRECTIONS, MILITARY, & VETERANS

Representative Takashi Ohno, Chair

Representative Sonny Ganaden, Vice Chair

HEARING DATE: February 4, 2022

TIME: 10 AM, Via Videoconference

SUPPORT OF HB2313 RELATING TO RISK AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR FEMALE OFFENDERS

Chair Ohno, Vice Chair Ganaden, Members of the Committee

Hawai'i Friends of Restorative justice is in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB2313, RELATING TO RISK AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT FOR FEMALE OFFENDERS.

HB2313 mandates that a pretrial gender-responsive risk and needs assessment tool be implemented that considers factors important to evaluate women's risk to reoffend and women's specialized treatment needs, such as rates of physical and sexual abuse prior to becoming an offender. This mandate aligns with the recommendations of the Department of Justice National Corrections Institute, The National Resource Center for Justice Involved Women and Hawaii's own Criminal Justice Research Institute (CJRI).

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Thank you for the opportunity to testify and for considering our thoughts on this important issue. If you have further questions regarding our support of this measure, please contact Lorenn Walker at lorenn@hawaiiifiends.org.



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HB-2313

Submitted on: 2/2/2022 9:21:47 PM

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

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

Comments:

Hawaii Health & Harm Reduction Center supports HB 2313.

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.