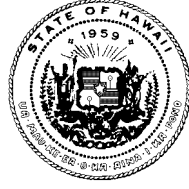


DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CATHY BETTS
DIRECTOR

JOSEPH CAMPOS II
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

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

February 22, 2022

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

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 2640 SD1 – RELATING TO INCARCERATED WOMEN.**

Hearing: February 24, 2022, 10:00 a.m.
Via Videoconference, State Capitol

DEPARTMENT'S POSITION: The Department of Human Services (DHS) appreciates the intent of this measure, offers comments, and defers to the Departments of Education and Public Safety.

PURPOSE: The purpose of the bill is to appropriate funds for the second year of a program to train incarcerated women to be general education development tutors for their peers, provide college correspondence courses for women in the women's community correctional center, and provide reentry and transition services for women wanting to continue their education post incarceration. Enables partnerships with the Department of Education, University of Hawaii, and Department of Public Safety. Appropriates moneys. (SD1) The SD1 amended the measure by making technical amendments.

DHS supports the continuation of the education program for women in incarceration initially funded by the Governor's emergency education relief (GEER). Women who are incarcerated often experienced economic disparities, familial instability, and violence that impacted their education and employment experiences.

Reentry and transition support programs are needed to help these individuals be successful upon release. Increasing opportunities while incarcerated to obtain general education degrees, pursue college credits, and become tutors of their peers, are transformative experiences so that upon release, women will have more confidence and the minimum qualifications to re-enter the workforce.

These peer tutors offer non-judgmental support, develop relationships and social connections, and offer general education development tutoring. With their lived experience, peer support specialists are recognized as effective and trusted resources for women transitioning to community life.

Women exiting incarceration need education and credentials to return to the competitive workforce to support themselves and their families. Most women also have children and return to the family and their parenting role. Children react differently to their parent's return, and having educational confidence may help parents restore their relationship as they guide their children through school and life. Parental incarceration is a cause of multi-generational trauma and is an Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) that disproportionately impacts children of color and children in poverty. Education is a crucial component to breaking the cycle of multi-generational poverty and incarceration.

DHS is committed to collaborating with the Departments of Education and Public Safety to address the women's basic needs with available concrete services DHS can offer.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



CRAIG K. HIRAI
DIRECTOR

GLORIA CHANG
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

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

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

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
SENATE BILL NO. 2640, S.D. 1

February 24, 2022
10:00 a.m.
Room 211 and Videoconference

RELATING TO INCARCERATED WOMEN

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

Senate Bill No. 2640, S.D. 1, appropriates \$250,000 in general funds as second-year funding to the Department of Public Safety (PSD) for FY 23 for the education program for imprisoned women, a program to train incarcerated women to be general education development tutors for their peers, provide college correspondence courses for women in the Women's Community Correctional Center, and provide reentry and transition services for women who wish to continue their education post incarceration. The bill also indicates that PSD may transfer the appropriated funds to the University of Hawai'i or the Department of Education or award a grant to a private entity to achieve the intended purposes of the bill.

B&F notes that, with respect to the general fund appropriation 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.



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Tuesday, February 24, 2022, at 10:00 a.m.

By

Debora J. Halbert
Associate Vice President for Academic Programs and Policy
University of Hawai'i System

SB 2640 SD1 – RELATING TO INCARCERATED WOMEN

Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran, and members of the committee:

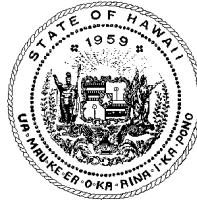
Thank you for the opportunity to testify on SB 2640 SD1, relating to the appropriation of funds for the second year of a program to train incarcerated women to be general education development tutors for their peers, provide college correspondence courses for women in the women's community correctional center, and provide reentry and transition services for women wanting to continue their education post incarceration.

The University of Hawai'i (UH) supports the intent of SB 2640 SD1 and upholds the value of the current program but defers to the Department of Public Safety. This bill appropriates additional funds for the Hawai'i Friends of Restorative Justice to support their efforts to continue to provide for the second year of their education program for imprisoned women.

The UH supports the program and its intent. Windward Community College (Windward CC) has taken the primary lead on this initiative and is partnering with Hawai'i Friends of Restorative Justice in this educational effort. Once these women have completed their GED, Hawai'i Friends of Restorative Justice has helped facilitate planning for Windward CC to partner with University of Hawai'i at Mānoa College of Social Sciences to support students in their transition to the baccalaureate degree program.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of the intent of SB 2640 SD1.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

1177 Alakea Street, 6th Floor
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 SENATE BILL 2640, SENATE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO INCARCERATED WOMEN.

by
Max N. Otani, Director

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

February 24, 2022; 10:00 a.m.
Via Videoconference

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

The Department of Public Safety (PSD) has reviewed Senate Bill (SB) 2640, Senate Draft (SD) 1, which appropriates funds for the second year of a pilot program to train incarcerated women at the Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC) to be general education development tutors for their peers and funding for college correspondence courses for the inmate tutors.

The Department supports the intent of this measure and respectfully offers the following comments. A total of five (5) G.E.D. tutors were successfully trained and certified in the first year using Funds from the Governor's Emergency Education Relief grant (GEER), provided through the Hawaii Friends of Restorative Justice. As of January 2022, a total of nine (9) women at WCCC earned their G.E.D. diplomas, and of the nine graduates, six (6) went on to enroll in post-secondary programs for college credit. Although the numbers may be modest, the program's success is great.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony supporting the intent of SB 2640, SD 1.



SB2640 SD1 Women's Prison Education Project

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair

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

Thursday, Feb 24 2022: 10:00 am : Videoconference

Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition Supports SB2640 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.

Education for women incarcerated and going through a reentry process back into their community has **multiple benefits**:

1. Provides skills to develop their potential, helps with employment, instills confidence, develops ethics, and improves their well-being.
2. Improves relations with PSD and parole staff members.
3. Dramatically enhances self-esteem.¹
4. Reentry education has many positive effects on the children of reentry women.

Moreover, it is a highly cost-effective investment.

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

¹ Northwestern University Prison Education Program 2022 <https://sites.northwestern.edu/npep/benefits-of-prison-education/#:~:text=%E2%80%9CInside%E2%80%9D%20Benefits&text=Prison%20education%20also%20breaks%20down,the%20prisoners'%20self%20Desteem.>

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE ON PRISONS

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COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair

Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Thursday, February 24, 2022

10:00 AM

SB 2640 SD1 - STRONG SUPPORT - WCCC TRAINING for PEER TUTORS

Aloha Chair Dela Cruz, 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 more than 4,052 Hawai'i individuals living behind bars under the "care and custody" of the Department of Public Safety on any given day. We are always mindful that 1,111 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 is in support of this educational program for women at WCCC where they are trained as peer tutors in general education. This is wonderful! Since the program started the number of women who got their GEDs has increased. This is so important, especially since most of the women are mothers.

Providing college courses - which, in our humble opinion, should be a partnership with Hawai'i universities and our Community College system - is vital. Twenty years ago, CAP participated in a survey at WCCC asking the women 3 questions: 1) what are the most helpful things during your incarceration, 2) what were the least helpful things of your incarceration, and 3) if you were the Director what would you change. The majority of the responses asked for college courses. The women know they need education in order to earn enough to support themselves and their families, therefore, providing reentry and transition services for women wanting to further their education post release is crucial.

Education is the route out of poverty, an economic mobility booster, and increases the tax base! Please support.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

SB-2640-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2022 7:04:12 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/24/2022 10:00:00 AM

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

Comments:

Hawaii Health & Harm Reduction Center supports SB 2640, SD 1, which appropriates funds for the second year of a program to train incarcerated women to be general education development tutors for their peers, provide college correspondence courses for women in the women's community correctional center, and provide reentry and transition services for women wanting to continue their education post incarceration.

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.

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

HEARING DATE: Thursday, February 24, 2022
TIME: 10:00 a.m., Via Videoconference

SUPPORT FOR SB2640 RELATING TO INCARCERATED WOMEN

The Women's Prison Project **STRONGLY SUPPORTS** SB2640 appropriating \$250,000 to continue the second year of a pilot program for higher and continuing education at the Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC). The first year was funded with a [2021 GEER grant](#).

The program is a collaborative effort between Hawai'i Friends of Restorative Justice (HFRJ), the Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC), Windward Community College (WCC), College of Social Sciences University of Hawai'i (UH) and McKinley Community School for Adults (MCSA).

"As Horace Mann once said, education is 'the great equalizer,' but this only works if the most vulnerable individuals have access to it" ([Bender, 2018](#)). Incarcerated people in Hawai'i read at an average 5th-6th grade level [according to the state](#) and the experience of HFRJ working at WCCC shows many average less, especially in math. Almost 60% of the women at WCCC are high school dropouts.

The results in the first six months of the peer tutoring component of this innovative education program show its remarkable value for helping women continue their educations. The program trains imprisoned women who have at least a high school education to become tutors for their peers studying for the GED. Since the program began in earnest in November 2021, five women completed a 20-hour training program in cooperative education, which taught them how to engage students in hands-on learning. After completing the program, they were hired as tutors. Next week the second cohort of 10 tutors will begin training.

To study for the GED with a poor academic history is especially challenging. The women studying for the GED in this program had grade levels assessed before they began at only 4th and 5th grades, but with the encouragement of their tutors they began to see themselves as capable of passing the test.

About 30 women enrolled in the program who worked for innumerable hours studying for the test (one dropped out for personal reasons). While the financial incentive for passing the GED helped get the women into the classroom to begin studying, it was the tutors' hands-on, and consistently applied assistance that helped the women learn the material to pass the GED.

The success of the program to date far exceeds its initial expectations. Despite WCCC's average rate of GED passage since 2016 of only three women a year, nine (9) women have passed the GED as of January 2022 in this program. The new cohort of tutors will be trained from the group who recently passed the GED.

Higher education is also supported by this program, including providing college correspondence courses for women who have high school educations or for those who have passed the GED.

Research has shown that higher and continuing [education reduces repeat crime](#), and an academic paper on the program has already been accepted for publication later this year in a book about cooperative and peace education. We can share the draft with you of this paper if you are interested.

We need to provide education for those in our correctional institutions who literally fell through the cracks in our education system. We urge the Committee to please pass this bill. If you have any questions about all components of this program, please contact Loren Walker, JD, MPH, at loren@hawaii.edu or (808) 218-3712. Mahalo for your public service.

Leela Bilmes Goldstein
On behalf of the Women's Prison Project

Senator Donovan M. Dela Cruz, Chair
Senator Gilbert S.C. Keith-Agaran, Vice-Chair
Committee on Ways And Means

RE: SB2640

Thursday, February 24, 2022
10:00 A.M
Conference Room 211 & Videoconference

As an advocate for positive transitioning for incarcerated women, and being an adult student myself at UH Manoa at the age of 35, I know education is NEVER too late, which is why I am here today to express my support for SB2640, Relating to appropriate funds for the education program for imprisoned women.

Giving women who are incarcerated the opportunity to gain general education or college correspondence courses while imprisoned helps grow a strong foundation for them to rely on when transitioning. According to a study by the U.S. Sentencing Commission (USSC), individuals who are younger than 21 who are released from prison are rearrested at the highest rates of any age group. Individuals who did not complete high school were rearrested at the highest rate 60.4%, while those who had a college degree were rearrested at a rate of 19.1%. While incarcerated women and school aged women are more likely to be arrested, they also have a lot to gain from educational opportunities while in prison.

In closing, education should be a resource and opportunity for incarcerated women in order to better the chances of a successful transition. Therefore, I urge the committee to pass SB09-XXX. Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Kimberly Hamasaki

808-219-4185

SB-2640-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/21/2022 8:44:47 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/24/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Johnnie-Mae L. Perry	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SUPPORT SB 2640 RELATING TO INCARCERATED WOMEN.

SB-2640-SD-1

Submitted on: 2/22/2022 10:52:13 PM

Testimony for WAM on 2/24/2022 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Remote Testimony Requested
Diana Bethel	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of SB2640 SD1 which appropriates funds for the second year of a program to train incarcerated women to be general education development tutors for their peers, provide college correspondence courses for women in the women's community correctional center, and provide reentry and transition services for women wanting to continue their education post incarceration. Enables partnerships with the Department of Education, University of Hawaii, and Department of Public Safety.

Acquiring an education is one of the most powerful predictors of successful reentry into society for incarcerated individuals upon release from prison. The WCCC general education development tutor training program helps broaden students' horizons and gives them a glimpse of what might be possible in their lives. It provides hope, a means to economic mobility, and teaches self-discipline, organization, and responsibility. The tutors teach their peers and show by their example a motivated and active learner. They have helped form a learning community in which every student is encouraged and nurtured to succeed. The second year of the education program will produce even more GED graduates and many students who will go on to higher degrees. The program, initiated and developed by the Hawaii Friends for Restorative Justice, will be the gold standard for successful reentry educational programs throughout the state.

Please pass SB2640 SD1.