



STATE OF HAWAII
HAWAII CORRECTIONAL SYSTEM OVERSIGHT COMMISSION

February 10, 2022

TO: Honorable Senator Clarence Nishihara, Chair
Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military
Affairs

Honorable Joy San Buenaventura, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services

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

SUBJECT: **SB 3294, RELATING TO REENTRY PLANNING CIRCLES**

POSITION: STRONG SUPPORT

Chairs Nishihara and San Buenaventura, Vice Chairs DeCoite and Ihara, and Members of the Committee:

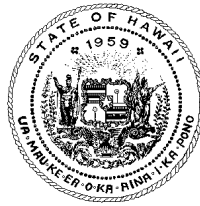
The Hawaii Corrections System Oversight Commission was created by Act 179, SLH 2019, to provide independent oversight over our correctional system. The Commission's statutory responsibilities include monitoring and reviewing the comprehensive offender reentry program of the Department of Public Safety 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).]

The Commission strongly supports SB 3294, which would fund for reentry planning circles for incarcerated women in Hawaii. This mandate would be consistent with the requirement in HRS 353H-3 that the Department of Public Safety develop a "comprehensive network of transitional programs to address the needs of individuals exiting the correctional system." Such a network promotes community safety by facilitating the adjustment from the highly structured prison setting to independent living. These transitional services work best when they link inmates in prison with the communities to which they return.

Reentry planning circles effectively help inmates re-connect with their families and other loved ones. Family connection is a crucial element in successful reentry. Our only

concern with this bill is that it is limited only to women inmates. It is a good start, nevertheless, and we urge your favorable consideration.

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR



STATE OF HAWAII
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

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MAX N. OTANI
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Tommy Johnson
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No. _____

**TESTIMONY ON SENATE 3294
RELATING TO REENTRY PLANNING CIRCLES.**

By
Max N. Otani, Director
Department of Public Safety

Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair
Senator Lynn DeCoite, Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Human Services
Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair

February 10, 2022; 1:00 p.m.
State Capitol, Via Videoconference

Chairs Nishihara and San Buenaventura, Vice Chairs DeCoite and Ihara, and Members of the Committees:

The Department of Public Safety (PSD) has reviewed Senate Bill (SB) 3294, which seeks to appropriate \$200,000.00 to fund reentry circles for a minimum of fifty (50) incarcerated women and offers the following comments.

PSD believes the therapeutic processes that may result from participation in reentry circles would best serve offenders and their families as part of jail diversion programs, not after conviction and sentencing. The potential positive outcomes of these types of circles could possibly serve as very effective intervention strategies in community-based incarceration diversion initiatives.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on SB 3294.

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
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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 COMMITTEES ON PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL,
AND MILITARY AFFAIRS AND HUMAN SERVICES
ON
SENATE BILL NO. 3294

February 10, 2022
1:00 p.m.
Via Videoconference

RELATING TO REENTRY PLANNING CIRCLES

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

Senate Bill No. 3294 appropriates \$200,000 in general funds to the Department of Public Safety for FY 23 to fund reentry planning circles for at least 50 incarcerated women. This bill is intended to lower recidivism rates and provide solution-based planning processes for the development of detailed plans for obtaining housing, employment, and other necessities upon the release of inmates from incarceration.

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.

SB-3294

Submitted on: 2/9/2022 12:39:44 PM

Testimony for HMS on 2/10/2022 1:00:00 PM

| Submitted By | Organization | Testifier Position | Remote Testimony Requested |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Linda Rich | Testifying for Women's Prison Project | Support | Yes |

Comments:

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair

Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair

Senator Lynn DeCoite, Vice Chair

HEARING DATE: February 10, 2002

TIME: 1:00 PM

SUPPORT FOR SB3294 RELATING TO REENTRY PLANNING CIRCLES

The Women's Prison Project (WPP) **STRONGLY SUPPORTS** SB3294 to appropriate \$200,000 to provide the reentry planning process, known as huikahi circles, for at least 50 women incarcerated at WCCC.

Reentry planning by individual incarcerated people is vital for their successful return to the community and their desisting from crime (Taxman, 2004).

Huikahi circles are for incarcerated people who take responsibility for their behavior and want to make amends with harmed loved ones and the community—and who want to plan for their transition back into the community. They have been provided at several state prisons, but mainly at WCCC.

The huikahi circles have been provided pro bono and with private grants to the state prisons. Except for the state's federal 2021 GEER grant, the state has never funded the process for adults.

The process has been extensively researched. It is healing for children of incarcerated parents and other loved ones. An independent evaluation of the process shows it reduces recidivism. Another study shows it can help decrease Hawaii's prison population.

We urge the joint committees on Human Services and Public Safety, Intergovernmental and Military Affairs to please pass SB3294.

If you have any questions about WPP's support, please contact Lorenn Walker, JD, MPH, at lorenn@hawaii.edu or (808) 218-3712.



HAWAII SUBSTANCE ABUSE COALITION

SB3294 Huikahi Circles (Restorative Circles) for Offender Reentry
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL, AND MILITARY AFFAIRS
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair
Senator Lynn DeCoite, Vice Chair
COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES
Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair
Tuesday, Feb 10 2022: 1:00 pm : Videoconference

Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition Supports SB3294:

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.

HSAC supports the Hawaii version of Restorative Circles that is a group process with offenders, victims, family and friends and is now evidenced-based practices:

- It has been growing in its use as part of offender reentry processes.
- The group processes is self-directed, goal-oriented, and an active learning experience for participants.
- It promotes positive motivation to repair harm and to take responsibility for their futures.
- Besides decreasing recidivism, the Huikahi Circle provides healing for people harmed.

This engaging process is important because it involves the public to help with recidivism and reentry back into their communities.

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

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE ON PRISONS

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

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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL & MILITARY AFFAIRS

Senator Clarence Nishihara, Chair

Senator Lynn DeCoite, Vice Chair

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES

Senator Joy San Buenaventura

Senator Les Ihara, Jr., Vice Chair

Thursday, February 10, 2022

1:00 PM

SB 3294 - STRONG SUPPORT FOR REENTRY PLANNING CIRCLES

Aloha Chairs Nishihara and San Buenaventura, Vice Chairs DeCoite and Ihara, and Members of the Committees!

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 4,085 Hawai`i individuals living behind bars or under the "care and custody" of the Department of Public Safety or the corporate vendor 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 strong support of this measure for statewide work furlough programs for women. The system is normed to medium security, violent males, so their numbers (3,691) are far greater and males get more attention than incarcerated women (394). The department's January 24, 2022 population report showed that women represented almost 10% of the total incarcerated population (4,085).

We know that many of the women are mothers, therefore, helping them develop work skills to facilitate their reentry is a win-win situation for themselves, their families, and the community! Women cannot support their families without proper training for jobs that will pay them a wage that will enable them to take care of themselves and their families.

We urge the committee to support women. Mahalo for this opportunity to testify.

"When women support each other, incredible things happen."

COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES, PUBLIC SAFETY, INTERGOVERNMENTAL, AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura
Senator Les Ihara, Jr.

Senator Clarence K. Nishihara
Senator Lynn DeCoite

Thursday, February 10, 2022 at 1300 HST

RE: Testimony in SUPPORT of SB3294 Relating to Reentry Planning Circles

Aloha Chair Joy A. San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Les Ihara, Jr., and the members of the Committee on Human Services; Chair Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair Lynn DeCoite, and the members of the Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military Affairs:

Mahalo for hearing SB3294 relating to reentry planning circles. I am writing in **strong support** of SB3294 because I believe in the importance of reentry planning circles.

Reentry planning circles are paramount to one's success upon reentry for three reasons:

1. Formerly incarcerated people experience isolation upon reentry due to strained familial bonds and community support.
2. It is difficult to adjust to the changes in this age of rapid advancement.
3. People lose their autonomy upon incarceration; therefore, it becomes difficult to speak for themselves and manage their time.

A plan and support system that is implemented BEFORE reentry will help alleviate uncertainty and help the individual stay on track. Incarceration alone will not rehabilitate someone, they need structure, education, guidance, and support. SB3294's plan to provide support for at least 50 women will have a positive impact on at least 50 families. I am reaffirming my **strong support** for SB3294.

Mahalo for considering my testimony,

Soon Kim
Senate District 15

SB-3294

Submitted on: 2/9/2022 7:09:28 AM

Testimony for HMS on 2/10/2022 1:00:00 PM

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

Comments:

Aloha Co-Chairs Nishihara and San Buenaventura, Co-Vice Chairs DeCoite and Ihara, and Members of the Committees,

I am writing in strong support of SB 3294 which makes an appropriation to further the practice of Huikahi restorative circles for at least 50 women at the Women's Community Correctional Center.

The Huikahi restorative circles program was started in 2005 and is part of the re-entry law, Chapter 353H, HRS (2007), meant to apply statewide. It provides incarcerated individuals the opportunity to gather together with family, friends, and employers to create a strong, supportive and healing network and a solutions-focused plan to facilitate the individual's successful transition back to the community.

Huikahi restorative circles establish the foundation for a successful reentry into society and, accordingly, help reduce recidivism. This is a cost-effective way to reduce recidivism and reduce costs to taxpayers while at the same time increase public safety.

Mahalo for your support of SB 3294.

Diana Bethel, Honolulu

February 9, 2022

TO: The Honorable Senator Joy A. San Buenaventura, Chair
Senate Committee on Human Services

The Honorable Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Chair
Senate Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental, and Military
Affairs

FROM: Carmen Hulu Lindsey, Chair
Board of Trustees at the Office of Hawaiian Affairs

SUBJECT: SB 3294 – RELATING TO REENTRY PLANNING CIRCLES.

Hearing: February 10, 2022, 1:00 p.m.
Via Videoconference, State Capitol

I am providing written testimony on behalf of the Women’s Prison Project in support of S.B. 3294. I support this bill because I believe that it is vital for our incarcerated women to receive the tools they need to successfully transition back into the community. While incarcerated at WCCC, our women receive trauma-informed care. This type of care establishes safe and nurturing conditions so that our women can begin the rehabilitation and healing process; they identify and address the core issues of their beliefs and behaviors; and gain sense of forgiveness and change for themselves, their ‘ohana, and the community. I view reentry planning circles as a final piece to the puzzle which is reintegration. These circles help our women prepare for life outside of prison and helps to address key factors for survival and success in the community. Through these circles, our women receive assistance developing detailed plans to obtain housing, employment and other necessities vital to survival, as well as building on and maintaining the sense of forgiveness by helping our women establish and/or repair relationships with ‘ohana and others. But, as crucial as huikahi restorative circles are, availability and resources are limited so funds are in dire need. I humbly ask the Committees for their consideration in support of S.B. 3294.

Mahalo for the opportunity to provide my written testimony on this measure.