

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII  
**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY**  
*Ka 'Oihana Ho'opalekana Lehulehu*  
1177 Alakea Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii'i 96813

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**Melanie Martin**  
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**Michael J. Hoffman**  
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**William F. Oku**  
Deputy Director  
Law Enforcement

No. \_\_\_\_\_

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 451, HOUSE DRAFT 1  
RELATING TO INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS.

By  
Tommy Johnson, Director

Senate Committee on Public Safety and Intergovernmental and Military Affairs  
Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair  
Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair

Wednesday, March 15, 2023; 3:00 p.m.  
CR 225 and Via Video Conference

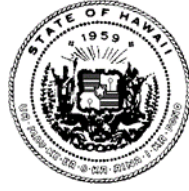
Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Elefante, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Public Safety (PSD) strongly supports House Bill (HB) 451, House Draft (HD) 1, which proposes to extend the time to expend appropriations for the establishment of a pilot visitation and family resource center at the Waiawa Correctional Facility on Oahu pursuant to Act 125, Session Laws 2022.

PSD appreciates the Legislature's inclusion of its recommended amendments reflected in HB 451, HD 1, which extend the effective date to encourage further discussions needed for this worthwhile project.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony in support of HB 451, HD 1.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR  
KE KIA'ĀINA



CATHY BETTS  
DIRECTOR  
KA LUNA HO'OKELE

JOSEPH CAMPOS II  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
KA HOPE LUNA HO'OKELE

STATE OF HAWAII  
KA MOKU'ĀINA O HAWAI'I  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**  
KA 'OIHANA MĀLAMA LAWELAWE KANAKA  
Office of the Director  
P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

March 14, 2023

TO: The Honorable Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair  
Senate Committee on Public Safety and Intergovernmental and Military Affairs

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: [HB 451 HD1](#) – RELATING TO INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS.

Hearing: March 15, 2023, 2:00 p.m.  
Conference Room 225 & Via Videoconference, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports this measure and defers to the Public Safety Department (PSD) on relevant parts.

**PURPOSE:** This bill amends Act 125, Session Laws of Hawai'i 2022, to extend the time to expend appropriations for the establishment of a pilot visitation and family resource center at Waiawa correctional facility on Oahu, and makes conforming amendments related to the establishment of the department of corrections and rehabilitation. Appropriates additional funds to implement the pilot visitation and family resource center at Waiawa correctional facility. Effective 6/30/3000. (HD1)

The House Committee on Corrections, Military & Veterans has amended this measure by:

- (1) Changing the effective date to June 30, 3000, to encourage further discussion; and
- (2) Making a technical, nonsubstantive amendment for the purposes of clarity, consistency, and style.

The Act 129 and family resource center working group met in July 2022 to celebrate the passage of Act 125, Relating To Children And Family Of Incarcerated Individuals, and Act 129, Relating to Family Resource Centers. In addition, the working group discussed how family resource centers connect the two Acts and sought pathways for further collaboration.

DHS requested the release of appropriate funds from the Department of Budget & Finance, which is pending. In addition, PSD requested the release of appropriated funds for Waiawa Correctional Facility and received approval for draft plans and other building materials for the child visiting center and family resource center. However, the final design is incomplete, and only renovations to the existing building are currently planned.

The working group met again in November 2022. Participants requested a virtual site visit to an existing resource center at another correctional facility. The group met virtually with the New Hampshire Prisons Family Connections Center staff in January 2023. The group reviewed Waiawa child visiting center renderings and determined additional renovations, including an Americans Disability Act (ADA) compliant restroom with a diaper changing station, modular structures, air conditioning, and IT infrastructure for Internet/Wi-Fi 5G access. These additional requests were not included in the initial request for appropriations.

In October 2022, DHS Benefit, Employment & Support Services Division (BESSD) posted a Request for Information (RFI) on home visiting programs and services to address adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) of parents with young children, which specifically included services provided to families with incarcerated parent(s) at public correctional facilities. Unfortunately, BESSD did not receive any plan proposals through the end of the RFI period that ended in November 2022.

The Hawaii's Children Trust Fund sponsored a special training by Blueprint for Change entitled, "Pehea nā keiki? And How Are the Children?" Responding to the needs of children impacted by parental incarceration in November 2022 with Ann Adalist-Estrin, director of the National Resource Center on Children and Families of the Incarcerated at Rutgers University–Camden.

The working group is considering a Call to Action to explore opportunities for the community to help beautify the area around the building site at Waiawa, seeking an overhead cover for the outdoor play area. In addition, group participants discussed ways to help the

caregiving parent deal with the emotional aspect of visiting an incarcerated individual, pre-visit preparations, debriefing, and referrals for emotional support or other services after the visit when the family is home. Participants also raised issues around visiting logistics and family waiting time. The caregiving parent must manage the infant or child during the wait before the visit. Sometimes, the wait times range from two to five hours. Depending on the age of the infant or child, drinks and snacks are needed, a place to store baby bottles or medication that needs refrigeration, and a way to heat milk for babies, if needed.

DHS will issue a Request for Information (RFI) to seek interested community-based or non-profit organizations that would serve children and families of incarcerated individuals at Waiawa and potentially be accessible elsewhere. This RFI will allow potential providers to explore work on a correctional facility as the PSD completes building renovations. Then, DHS will post a Request for Proposals (RFP) for potential bidders.

The Department of Human Services requests an appropriation of \$350,000 to operate and develop the program curriculum and, with PSD, facilitate relationships of children and families of incarcerated individuals, including funds to contract 3-4 full-time positions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.  
GOVERNOR



MARK PATTERSON  
CHAIR

CHRISTIN M. JOHNSON  
OVERSIGHT COORDINATOR

COMMISSIONERS  
HON. MICHAEL A. TOWN  
(ret.)  
HON. RONALD IBARRA  
(ret.)  
TED SAKAI  
MARTHA TORNEY

**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**HAWAII CORRECTIONAL SYSTEM OVERSIGHT COMMISSION**  
235 S. Beretania Street, 16<sup>th</sup> Floor  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96813  
(808) 587-4160

TO: The Honorable Glenn Wakai, Chair  
The Honorable Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Public Safety and Intergovernmental and Military Affairs

FROM: Mark Patterson, Chair  
Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission

SUBJECT: House Bill 451, House Draft 1, Relating to Incarcerated Individuals  
Hearing: Wednesday, March 15, 2023; 3:00 p.m.  
State Capitol, Room 225

Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Elefante, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Correctional System Oversight Commission **strongly supports** House Bill 451, House Draft 1, which would extend the life of funds appropriated in 2022 to establish a pilot visitation and family resource center at the Waiawa Correctional Facility. This Bill would also appropriate additional funds for additional improvements at the visitation and resource center. Families play a crucial role in the rehabilitation of inmates. As such any network of transitional services must include meaningful reconnection with families, particularly if the inmate has children. It is difficult to have meaningful reconnection unless the families are allowed to have face-to-face contact in an suitable setting. Waiawa is an appropriate facility for this program, as most of its inmates are transferred from the Halawa Correctional Facility or the Saguaro Correctional Facility in Arizona, where there is precious little opportunity for face-to-face interaction between inmate-fathers and their children. Moreover, the challenges facing children of the incarcerated are well-documented. A visitation and resource center would help children deal with the trauma caused by parental incarceration.

The Hawaii Correctional 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 urge you your favorable consideration of this bill.

Should you have additional questions, the Oversight Coordinator, Christin Johnson, can be reached at 808-900-2200 or at [christin.m.johnson@hawaii.gov](mailto:christin.m.johnson@hawaii.gov). Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

[Bill #]  
[Committee]  
[Date]  
[Page #]

**HB-451-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 10:30:34 AM

Testimony for PSM on 3/15/2023 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Katherine Korenaga	Testifying for Hawaii Department of Human Services	Support	Remotely Via Zoom

Comments:

Aloha! I am testifying remotely on behalf of DHS Director Betts.

Thank you, Katherine



**Papa Ola Lokahi**  
Nana I Ka Pono Na Ma

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**Senate Committee on Public Safety and Intergovernmental and Military Affairs**

Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair

Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair

**Wednesday, March 15, 2023, 3:00 PM, Conference Room 225 & Videoconference**

**RE: HB 451 HD 1 – RELATING TO INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS**

**Position: SUPPORT**

Dear Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Elefante, and Members of the Committee on Public Safety and Intergovernmental and Military Affairs,

Papa Ola Lōkahi testifies in **SUPPORT** of **HB 451 HD 1** as we support efforts aimed at cultural and person-centered approaches to rehabilitating incarcerated people, for which Native Hawaiians are overrepresented. This measure provides the time necessary to bring the pilot visitation and family resource center at Waiawa correctional facility to fruition. Resources such as these provide a pathway for incarcerated people to have consistent contact with their loved ones in an environment that encourages visitation with family and keiki.

‘Ohana is an integral part of a person’s support system, and facilitating these connections is essential to the health and well-being of the incarcerated and the entire family unit. A family-friendly visitation facility may also help reduce recidivism when incarcerated people re-enter society. Frequent contact throughout incarceration may also help to reduce anxiety and stress when people transition out of the carceral system.

Concurrent measures such as this and SB 310, which allow for the creation of the pilot visitation and family resource center, are needed to rehabilitate incarcerated people and reduce recidivism in our communities. Multiple approaches, such as these measures, are essential to address people’s needs holistically. Additionally, we would like to lift up that the lack of data on the needs of Native Hawaiians within the carceral system does not allow us to design programs and interventions further. We urge the legislature to consider how we can learn more about the needs of Native Hawaiians who are incarcerated, as this knowledge is essential to resolving Native Hawaiian representation in prisons.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of HB 451 HD 1.

*Papa Ola Lōkahi, the Native Hawaiian Health Board, authorized by the federal Native Hawaiian Health Care Improvement Act, is charged with raising the health status of Native Hawaiians to the highest possible level, which we achieve through strategic partnerships, programs, and public policy.*





*Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks! is a nonpartisan 501c4 nonprofit committed to advocating for children and their families. Our core issues are safety, health, and education.*

To: Senator Wakai, Chair  
Senator Elefante, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Public Safety and Intergovernmental and Military Affairs

Re: HB451 HD1, relating to incarcerated individuals  
3:00 p.m., Mar. 15, 2023

Aloha Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Elefante and committee members:

On behalf of Hawai'i Children's Action Network (HCAN) Speaks!, mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **STRONG SUPPORT** of House Bill 451 HD1, relating to incarcerated individuals.

Incarceration can have significant impacts on families and especially young children. Keiki whose parents are involved in the criminal justice system may face greater mental health, behavioral, education and economic hardships. The National Institute for Justice has noted children are better able to weather these difficulties if they have a strong support system. For some children, having sustained, positive connections with their incarcerated parents helps them build that strong support system. Correctional facilities can play an important role then in supporting children and their families. They can provide spaces that are family friendly to facilitate these more positive connections.

This bill helps continue the good work that has already begun. The visitation and family resource center will yield numerous positive outcomes. Frequent contact between incarcerated individuals and their families can help children build resilience. It can also help an incarcerated individual build their own resilience, reducing their likelihood of recidivism. The center will also help families build their social network by connecting them to services, guidance, counseling and more.

We need HB451 HD1 to continue the conversations and work state and community partners have begun to break the intergenerational cycle of incarceration. **Please advance this important measure.**

Mahalo,

Ke'ōpū Reelitz  
Director of Early Learning and Health Policy



# HAWAI`I YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK

677 Ala Moana Blvd., Suite 904

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Phone: (808) 489-9549

Web site: <http://www.hysn.org> E-mail: [info@hysn.org](mailto:info@hysn.org)

Vonnell Ramos, President  
Cyd Hoffeld, Vice President  
Sione Ford Naeata, Treasurer  
Jefferson Gourley, Secretary

Judith F. Clark, Executive  
Director

### Network Membership

*Bay Clinic*  
*Big Brothers Big Sisters Hawai`i*  
*Big Island Substance Abuse*  
*Council*  
*Bobby Benson Center*  
*Child and Family Service*  
*Coalition for a Drug-Free Hawai`i*  
*Collins Consulting, LLC*  
*Domestic Violence Action Center*  
*EPIC `Ohana, Inc.*  
*Family Programs Hawai`i*  
*Family Support Hawai`i*  
*Friends of the Children's Justice*  
*Center of Maui*  
*Get Ready Hawai`i*  
*Hale Kipa, Inc.*  
*Hale `Opio Kaua`i, Inc.*  
*Hawai`i Children's Action*  
*Network*  
*Hawai`i Health & Harm*  
*Reduction Center*  
*Ho`ola Na Pua*  
*Ho`okele Coalition of Kaua`i*  
*Ka Hale Pomaika`i*  
*Kahi Mohala*  
*Kokua Kalihi Valley*  
*Kaua`i Planning and Action*  
*Alliance*  
*Maui Youth and Family Services*  
*Na Pu`uwai Molokai Native*  
*Hawaiian Health Care*  
*Systems*  
*P.A.R.E.N.T.S., Inc.*  
*Parents and Children Together*  
*PHOCUSED*  
*PFLAG – Kona, Big Island*  
*Planned Parenthood of the*  
*Great Northwest, Hawaii*  
*Alaska, Kentucky, Indiana*  
*Residential Youth Services*  
*& Empowerment (RYSE)*  
*Salvation Army Family*  
*Intervention Services*  
*Sex Abuse Treatment Center*  
*Susannah Wesley Community*  
*Center*  
*The Catalyst Group*

March 12, 2023

To: Senator Glenn Wakai,, Chair  
And members of the Committee on Public Safety, Intergovernmental,  
and Military Affairs

## TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB 451 HD 1 RELATING TO INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS

Hawaii Youth Services Network, a statewide coalition of youth-serving organizations, supports HB 451 HD 1 Relating to Incarcerated Individuals.

Children of incarcerated parents experience grief and loss, similar to the experience of divorce or the death of a parent. Studies show that children of incarcerated parents are at increased risk of abuse or neglect, and more likely to have mental problems, and difficulty in school. Children of incarcerated parents are seven times more likely to enter the juvenile or adult correctional systems themselves. Regular visitation provides opportunities to sustain the parent-child bond while a parent is incarcerated, which can alleviate many of these problems.

Prisoners who have regular contact with their children benefit as well. They are less likely to violate prison rules and create trouble for prison authorities. They are more likely to take advantage of rehabilitation and educational opportunities while in prison. Regular contact with children increases the chances of successful reintegration into the community when a parent is released from prison.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,

Judith F. Clark, MPH  
Executive Director



## **COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS**

Sen. Glenn Wakai, Chair

Sen. Brandon Elefante, Vice Chair

Wednesday, March 15, 2023

Room 225 and Videoconference

3:00 PM

### **STRONG SUPPORT FOR HB 451 HD1-FAMILY VISITING & RESOURCE CTR.**

Aloha Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Elefante and Members of the Committee!

The Hawai'i 'Ohana Support Network is in **STRONG SUPPORT** of HB 451 HD1 that extends the time to expend appropriations for the establishment of the Family Visiting & Resource Center at Waiawa Correctional Facility, makes conforming amendments related to the establishment of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation; and appropriates additional funds to implement the pilot Family Visiting and Family Resource Center at Waiawa Correctional Facility on Oahu.

Family resource centers are flexible, family-focused, and culturally sensitive hubs of support and resources that provide programs and targeted services based on the needs and interests of families. They help to build the Five Family Protective Factors: Parental resilience, knowledge or parenting and child development, social emotional learning, social networking, and offer concrete support in times of need. By strengthening families we can decrease child abuse and neglect and increase student success.

HB 451 HD1 ensures that the funds appropriated for Act 125 will not lapse and appropriates additional funds for the Center's renovations as well as an ADA-compliant restroom in or near the building being renovated – an important addition to Center that will have families and children visiting their loved ones.

HB 451 HD1 continues the partnership with the Department of Human Services and the Family Reunification Working Group to create a Family Visiting and Resource Center at Waiawa Correctional Facility.

Maintaining connections with loved ones *IS* a reentry strategy that helps ease the transition from institutional to community life and back to family. Children are

especially impacted by the incarceration of a parent and deserve a safe and comfortable space to spend time with their parents.

The Hawai'i 'Ohana Support Network urges the committee to pass this bill and provide adequate funding to get this project moving. Taking care of families is part of our culture and this project will have long-lasting benefits for everyone!

Let's put an end to intergenerational incarceration in Hawai'i nei!

Kathleen O'Dell, PhD  
Network Coordinator  
Hawai'i 'Ohana Support Network

# COMMUNITY ALLIANCE ON PRISONS

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## COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND MILITARY AFFAIRS

Sen. Glenn Wakai, Chair

Sen. Brandon Elefante, Vice Chair

Wednesday, March 15, 2023

Room 225 and Videoconference

3:00 PM

### **STRONG SUPPORT FOR HB 451 HD1-FAMILY VISITING & RESOURCE CTR.**

Aloha Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Elefante 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 3,981 Hawai'i individuals living behind bars<sup>1</sup> and under the "care and custody" of the Department of Public Safety/Corrections and Rehabilitation on any given day. We are always mindful that 917 - 24.4% of the male imprisoned population<sup>2</sup> - 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 appreciates this opportunity to testify in strong support of HB 451 HD1 that extends the time to expend appropriations for the establishment of the Family Visiting & Resource Center at Waiawa Correctional Facility, makes conforming amendments related to the establishment of the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation; and appropriates additional funds to implement the pilot Family Visiting and Family Resource Center at Waiawa Correctional Facility on Oahu.

HB 451 HD1 ensures that the funds appropriated for Act 125 will not lapse and appropriates additional funds for the Center's renovations as well as an ADA-compliant restroom in or near the building being renovated - an important addition to Center that will have families and children visiting their loved ones.

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<sup>1</sup> Department of Public Safety, End of Month Population Report, February 28, 2023.

[https://dps.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Pop-Reports-EOM-2023-23-28\\_George-King.pdf](https://dps.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Pop-Reports-EOM-2023-23-28_George-King.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Why are 24.4% of Hawai'i's male prison population sent thousands of miles from home when the following prisons in Hawai'i have room here: Halawa is at 75%; Halawa Special Needs Facility is at 60%; Kulani is at 44%; Waiawa is at 53% of operational capacity.

HB 451 HD1 continues the partnership with the Department of Human Services and the Family Reunification Working Group to create a Family Visiting and Resource Center at Waiawa Correctional Facility.

Maintaining the connections of families and loved ones has been proven by 50 years of research. Visitation, mail, phone, and other forms of contact between incarcerated people and their families have positive impacts for everyone – including better health, reduced recidivism, and improvement in school.

The positive effects of visitation have been well-known for decades – particularly when it comes to reducing recidivism. A 1972 study on visitation that followed 843 people on parole from California prisons found that those who had no visitors during their incarceration were six times more likely to be reincarcerated than people with three or more visitors. A few years later, researchers found similar results in a study of people paroled from Hawai'i facilities.<sup>3</sup>

This Center facilitates connections with families and their incarcerated loved ones, an important part of a person's rehabilitation and successful reentry. It will be providing games and toys for families to play together to create some sense of normalcy for families.

There is probably no area of greater consensus in the field than regarding the effects of paternal incarceration on children's behavioral and mental health problems. Although no one dataset is ideally suited to consider these effects, and obstacles to causal inference remain, research using a range of datasets ties paternal incarceration to greater behavioral and mental health problems in children. Although there is evidence for both externalizing and internalizing behavioral problems, evidence regarding externalizing and physically aggressive behaviors tends to be the strongest; it also tends to suggest that male children are more affected in this domain than female children.

These behavioral and mental health indicators are tightly linked with school readiness, and, as a result, it is perhaps unsurprising that children with incarcerated fathers are less prepared to enter school than their peers. Yet children of incarcerated fathers face even more impediments to thriving in educational institutions after they set foot in the classroom. Having been incarcerated promotes withdrawal from educational institutions on the part of their parents. In conjunction with the stigma attached to paternal incarceration in the eyes of teachers, this leaves children of incarcerated fathers in triple jeopardy in schools—unprepared, with disengaged parents, and carrying the stigma of paternal incarceration.

Given the strikes against them, it is no great surprise that children with incarcerated fathers are more likely to be held back in school, have lower cognitive

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<sup>3</sup> Research roundup: The positive impacts of family contact for incarcerated people and their families, Leah Wang, December 21, 2021. [https://www.prisonpolicy.org/blog/2021/12/21/family\\_contact/](https://www.prisonpolicy.org/blog/2021/12/21/family_contact/)

functioning in middle childhood than their peers, and perform more poorly on a range of indicators of school success in high school.<sup>4</sup>

A 2014 study of incarcerated women found that those who had any phone contact with a family member were less likely to be reincarcerated within the five years after their release. In fact, phone contact had a stronger effect on recidivism compared to visitation, which the study also examined.

Of course, reduced recidivism is not the only benefit. A 2020 survey of incarcerated parents showed that **parent-child relationships improved** when they had frequent (weekly) phone calls.<sup>5</sup>

The Family Reunification Group is composed of community organization, families, and concerned community members who have been working on this issue for several years. The group was brought together by Blueprint for Change and the Department of Human Services and we have been working with the DHS and DPS to bring this to reality. The group issued a report that is available to review electronically at the Department's website:

<https://humanservices.hawaii.gov/reports/legislative-reports/>.

Maintaining connections with loved ones *IS* a reentry strategy that helps ease the transition from institutional to community life and back to family. Children are especially impacted by the incarceration of a parent as noted in the research.

Community Alliance on Prisons urges the committee to pass this bill and provide adequate funding to get this project moving. COVID and the supply chain impacts have had a great impact and we are now so close to making this Center a reality. This will be a shining star for Hawai`i nei. Taking care of families is part of our culture and this project will have long-lasting benefits for everyone!

Let's put an end to intergenerational incarceration in Hawai`i nei!

*"Children are the living message we sent to a time we will not see."*

*John F. Kennedy*

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<sup>4</sup> Assessing mass incarceration's effects on families, HEDWIG LEE AND CHRISTOPHER WILDEMAN, SCIENCE • 14 Oct 2021 • Vol 374, Issue 6565 • pp. 277-281 • DOI: 10.1126/science.abj7777. <https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.abj7777>

<sup>5</sup> See FN 3

TO: Senate Committee on Public Safety and Intergovernmental and Military Affairs

RE: HB451 HD1 - RELATING TO INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS

POSITION: **STRONG SUPPORT**

Wednesday, March 15, 2023  
Conference Rm: 225 and Videoconference  
3 PM

Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Elefante and members of the committee:

Having been a member of HCR 205, the working group that was established by the Legislature to help create the pilot project for the Waiawa Visitation Center, I want to first say mahalo nui loa to all of you on this committee who supported the creation of the pilot project in past sessions. Your support is much appreciated, and those of us on the working group believe it will lead to us breaking the cycle of incarceration in our State.

But, your support is still needed this session. In discussion with staff from the Department of Corrections during the interim, it has come to our attention that the renovation costs related to improving the designated Visiting and Resource Center site have increased significantly. An additional appropriation to PSD is necessary to renovate the Visiting and Resource Center site. HB 451 HD1 includes an appropriation that we believe is sufficient to cover the increase of cost that has occurred over the past year.

The bill also extends the life of the HCR 205 Working group which provides all stakeholders with the opportunity to continue the conversation about how we break the cycle of incarceration and not only help families sustain themselves but also save the State millions of dollars in the future by reducing our prison population and welfare costs.

I strongly urge the committee to pass HB451 HD1. Mahalo a nui loa for the opportunity to testify.



**HB-451-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 6:00:02 PM

Testimony for PSM on 3/15/2023 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Alan Garcia	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support of HB451, HD1

I support this measure, which extends the time to expend appropriations for the establishment of a pilot visitation and family resource center at the Waiawa correctional facility on Oahu pursuant to Act 125, Session Laws 2022. This bill will further implement the pilot visitation and family resource center at Waiawa correctional facility.

At the ned of the day, a measure like this would have a profound impact in reducing recidivism.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB451, HD1.

**HB-451-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 7:45:26 PM

Testimony for PSM on 3/15/2023 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Lisa Smith	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support of HB451, HD1

This bill would extend the life of funds appropriated in 2022 to establish a pilot visitation and family resource center at the Waiawa Correctional Facility. This Bill would also appropriate additional funds for additional improvements at the visitation and resource center. Families play a crucial role in the rehabilitation of inmates. As such any network of transitional services must include meaningful reconnection with families, particularly if the inmate has children.

This bill will provide a stronger family unit between inmates and their loved ones and help inmates transfer out of the correctional facility knowing they have a loving family to waiting for them. This bill will help to reduce recidivism and therefore will reduce crime.

**HB-451-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 9:11:40 PM

Testimony for PSM on 3/15/2023 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Tiffany Sims	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support of HB451, HD1

Incarceration can have significant impacts on families and especially young children. Keiki whose parents are involved in the criminal justice system may face greater mental health, behavioral, education and economic hardships. The National Institute for Justice has noted children are better able to weather these difficulties if they have a strong support system. For some children, having sustained, positive connections with their incarcerated parents helps them build that strong support system. Correctional facilities can play an important role then in supporting children and their families. They can provide spaces that are family friendly to facilitate these more positive connections.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this bill.

**HB-451-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 9:21:55 PM

Testimony for PSM on 3/15/2023 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Jasmine Ramos	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

In support of HB451, HD1

The data confirms that family-friendly visiting centers will encourage families to stay in frequent contact with their significant others who are incarcerated. Also, National data shows that incarcerated individuals who maintain regular contact with their children and families are less likely to recidivate when they reenter society. Therefore, this bill will help to reduce recidivism which of course reduces crime as well as taxpayer costs to cover our inmates.

Having the visiting centers staffed by social service professionals will provide families with opportunities to receive information and referral and resource linkage services, guidance and counseling, wrap-around services to address issues relating to poverty, which will ultimately have better outcomes for our people.

Visiting centers could also be staffed with kupuna and Hawaiian cultural practitioners who could provide Native Hawaiian families with more relevant cultural counseling and problem-solving practices.

The bill provides an opportunity to begin breaking the cycle of incarceration that is generational in some families.

For these reasons, I am in support of this bill.

**HB-451-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/13/2023 10:48:58 PM

Testimony for PSM on 3/15/2023 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Diana Bethel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am writing in strong support of HB451 HD1, which amends Act 125 (2022), in order to extend the time to expend appropriations for the establishment of a pilot visitation and family resource center at Waiawa correctional facility on Oahu.

The ultimate goal of this project is to reduce Hawaii's high rate of recidivism by strengthening family ties, i.e., the social support networks that enable successful reentry back into our communities. Secondly, the center will provide assistance to families impacted by incarceration of a family member.

By helping the family manage such a drastic change in its economic status and family relationships, the family can remain intact and healthy enough to provide adequate support to the family member returning from prison. In addition, it will mitigate the devastating consequences that incarceration of a family member can have on the mental and physical health of both remaining spouse as well as the children, which too often leads to depression, antisocial behavior, and intergenerational incarceration.

A building at Waiawa to house the center will be renovated to provide all the necessary amenities required for the family visitation and resource center facility.

This pilot project will surely become a model for reducing Hawaii's high rate of recidivism as well as for demonstrating a truly successful, and sadly so rare, example of department/community collaboration.

Please pass HB451 HD1. Mahalo for your consideration.

Diana Bethel

Honolulu

**HB-451-HD-1**

Submitted on: 3/14/2023 2:01:22 AM

Testimony for PSM on 3/15/2023 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Testify</b>
Kristine Crawford	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please pass HB 451 HD1 and provide the necessary funding to establish the family visiting and resource center at Waiawa Correctional Facility. Family visitation helps to reduce recidivism. Thank you.



**Blueprint  
FOR Change**

*“Blueprint for Change develops and supports community-driven services that promote the well-being of children and families.”*

**TO: Senate Committee on Public Safety and Intergovernmental and Military Affairs**  
Sen. Glenn Wakai, Chair  
Sen. Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice Chair

**FROM: Shayne Kukunaokalā Yoshimoto, Executive Director**

**RE: HB 451, HD1 - RELATING TO INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS**

**POSITION: STRONG SUPPORT**

**Wednesday, March 15, 2023, 3:00 PM**

**Aloha Chair Wakai, Vice Chair Elefante, and Members of the Committee.**

My name is Shayne Kukunaokalā Yoshimoto. I am the Executive Director of Blueprint for Change, a non-profit organization with a strong track record for innovating and implementing effective support services that address the unique challenges facing Hawai‘i’s ‘ohana. The organization’s roots date back to 1994 when in response to a growingly overburdened Child Welfare System, the Hawai‘i State Legislature created the Child Welfare Services Reform Task Force to develop a “Blueprint for reform in child protective services.”

After several years of rigorous evaluation, the Committee finalized the core elements of the Neighborhood Place model. In 2000, Blueprint for Change (BFC) was formed and incorporated as a nonprofit organization to serve as the Department of Human Services, master contractor for Neighborhood Place services, and to continue the Committee’s effort to improve the responsiveness of the State of Hawai‘i – Child Welfare System.

By maintaining fluid relationships between state agencies, local service providers, and community advocates, Blueprint for Change, and the Neighborhood Place Partnership can significantly improve the responsiveness of the state’s Child Welfare System while reducing instances of child abuse and neglect.

As part of the oversight of the (7) NP across the state, BFC collects Quarterly Activity Reports (QAR), which are designed to inform services, procedures, and practices moving forward. In 2013 the QAR showed a significant increase in services delivered to families impacted by incarceration. This led BFC to explore this issue further. Thus, the creation of the Family Reunification Working Group (FRWG).

The FRWG, which includes representatives from DHS, PSD, ACLU, Kamehameha Schools, the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, and several community-based non-profit organizations, gained support and interest through the Legislative Keiki Caucus and began meeting regularly to explore and advocate for solutions to problems encountered by children and families in the State who are affected by incarceration.

Blueprint for change appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in strong support of HB 451, HD1 that extends the time to expend appropriations for the establishment of the Family Visiting & Resource Center at Waiawa Coorectional Facility, appropriates additional funds needed to implement the pilot project, and ensures the continued partnership with the Department of Human Services and the FRWG.

The following are reasons for STRONG SUPPORT OF HB 451, HD1:

- Family-friendly visitation centers will encourage families to stay in frequent contact with their significant others who are incarcerated;
- National data shows that incarcerated individuals who maintain regular contact with their children and families are less likely to recidivate when they reenter society;
- Having the visitation centers staffed by social service professionals will provide families with opportunities to receive information and referral and resource linkage services, guidance and counseling, wrap-around services to address issues relating to poverty, etc;
- Visitation centers could also be staffed with kupuna and Hawaiian cultural practitioners who could provide Native Hawaiian families with more relevant cultural counseling and problem-solving practices;
- The bill provides an opportunity to begin breaking the cycle of incarceration that is generational in some families;
- The bill provides all stakeholders with the opportunity to continue the conversation about how we break the cycle of incarceration and not only help families sustain themselves but also save the State millions of dollars in the future by reducing our prison population and welfare costs; and
- The New Hampshire Prison Family Connection Centers hosted a virtual tour for the Act 125, Session Laws of Hawai'i 2022 working group, which provided a great example of our possibilities here in Hawai'i.

I strongly urge the committee to pass HB 451, HD1. Mahalo ā nui loa for the opportunity to testify.



**LATE**

Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair

Senator Brandon J.C. Elefante, Vice-Chair

PSM (Senate Committee on Public Safety and Intergovernmental and Military Affairs)

Budde Cabael, MSW Candidate

PO Box 823

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March 13, 2023

**Support for HB451HD1 - RELATING TO INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS**

Aloha Chair Wakai, Vice-Chair Elefante, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Budde Cabael and I am completing my final year as a graduate student at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, Thompson School of Social Work and Public Health where I will earn a Master of Social Work with a specialty focus on Child and Family Practice. **I am testifying in support of HB451HD1** for the following reasons:

- The visitation and family resource center will serve the Native Hawaiian population, a community that is overrepresented in the state corrections system.
- Changing a person's physical environment does affect their socio-emotional perspective. This visitation and family resource center will provide a place for the individual to better reconnect with their family and assume their role as a father, husband, brother, or son.
- Implementing the visitation and family resource center at Waiawa Correctional Facility will affirm the commitment by the State of Hawaii to improve the lives of families affected by incarceration.

The completion of this center will provide a place for opportunities to support this population. Children and families of these individuals who have experienced adverse events related to incarceration can find healing there. Through that healing, this population will also be equipped against recidivism. **Again I am in support of HB451HD1**

Mahalo me ka oia 'i 'o (sincerest thanks),

Budde Cabael