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# A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO OFFENDER REENTRY PROGRAMS.

**BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:**

1       SECTION 1. The legislature finds that House Concurrent  
2 Resolution No. 85, H.D. 2, S.D. 1 (2016), requested the  
3 convening of a task force to make recommendations to the  
4 legislature on ways to improve Hawaii's correctional system.  
5 The final report of the task force was submitted to the  
6 legislature in December 2018. According to the 2018 report,  
7 "the State's correctional system is not producing acceptable,  
8 cost-effective, or sustainable outcomes and needs immediate and  
9 profound change." Prison populations have risen noticeably  
10 since the 1980s, with Hawaii experiencing an eight hundred and  
11 seventy per cent increase in the prison population between 1980  
12 and 2018. This increase has had a disproportionate impact on  
13 Native Hawaiians, with the task force finding that Native  
14 Hawaiians make up forty per cent of the prison population but  
15 only twenty per cent of the overall population in the State.  
16 Additionally, prisons are failing to correct unwanted behavior,  
17 leading to higher rates of recidivism.



1           The legislature further finds that the 2019 Recidivism  
2 Update to the 2002 Hawaii Recidivism Baseline Study shows that  
3 nearly fifty-four per cent of criminals in Hawaii are repeat  
4 offenders. The state correctional system's high rate of  
5 recidivism, and the corresponding overall increase in prison  
6 populations since the 1980s, places a serious financial burden  
7 on local communities. A 2020 study evaluating the corrections  
8 system in Hawaii estimates that it costs the State approximately  
9 \$72,000 to incarcerate an inmate for one year. By lowering  
10 recidivism rates, the State could save significant amounts of  
11 money that it could invest into other programs, such as  
12 education, infrastructure, or social services.

13           The legislature further finds that offering extensive and  
14 high-quality educational and vocational programs to inmates is  
15 effective in reducing rates of recidivism and the overall cost  
16 of the correctional system.

17           The legislature further finds that inmate participation in  
18 mentorship reentry programs translates to higher rates of  
19 employment and lower rates of recidivism. According to a  
20 Public/Private Ventures study, inmates who participated in  
21 mentorship programs were more than twice as likely to find a job



1 after release than inmates who did not. The same study found  
2 that one year after release, participants who were mentored were  
3 thirty-five per cent less likely to recidivate than inmates who  
4 were not mentored.

5 The purpose of this Act is to:

- 6 (1) Encourage inmates to participate in correctional  
7 educational programs and vocational training;
- 8 (2) Increase the quality and quantity of correctional  
9 mentorship, counseling, educational, and vocational  
10 training programs available to interested inmates;
- 11 (3) Allow inmates to earn an income and engage in  
12 supervised apprenticeship training to obtain licensure  
13 and increase marketability and work-force-readiness  
14 upon the completion of their sentencing; and
- 15 (4) Appropriate funds to expand model programs to include  
16 more quality educational and vocational programs.

17 SECTION 2. Section 353H-4, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is  
18 amended to read as follows:

19 "[+]§353H-4[+] **Model programs; department of corrections**  
20 **and rehabilitation.** Subject to funding by the legislature, the  
21 department of corrections and rehabilitation shall enhance the



1 State's comprehensive offender reentry system by developing  
2 model programs designed to reduce recidivism and promote  
3 successful reentry into the community. Components of the model  
4 programs shall include but are not limited to:

- 5       (1) Earn and learn programs. The department shall expand  
6       existing career training opportunities and work  
7       furlough programs to include earn and learn programs.  
8       For purposes of this paragraph, "earn and learn  
9       programs" means programs that allow eligible offenders  
10       to participate in supervised apprenticeships to allow  
11       offenders to work toward licensure while earning an  
12       income;
- 13       ~~[(1)]~~ (2) Highly skilled staff who are experienced in  
14       working with offender reentry programs;
- 15       ~~[(2)]~~ (3) Individualized case management and a full  
16       continuum of care to ensure successful reentry;
- 17       ~~[(3)]~~ (4) Life skills development workshops, including  
18       budgeting, money management, nutrition, and exercise;  
19       development of self-determination through education;  
20       employment training; special education for the  
21       learning disabled; social, cognitive, communication,



1 and life skills training; and appropriate treatment  
2 programs, including substance abuse and mental health  
3 treatment;

4 [~~(4)~~] (5) Parenting and relationship building classes. The  
5 department shall institute policies that support  
6 family cohesion and family participation in offenders'  
7 transition to the community, and, where possible,  
8 provide geographical proximity of offenders to their  
9 children and families; [~~and~~]

10 [~~(5)~~] (6) Ongoing attention to building support for  
11 offenders from communities, community agencies, and  
12 organizations[~~+~~];

13 (7) Programs that encourage offenders without a high  
14 school diploma or equivalency certificate to obtain a  
15 high school equivalency certificate while incarcerated  
16 by matching offenders with an advisor, mentor, or  
17 guidance counselor to support the offenders'  
18 understanding of incarceration's impact on family,  
19 emotions, society, and the self;



- 1        (8) Programs that encourage eligible offenders to attend  
2        community college or university by teaching offenders  
3        the benefits of a college education;
- 4        (9) Programs that shift the focus of career training  
5        programs to relevant and useful opportunities,  
6        highlight job prospects and benefits that offenders  
7        can obtain after completion of specific career  
8        training programs, and teach offenders about the  
9        benefits of stable employment beyond incarceration and  
10       its benefits on themselves, family, and society;
- 11       (10) Programs that work with non-profit organizations and  
12       the business community to secure job positions for  
13       offenders that have completed necessary career  
14       training programs and have the required  
15       qualifications; and
- 16       (11) Programs that compel offenders convicted of a felony  
17       to undergo emotional, academic, and behavioral  
18       mentoring or counseling by recommending that offenders  
19       be granted parole or early release upon completion of  
20       the program."



1 SECTION 3. In accordance with section 9 of article VII, of  
 2 the Constitution of the State of Hawaii and sections 37-91 and  
 3 37-93, Hawaii Revised Statutes, the legislature has determined  
 4 that the appropriations contained in this Act will cause the  
 5 state general fund expenditure ceiling for fiscal year 2024-2025  
 6 to be exceeded by . The reasons for the exceeding of  
 7 the ceiling are that the appropriation made in the Act is  
 8 necessary to serve the public interest and to meet the need  
 9 provided for by this Act.

10 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general  
 11 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so  
 12 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2024-2025 for  
 13 the department of corrections and rehabilitation to expand  
 14 existing model programs to provide more educational and  
 15 vocational training opportunities for interested offenders.

16 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the department of  
 17 corrections and rehabilitation for the purposes of this Act.

18 SECTION 5. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed  
 19 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.



**1** SECTION 6.. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 3000.





**Report Title:**

Minority Caucus Package; Recidivism; Offender Re-entry Programs; Appropriation; Expenditure Ceiling

**Description:**

Expands programming and training for the comprehensive offender reentry program under the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to reduce the rate of recidivism and increase inmate marketability and work-force-readiness. Appropriates funds. Effective 7/1/3000. (HD1)

*The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

