



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

‘ŌNAEHANA KULANUI O HAWAII

Legislative Testimony

Hō'ike Mana'o I Mua O Ka 'Aha'ōlelo

Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Thursday, April 6, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.

By

Della Teraoka

Interim Vice President for Academic Affairs, Community Colleges
University of Hawai'i System

HB 67 HD1 SD1 – MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE PU'UHONUA PROGRAM

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

The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of HB 67 HD1 SD1, which would appropriate funds for the Pu'uhonua Program at Windward Community College (WCC). Since 2017, WCC has offered credit-bearing college education at the Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC) and Hawai'i Youth Correctional Facility (HYCF). Courses have been offered at Halawa Correctional Facility (HCF) since 2022. All college coursework and support services to date have been provided through the use of federal extramural (grant) funding. These funding sources are non-renewable and expire in June and September of 2023.

WCC's Pu'uhonua Program has a proven history of success. Between Fall 2018 and Spring 2022, 218 students were enrolled in college coursework at WCCC and HYCF. These students earned 1057 college credits and 13 certificates. Their overall grade point average (GPA) was 3.6, which is higher than the on campus student GPA, demonstrating their aptitude and engagement year after year. In the one semester WCC has provided classes at HCF, 16 men have enrolled, earning 45 credits to date and with an overall GPA of 3.12. Through supportive practices like pro-active counseling and tutoring, Pu'uhonua has resulted in positive educational change for carceral populations.

The Pu'uhonua Program provides effective pathways for incarcerated students to grow critical thinking, career and life skills. It also serves as a pathbreaking model for Hawai'i's educational institutions. WCC is the first college in the University of Hawai'i (UH) system to offer significant credit-bearing education to carceral populations. We are also the first to be designated as a Pell Experimental Site, utilizing federal financial aid to cover the cost of tuition, fees and educational materials.

Completing college coursework while incarcerated has been shown both nationally and locally to have significant benefits for the incarcerated individuals, the overall incarcerated environment and society. While in prison, there is a substantial reduction in violence and disciplinary infraction. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics,

formerly incarcerated individuals who receive no further education within or after leaving prison are 76% more likely to recidivate within five years; that recidivism rate drops to 14% for individuals who obtain an associate's degree. There is a 13% increase in post-release employment for parolees who participate in prison education programs.

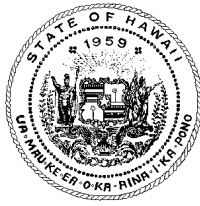
After students are released from prison, these positions will continue to benefit the incarcerated individuals and our state. The supportive counselors created herein will connect students to further educational opportunities and resources post-release so they can continue their journey. For example, the students can be referred to career services and placement both online and in person through WCC's career center.

HB 67 HD1 SD1 supports an effective, supportive educational intervention that has been proven over seven years of implementation and growth by appropriating the positions and funds to staff WCC's Pu'uhonua program.

The University of Hawai'i supports the intent of HB 67 HD1 SD1 on the condition its passage does not replace or adversely impact priorities as indicated in our BOR Approved Budget.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 67 HD1 SD1.

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 96813

TOMMY JOHNSON
DIRECTOR

Melanie Martin
Deputy Director
Administration

Michael J. Hoffman
Acting Deputy Director
Corrections

William F. Oku
Deputy Director
Law Enforcement

No. _____

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 67, HOUSE DRAFT 1, SENATE DRAFT 1
MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE PU'UHONUA PROGRAM.

By

Tommy Johnson, Director

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

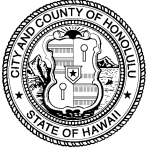
Thursday, April 6, 2023, 10:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 211 and Via Videoconference

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

The Department of Public Safety (PSD) supports House Bill (HB) 67, House Draft (HD) 1, Senate Draft (SD) 1, which seeks to appropriate funding to the Windward Community College Pu'uhonua program for three (3) full-time positions. With the reinstatement of the Pell grant, these positions will support higher education opportunities at the Women's Community Correctional Center (WCCC), the Halawa Correctional Facility (HCF), and the Hawai'i Youth Correctional Facility (HYCF).

PSD continues to work with Windward Community College Pu'uhonua program at WCCC and more recently, at HCF, providing college-credited classes. PSD is supportive of providing committed persons with higher education opportunities to lower the recidivism rate in the State.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of HB 67, HD1, SD1.



KAHALU'U NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD NO. 29

(He'eia Kea. 'Āhuimanu. Kahalu'u. Waihe'e. Ka'alaea. Waiāhole. Waikāne. Hakipu'u. Kualoa)

C/o Neighborhood Commission Office ◊ 925 Dillingham Boulevard, Suite 160 ◊ Honolulu, Hawaii 96817

PHONE (808) 768-3710 ◊ FAX (808) 768-3711 ◊ INTERNET: <http://www.honolulu.gov/nco>

"LET US NOT EVER HAVE AN UNHAPPY MINORITY; RATHER, LET US BUILD A COMMUNITY CONSENSUS."

Senate Committee on Ways and Means
Thursday, April 6, 2023, at 10:00 a.m.
Conf. Rm. 211 & Videoconference
State Capitol

RE: HB 67, HD1, SD1, Making an Appropriation for the Pu'uhonua Program

Aloha e ka Luna Ho'omalua Dela Cruz, ka Hope Luna Ho'omalua Keith-Agaran, a me nā lālā o ke Kōmike o Nā Loa'a a me Nā Ho'olilo o ka'Aha Kenekoa.

In our regular board meeting on March 8, 2023, the Kahalu'u Neighborhood Board #29 voted unanimously to **support the concepts** of HB 67, HD1, SD1, which appropriates funds for three full-time equivalent positions for Windward community college's Pu'uhonua Program.

Mahalo for this opportunity to offer testimony and please do advance this measure.

Me ka ha'aha'a,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ka'ano'i Walk".

Ka'ano'i Walk, Chair

Kahalu'u Neighborhood Board #29

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE ON PRISONS

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

Phone/E-Mail: (808) 927-1214 / kat.caphi@gmail.com



COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

Senator Donovan Dela Cruz, Chair

Senator Gilbert Keith-Agaran, Vice Chair

Thursday, April 6, 2023

10:00 AM

Room 211 and Videoconference

STRONG SUPPORT FOR HB 67 HD1 SD1 - PU`UHONUA PROGRAM @ WINDWARD

Aloha Chair DelaCruz, 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 4,012 Hawai`i individuals living behind bars¹ and under the “care and custody” of the Department of Public Safety/Corrections and Rehabilitation on any given day. We are always mindful that 914 - 25.4% of the male imprisoned population² - 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 Windward Community College’s successful Pu`uhonua Program. Windward is the only college that implements the Pell Grant. We hope that the legislature will see the importance of this program and the need for funding.

HB 67 HD1 SD1 is an important bill that appropriates funding necessary for fiscal year 2023 – 2024 and the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2024 – 2025 for the Windward Community College Pu`uhonua program, as follows: (1) \$ for the establishment of one full – time equivalent (1.0 FTE) Women's Community Correctional Center counselor position; (2) \$ for the establishment of one full – time equivalent (1.0 FTE) Halawa Correctional Facility counselor position;

¹ Department of Public Safety, End of Month Population Report, March 27, 2023.

https://dps.hawaii.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Pop-Reports-Weekly-2023-03-27_George-King.pdf

² Why are 25.4% 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 76.9%; Halawa Special Needs Facility is at 62.1%; Kulani is at 47%; Waiawa is at 50.6% of operational capacity.

and (3) \$ for the establishment of one full – time equivalent (1.0 FTE) incarcerated education coordinator position, to be responsible for the 2023-24 support of the Hawaii youth correctional facility, including student counseling and instructional support.

This is one of the bills that has lasting impacts for our families, for our correctional facilities, and for the future of Hawai`i nei. This program benefits the entire community by inspiring change through education.

There are currently 91 students registered (90% of whom are of native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander ancestry) and who are taking classes toward an AA degree. The Pu`uhonua Program not only offers college classes, but guidance, transition support, and resources upon release to women, many of whom are incarcerated due to their social economic background and have become the first generation college students in their families.

The classes have been filled to capacity and over 80% of the women who participated within the last six (6) years have over a 3.0 G.P.A. The graduates of this program have continued their educational journey!

Community Alliance on Prisons urges the committee to pass this bill with a strong recommendation for funding this great program, especially since many of the women and men are parents. This is a great inspiration for their children.

This program can lift families out of poverty and show children that education is the pathway to a better life, as demonstrated by their Moms' participation in higher education.

Education is the route out of poverty and onto the economic mobility track!

Mahalo nui for scheduling this bill; the community appreciates your support.



Hawai'i

Committee: Committee on Ways and Means
Hearing Date/Time: Thursday, April 6, 2023 at 10:00 a.m.
Place: Conference Room 211 & Videoconference
Re: **Support of H.B. 67, H.D.1, S.D. 1: Making An Appropriation for the Pu`uhonua Program**

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

The American Civil Liberties Union of Hawai'i ("ACLU of Hawai'i") **strongly supports H.B. 67, H.D. 1, S.D.1.** This bill appropriates funds for Windward Community College to continue offering college credit courses to incarcerated people through its Pu`uhonua Program.

The ACLU of Hawai'i is committed to transforming Hawaii's criminal legal system and building a new vision of safety and justice. First and foremost, we advocate for decarceration strategies to reduce the number of people in our jails and prisons and shifting spending priorities away from mass criminalization and incarceration that disparately impacts Native Hawaiians, Pacific Islanders, Black, and low-income people - towards health care, housing, education and human services within communities.

Simultaneously, we advocate for humane conditions of confinement, meaningful rehabilitation program, and comprehensive re-entry support services that includes **education and higher educational opportunities.**

Education in correctional settings is a cost-effective way to reduce crime and leads to long term benefits across the entire population for a myriad of reasons:

- The Rand Corporation issued a 2016 report that showed that individuals who participate in any type of educational program while in prison are 43% less likely to return to prison.¹
- Prisons with college programs have less violence among incarcerated people. In turn, this creates a safer environment for both incarcerated people and jail and prison staff.

¹ https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/perspectives/PE300/PE342/RAND_PE342.pdf

- Children with parents with college degrees are more likely to complete college. This enhances social mobility for families, and helps to break generational cycles of incarceration.
- People with criminal records experience many barriers to obtaining employment with livable wages. On average, formerly incarcerated people earn 11% less than those with no criminal record doing the same job. They are also 15-30% less likely to find a job in the first place. Earning a high school and college diploma increased employment and other life opportunities.
- Education is a tool of transformation. It empowers people to see themselves as positive agents of change.²

In closing, we ask for your support of **H.B. 67 H.D. 1, S.D. 1 to appropriate funds for the Pu'uhonua Program at the University of Hawai'i Windward Community College**. Please invest in higher education, not building new and expanded jails and prisons.

Sincerely,

Carrie Ann Shirota

Carrie Ann Shirota
Policy Director
ACLU of Hawai'i

The mission of the ACLU of Hawai'i is to protect the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the U.S. and State Constitutions. The ACLU of Hawai'i fulfills this through legislative, litigation, and public education programs statewide. The ACLU of Hawai'i is a non-partisan and private non-profit organization that provides its services at no cost to the public and does not accept government funds. The ACLU of Hawai'i has been serving Hawai'i for over 50 years.

American Civil Liberties Union of Hawai'i
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Hawai'i 96801T: 808.522.5900
F: 808.522.5909
E: office@acluhawaii.orgwww.acluhawaii.org

² <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2016/12/12/the-ex-con-scholars-of-berkeley>. See also, <https://www.npr.org/2022/09/26/1125173010/this-education-program-gives-incarcerated-women-a-better-chance-at-life-beyond-p>

HB-67-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 8:42:02 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Mahealani Cypher	Testifying for Ko`olau Foundation	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

The Ko`olau Foundation strongly supports passage of HB67, as amended, and urges your committee to concur by passing this measure out of committee and on to the Senate floor for full agreement.

Our organization is dedicated to the preservation of history and heritage, and to advocate for perpetuation of the culture and native people of these islands.

Passage of this bill will aid and benefit women in Hawaii's prisons who are served by the Pu`uhonua program.

We urge your committee to give your support to this measure by passing it out of committee and out of the Senate into law.

Mahalo for considering our mana`o.

HB-67-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/3/2023 9:19:45 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
TAMELA WILCOX	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha Please hear HB67!!!

Save our incarcerated students!!

My name is Tamela Wilcox, and I am currently the Pu'uhonua Counselor here at Windward Community College but writing as an individual. I am also teaching the IS-103 Introduction to College course at the WCCC Facility. I have only been with the Pu'uhonua for 7 months, but it has been such a privilege to be a part of this program. Recently we lost our support through grant funding, and need the legislative support to continue to inspire change through education.

We currently have 91 out of 189 inmates who are currently registered and taking classes toward an AA Degree. This program gives these women hope that through education they can make positive changes in their lives. We not only offer college classes but guidance, transition support, and resources upon release.

Out of 91 inmates over 90% of these incarcerated women come from Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander Ancestry. Most of these women are in this situation due to social economic background, and bad life choices. Most of these women have become first generation college students. And have set goals upon release, not to return to prison. These students thrive for more having less write-ups and a better attitude and work ethic.

It has been without a doubt the most rewarding position I have held in my entire career. Whether it be myself or someone else my goal is to keep the program going because it really works. Please continue to build and support the Pu'uhonua Program here at Windward Community College. I ask for your kokua in support of HB67 to appropriate funds for staff to continue the Pu'uhonua Program.

Mahalo Nui

TamelaWilcox

HB-67-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 7:19:37 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
karolle t. bidgood	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB67 and ask that you do the same.

Thank you.

HB-67-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 7:55:25 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Colleen Rost-Banik	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Colleen Rost-Banik and I am a Sociology instructor at UH, Mānoa and have also been lecturing in Sociology through Windward Community College's Pu'uhonua Program for the past five years. During the past five years, the Pu'uhonua Program has been primarily supported through federal grant funding, which has now expired. We need state, legislative support to maintain and expand this program, particularly in regards to staffing.

College courses at the Women's Community Correctional Center have been a huge boon for the women, and the students at WCCC are asking for more courses. As an instructor of the Sociology courses, I have had the privilege of working with many of the women; they are brilliant and eager to learn more. Unfortunately, the women are incarcerated because life circumstances (often the results of poverty, abuse, and societal neglect) have led them to dark places with few choices. Additionally, we have a carceral system that has disproportionately incarcerated Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander women, which has caused great harm to their families and communities.

Thus, it is our kuleana to support the women at WCCC with continued education. Several women have taken all the courses that Windward Community College has had the capacity to offer. With the support of HB67, Windward Community College could hire the appropriate staff to maintain and expand the program, offering more college courses so that the women can pursue degrees that better prepare them for life outside of prison.

I humbly request that you support HB67 and appropriate the funds to hire the staff for the Pu'uhonua Program. It is our collective and societal duty.

Respectfully,
Colleen Rost-Banik, PhD

HB-67-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 8:28:53 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Alysa Tomasa	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As an educator, I support this bill, which provides opportunities for education for the incarcerated and leverages federal funding for Pell grants to reduce recidivism. Studies show that when a person feels connected to their community, they're recidivism rate drops significantly. Investing in the betterment and education of an individual who perhaps would otherwise be written off by society can change the whole trajectory of not only that individual, but their family and the next generation as well. The work that the Pu'uhonua grant is doing is almost immeasurable, and keeping these individuals who are making a positive impact in the lives of the incarcerated is critical. Thank you.

HB-67-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 8:54:35 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Janice Nielsen	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill, which provides higher education for the incarcerated and leverages federal funding for Pell grants to reduce recidivism. Education is key in prevent returns in incarceration. We need to make sure this program not only continues, but grows and provides greater oppetunities.

HB-67-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 9:01:16 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nancy Marker	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

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

As an individual, I strongly support HB67 HD1 SD1 which would appropriate funds for the Pu‘uhonua Program.

WCC’s Pu‘uhonua Program has a proven history of success over seven years. The program provides effective pathways for incarcerated students to grow critical thinking, career and life skills. Completing college coursework while incarcerated has been shown both nationally and locally to have significant benefits for the incarcerated individuals, the overall incarcerated environment and society.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 67.

Sincerely,

Nancy Marker

HB-67-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 9:54:13 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicole	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support HB67, which would appropriate funds for the Pu‘uhonua Program at Windward Community College (WCC). WCC has offered credit-bearing college education at the Women’s Community Correctional Center (WCCC), Hawaii Youth Correctional Facility (HYCF) and Halawa Correctional Facility. All college coursework and support services to date have been provided through the use of federal extramural (grant) funding. The grant is non-renewable and will expire in September 2023.

WCC’s Pu‘uhonua Program has a proven history of success. Between Fall 2018 and Spring 2022, 218 students were enrolled in college coursework at WCCC and HYCF. These students earned 1057 college credits and 13 certificates. Their overall grade point average was 3.6, which is higher than the on campus student grade point average, demonstrating their aptitude and engagement year after year. In the one semester WCC has provided classes at Halawa Correctional Facility, 16 men have enrolled, earning 45 credits to date and with an overall grade point average of 3.12. Through supportive practices like proactive counseling and tutoring, Pu‘uhonua has resulted in positive educational change for carceral populations.

The Pu‘uhonua Program provides effective pathways for incarcerated students to grow critical thinking, career and life skills. It also serves as a pathbreaking model for Hawai‘i’s educational institutions. WCC is the first college in the University of Hawai‘i (UH) system to offer significant credit-bearing education to incarcerated populations. We are also the first to be designated as a Pell Experimental Site, utilizing federal financial aid to cover the cost of tuition, fees and educational materials.

Completing college coursework while incarcerated has been shown both nationally and locally to have significant benefits for the incarcerated individuals, the overall incarcerated environment and society. While in prison, there is a substantial reduction in violence and disciplinary infraction.

This bill supports an effective, supportive educational intervention that has been proven over seven years of implementation and growth. I urge the legislature to invest in effective rehabilitation for incarcerated populations by appropriating the funds to provide the positions necessary to staff WCC’s Pu‘uhonua program.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of HB67.

HB-67-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 10:05:14 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Will Caron	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please support HB67 HD1 SD1.

HB-67-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 10:22:11 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carla Allison	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Carla Allison and I strongly support HB67. This bill funds education for incarcerated women, exactly the resource needed to prevent recidivism and change the future of our local women and their families. Please vote yes on this bill so the already successful programs can continue. Thank you.

HB-67-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 11:13:34 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Carolyn Eaton	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha, Chair Dela Cruz, Vice Chair Keith-Agaran and Committee Members,

My name is Carolyn Eaton. I am a resident of Honolulu and take a special interest in the well-being of all men and women our State holds, and must care for, in our prisons and jails. I do not forget those held in Arizona, whose welfare is equally our State responsibility.

Today, your attention is on the Pu'uhonua Program which benefits inhabitants at Halawa. Please approve this bill for funding the program for them at Windward Community College.

Mahalo for your consideration of my plea and for your hard work this Session.

Ways and Means Committee
Thursday, April 6th, 2023, 10am

HB67– MAKING AN APPROPRIATION FOR THE PU'UHONUA PROGRAM

Position: Strongly Support

My name is Kathleen O'Dell and I am an instructor in Human Development and Family Studies at Windward Community College (WCC). I have been teaching in the Pu'uhonua Program for the past year through WCC. I strongly support HB67, which would appropriate funds for the Pu'uhonua Program at WCC.

Completing college coursework while incarcerated has been shown both nationally and locally to have significant benefits for the incarcerated individuals, the overall incarcerated environment and society. While in prison, there is a substantial reduction in violence and disciplinary infraction. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, formerly incarcerated individuals who receive no further education within or after leaving prison are 76% more likely to recidivate within five years; that recidivism number drops to 14% for individuals who obtain an associate's degree. There is a 13% increase in post-release employment for parolees who participate in prison education programs.

After students are released from prison, these positions will continue to benefit the incarcerated individuals and our State. The supportive counselors created herein will connect students post-release to further educational opportunities. For example, the students can be referred to career services and placement both online and in person through WCC's career center.

I have learned so much with and from my incarcerated students. What I know now more than ever is that we, as a society, failed so many of them in their childhood and youth. We failed to care for and protect them from harm. Despite the neglect and abuse so many have experienced, they rise up to get an education in an environment that is challenging beyond what most of us can imagine. They are making a commitment to positive change, to plan for a future without crime, to know more and do better. Now, we have to commit to support them in these endeavors because it is their right and our duty as democratic citizens.

This bill supports an effective, supportive educational intervention that has been proven over seven years of implementation and growth. I urge the legislature to invest in effective rehabilitation for incarcerated populations by appropriating the funds to provide the positions necessary to staff WCC's Pu'uhonua program.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of HB67.

Kathleen O'Dell, PhD

HB-67-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 2:14:22 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Nicholas Chagnon	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear members of the committee,

I am writing to express my support for HB67. As a criminologist, I understand how important reform of our prison system is. Our current approach to crime and incarceration is counterproductive as the harsh discipline and deprivation of our prisons dehumanizes inmates. In turn, that makes their rehabilitation less likely and only exacerbates our crime problem. Correctional facilities must be places of healing and support if they are to work. Any steps towards that goal are paramount at this point in time.

Sincerely,

Nicholas J. Chagnon

HB-67-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 3:14:35 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marcela Montalto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am writing to express my full support for the funding of UH college courses at the women's Correctional Center in Hawaii. As a member of the academic community, I strongly believe that providing educational opportunities to incarcerated individuals is essential for their rehabilitation and successful reentry into society.

Studies have shown that access to higher education significantly reduces recidivism rates and improves post-release employment prospects. By offering UH college courses at the women's Correctional Center, we can give incarcerated women the chance to develop new skills and knowledge, and gain the confidence and tools they need to become productive members of their communities.

Moreover, investing in education for incarcerated women is a humane and just approach to criminal justice. It recognizes that individuals who have made mistakes still have the potential to grow and change, and it values their worth as human beings.

I urge you to support the funding of UH college courses at the women's Correctional Center in Hawaii. By doing so, we can make a real difference in the lives of incarcerated women, their families, and their communities.

HB-67-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 3:25:17 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Darci Shin	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill, which provides educational opportunities for justice challenged and leverages federal funding for Pell grants to reduce recidivism.

HB-67-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/4/2023 11:58:41 PM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Marina Dana-Duran	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Marina Duran and I am offering my testimony in support of HB 67. The University of Hawaii Windward Community College Pu'uhonua Program offers incredible education opportunities for incarcerated populations. Offering these opportunities for individuals to work towards certificates and degrees prepares students for continued education and future professions. The Pu'uhonua Program has reported high GPAs from participants, indicating high levels of motivation and interest in growth. Most importantly, having these opportunities for growth greatly reduces instances of recidivism.

Native Hawaiians are disproportionately represented in Hawaii's incarceration rates. 43% of participants in the Pu'uhonua Program identified as Native Hawaiian. The loss of funding to this program would mean a loss of opportunity for these students. Higher education within this program gives students the chance to contribute to their communities and build a sense of purpose and pride. With the funding of three full time positions within the program, those opportunities for growth could be extended to countless others. I offer my support for the appropriation of funding for this program.

HB-67-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 8:14:21 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Simone Kamaunu	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support this. Please help make this possible.

Mahalo nui loa, Simone' Kamaunu

LATE

HB-67-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 10:01:11 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Diana Bethel	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

Thank you so much for scheduling HB67 HD1 SD1 which provides funding for three full-time positions for Windward Community College's Pu'uhonua program.

Windward Community College (WCC) has been a pioneer in providing academic courses, certificates, and a pathway to further higher education for many incarcerated individuals. Through the Pu'uhonua program, WCC makes good use of Pell Grants to not only offer college classes in the prisons, but to assist those transitioning to college once they are released. In 2023, its federal funding will lapse and significantly diminish the program's positive impact.

Education reduces recidivism. It enables incarcerated individuals to prepare for a self-supporting and productive life for themselves and their families in their communities. It gives them confidence and hope that they can successfully reenter society. Reducing recidivism will lower Hawai'i's massive costs of incarceration and make our communities safer.

Funding for the Pu'uhonua program will keep on giving as it encourages economic and social mobility for the formerly incarcerated as well as their families and communities. It is a mere pittance compared to the ever-increasing high cost of incarcerating reoffenders.

Please fund the Pu'uhonua program via HB67 HD1 SD1 to help reduce our prison population and make our communities safer through education.

Mahalo

LATE

HB-67-SD-1

Submitted on: 4/5/2023 11:14:36 AM

Testimony for WAM on 4/6/2023 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kirsten Freeman	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

TO: The Honorable Senator Glenn Wakai

Chair, Senate Committee on Public Safety and Intergovernmental and Military Affairs

The Honorable Senator Donna Mercado Kim

Chair, Senate Committee on Higher Education

Thirty Second Legislature

State Capitol

State of Hawai'i

Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: HB 67 Appropriation of funds to establish three full-time equivalent positions for the University of Hawai'i Windward Community College's Pu'uho'oua Program.

IN SUPPORT

Good afternoon, Senators Wakai and Kim and members of the committee:

My name is Kirsten Freeman. I hold a master's degree in social work from The Thompson School of Social Work and Public Health at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. I want to thank you for including HB 67 in the committee's agenda. I am acting as an individual in strong support of HB 67.

The reason why I am writing in support of HB 67 is because I understand firsthand the importance of developing and implementing programs that provide opportunities for education for the incarcerated and that leverage federal funding for Pell grants to reduce recidivism.

Windward Community College (WCC) Pu‘uhonua program has a proven history of success. The program has had a positive impact on carceral populations and has helped to lower the recidivism rate in the State of Hawai‘i. This is especially important because Hawai‘i has an incarceration rate of 439 per every 100,000 individuals. This means Hawai‘i locks up individual’s at a higher rate than almost any democracy on earth. In fact, over 6,900 of Hawai‘i’s residents are currently incarcerated (Prison Initiative, 2021). This bill will ensure that this population is given ongoing opportunities for effective rehabilitation through higher education by providing the necessary funds to staff the WCC Pu‘uhonua program.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 67.

Kirsten Freeman, MSW