
SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE WOMEN'S CORRECTIONS IMPLEMENTATION COMMISSION TO DEVELOP A STRATEGY AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF WOMEN INCARCERATED AT THE WOMEN'S COMMUNITY CORRECTIONAL CENTER BY TWENTY-FIVE PERCENT OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS.

1 WHEREAS, transforming the State's prison system from a
2 punitive to a rehabilitative model is a priority of this body;
3 and

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5 WHEREAS, this body has given specific programmatic
6 attention to women in the criminal justice system; and

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8 WHEREAS, the Legislature adopted House Concurrent
9 Resolution No. 85, H.D. 2, S.D. 1, Regular Session of 2016,
10 which requested the establishment of a task force to study
11 effective incarceration policies in Hawaii and other
12 jurisdictions; and

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14 WHEREAS, the final report of the task force stated that
15 "the current model of prisons in Hawaii reinforces
16 institutionalized thinking and thought patterns and re-
17 traumatizes women"; and

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19 WHEREAS, the final report emphasized that "[w]omen should
20 be placed in community-based programs as soon as possible after
21 incarceration" because "being part of a community and learning
22 to navigate that community reinforces the reality that there is
23 something beyond incarceration,"; and

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25 WHEREAS, the final report also highlighted the differences
26 between women and men offenders and found that women offenders
27 "tend to have a history of physical and/or sexual abuse" and
28 that their "involvement in criminal activity is often motivated
29 by poverty and/or substance abuse, and they are less likely than
30 men to have been convicted of a violent crime"; and

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1 WHEREAS, according to the 2023 Annual Report of the
2 Criminal Justice Research Institute, roughly 86.5 percent of
3 women at the Women's Community Correctional Center had no
4 violent offenses under the Women's Corrections Implementation
5 Commission's definition of "violent offense"; and
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7 WHEREAS, the Legislature specifically recognized the
8 differences between women and men in the criminal justice system
9 when it established the Women's Corrections Implementation
10 Commission under Act 244, Session Laws of Hawaii 2022, to, among
11 other things, "[d]evelop and implement an evidence-based,
12 gender-responsive plan to divert non-violent women offenders,
13 especially those with minor children, from the criminal justice
14 system"; and
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16 WHEREAS, there has been little progress diverting non-
17 violent women offenders from prison as the recidivism rate
18 remains at fifty percent and the population at the Women's
19 Community Correctional Center remains at approximately two
20 hundred, a nine hundred fifty percent increase since 1978 when
21 only nineteen women were incarcerated there; and
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23 WHEREAS, the lack of progress diverting women from the
24 criminal justice system can be traced to two failings: the lack
25 of a definite, measurable goal by which to reduce the number of
26 incarcerated women and a lack of resources allocated to proven
27 community-based rehabilitative programs; and
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29 WHEREAS, there is a need in the State to establish policy
30 changes regarding probation, parole, and restitution; set
31 measurable goals to reduce the number of incarcerated women; and
32 provide sufficient resources to community-based programs to
33 include mental health counseling, drug and alcohol treatment,
34 education, and job training; now, therefore,
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36 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirty-second
37 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2024,
38 that the Women's Corrections Implementation Commission is
39 requested to develop a strategy and make recommendations to
40 reduce the number of women incarcerated at the Women's Community
41 Correctional Center by twenty-five percent by 2029; and
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1 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, in developing a strategy and
2 making recommendations, the Women's Corrections Implementation
3 Commission is requested to work with the Judiciary, Department
4 of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Department of Human Services,
5 Department of Health, Department of Education, Office of the
6 State Public Defender, Hawaii Paroling Authority, each county
7 police department and county prosecuting attorney, and
8 community-based organizations; and
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10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Women's Corrections
11 Implementation Commission is requested to submit:
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- 13 (1) An initial report of its findings and recommendations,
14 including any proposed legislation, to the Legislature
15 no later than November 1, 2024; and
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17 (2) Subsequent reports of its findings and
18 recommendations, including any proposed legislation,
19 to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior to
20 the convening of the Regular Sessions of 2026, 2027,
21 2028, and 2029; and
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23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
24 Resolution be transmitted to the Administrative Director of the
25 Courts, Director of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Director of
26 Human Services, Director of Health, Superintendent of Education,
27 State Public Defender, Chairperson of the Hawaii Paroling
28 Authority, chiefs of police of each county, and prosecuting
29 attorneys of each county.

