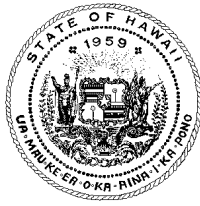


JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAII
**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
AND REHABILITATION**
*Ka 'Oihana Ho'omalu Kalaima
a Ho'oponopono Ola*
1177 Alakea Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

TOMMY JOHNSON
DIRECTOR

Melanie Martin
Deputy Director
Administration

Vacant
Deputy Director
Correctional Institutions

Sanna Muñoz
Deputy Director
Rehabilitation Services
and
Programs

No. _____

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 1735, HOUSE DRAFT 1
RELATING TO OFFENDER REENTRY PROGRAMS.

By
Tommy Johnson, Director
Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

House Committee on Finance
Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Representative Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

Tuesday, February 27, 2024; 10:00 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 308 & via Videoconference

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR) supports House Bill (HB) 1735, HD1, which proposes to expand programming and training for the comprehensive offender re-entry program to reduce the rate of recidivism and increase inmate marketability.

While the vast majority of the "earn and learn" programs nationally are geared towards at-risk youth, the DCR believes this type of program and be successfully implemented for adult justice-involved persons. To implement, maintain, and ensure the success of this type of program, the DCR will require funding for teachers, and staff specializing in employment services and job readiness. This can be accomplished by contracting with non-profit agencies that specialize in teaching and assisting justice-involved persons with job readiness training and coordinating with tradecraft unions and employers in the community.

In addition, the DCR would require additional annual funding of approximately \$1 million to expand current educational and vocational programs to include initiation of agreements with trade craft unions for apprenticeship programs for offenders, and expansion of our current carpentry apprentice program with the carpenter union. The agreements would compensate participants at minimum wage or higher, and cover associated costs such as the purchase of required work clothing, boots, tool belt and some tools, manuals, etc. Although DCR's Corrections Program Services Division (CPSD) already provides a wide range of educational opportunities and post-secondary education programs, we are always interested in expanding evidence-based programs and services that help justice-involved persons successfully transition and reintegrate back into the community.

Offenders are consistently encouraged to participate in programs aimed at increasing their marketability, lowering their risk of recidivism, and increasing their level of education. However, some tradecraft programs and career paths for justice-involved persons such as cosmetology, hair cutting, and nurse's aide, have such an intensive curriculum, that the Hawai'i State board requirements make it extremely difficult to obtain certification prior to the release of offenders. The DCR believes in and supports House Bill 1735, HD1, but there will need to be additional discussions with employers, Unions, Hawai'i State Boards, etc., to create and implement a sustainable and successful earn-and-learn program. The DCR stands ready to participate in those discussions.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 1735, HD1.

JON N. IKENAGA
STATE PUBLIC DEFENDER

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STATE OF HAWAI'I
OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER

February 26, 2024

H.B. 1735, HD1: RELATING TO OFFENDER REENTRY PROGRAMS

Chair Yamashita, Vice-Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee:

The Office of the Public Defender strongly SUPPORTS H.B. 1735, HD1.

We strongly support any efforts to expand education, counseling, and training programs for all incarcerated individuals. It is a common experience for incarcerated individuals to serve jail or prison time without a meaningful opportunity for self-improvement or options for successful re-entry in the community. The limited programs that do exist are often at capacity and do not adequately address the needs of the greater incarcerated population.

To meaningfully decrease the likelihood of recidivism, incarcerated individuals must reintegrate into the community with employment opportunities, life skills and societal support. If released from incarceration without such training and programming, individuals are drawn back to pre-existing circumstances that increase the chances of recidivism. Expansion of available programs and increased funding to enact additional programs and training opportunities is critical to the success of those who will be released. It also protects the community by decreasing the likelihood that these individuals will recidivate.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

JOSH GREEN, M.D.
GOVERNOR
KE KIA'ĀINA



STATE OF HAWAII | KA MOKU'ĀINA 'O HAWAI'I
HAWAII PAROLING AUTHORITY
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EDMUND "FRED" HYUN
CHAIR

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MILTON H. KOTSUBO
CAROL K. MATAYOSHI
MEMBERS

COREY J. REINCKE
ACTING ADMINISTRATOR

No. _____

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 1735, HD1, RELATING TO
OFFENDER REENTRY PROGRAMS

by
Edmund "Fred" Hyun
Chairman, Hawaii Paroling Authority

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FINANCE
Representative Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair
Representative Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chairman

Tuesday, February 27, 2024, 10:00 a.m.
State Capitol Conference Room 308 and Via Video Conference

Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of Committee:

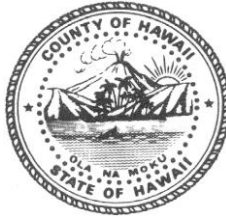
The Hawaii Paroling Authority (HPA) stands in strong support of HB 1735, HD1 to expand programming and training for the comprehensive offender re-entry program under the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DCR). The HPA firmly believes improving the education and marketability of inmates will reduce the likelihood of re-offending and future incarceration. We have witnessed successes with improved confidence, self-esteem and financial sustainability based on education, apprenticeship, mentorship, and counseling.

The best outcome would be that those coming out of prison are given the tools to succeed and become law abiding and contributing citizens in the community.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on HB 1735, HD1. We will be available to answer questions the committee members may have.

KELDEN B.A. WALTJEN
PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

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OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL NO. 1735 HD1

RELATING TO OFFENDER REENTRY PROGRAMS

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Representative Kyle Yamashita, Chair
Representative Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

Tuesday, February 27, 2024 at 10:00 a.m.
State Capitol Conference Room 308
And Via Video Conference

Honorable Chair Yamashita, Vice Chair Kitagawa, and Members of the Committee on Finance, The County of Hawai'i, Office of the Prosecuting Attorney submits the following testimony in support of the passage of House Bill No. 1735 HD1.

This bill was drafted with the intent to expand programming and training for the comprehensive offender reentry program under the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to reduce the rate of recidivism, increase inmate marketability and work-force-readiness, and to appropriate funds.

Reentry programs help individuals successfully reintegrate into society after release from incarceration. By providing access to education, job training, housing, and other supportive services, offenders will be provided the necessary tools to successfully reintegrate into society and reduce the likelihood of recidivism.

Successful reentry programs contribute to safer communities by helping former offenders become productive and contributing members of society. When offenders have access to necessary resources and support services they are able to rebuild their lives and are less likely to engage in criminal activity.

Many justice system-involved persons face underlying issues such as poverty, substance abuse, mental illness, and lack education or job skills. Reentry programs address these root causes by providing holistic support services to the complex needs of participants, thereby contributing to long-term solutions to systemic problems. Offender reentry programs are based on the principle of rehabilitation, which emphasizes the potential for individuals to change and improve their lives. These programs offer opportunities for education, vocational training, counseling, and other forms of support that can empower individuals to make positive life changes and break the cycle of crime.

Supporting offender reentry programing is a proactive, upstream approach to addressing the challenges of crime and incarceration, with benefits for individuals, communities, and society as a whole. Our Office supports multifaceted approaches to addressing crime, including treatment, resources, and reintegration. For the foregoing reasons, the, County of Hawai‘i, Office of the Prosecuting Attorney supports the passage of House Bill No. 1735 HD1. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this matter.



HB1735 Offender Reentry – Offender Training and Education

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Rep. Kyle T. Yamashita, Chair

Rep. Lisa Kitagawa, Vice Chair

Tuesday, Feb 27, 2024: 9:45: Room 329 Videoconference

Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition supports HB1735

ALOHA CHAIR, VICE CHAIR, AND DISTINGUISHED COMMITTEE MEMBERS. My name is Alan Johnson. I am the current chair of the Hawaii Substance Abuse Coalition (HSAC), a statewide organization for substance use disorder and co-occurring mental health disorder treatment and prevention agencies and recovery-oriented services.

HSAC agrees that expanding the programming and training for offenders before the reenter in their communities is needed as well as helps DCR to further develop their culture for rehabilitation, not just correction, which can greatly help to reduce recidivism.

HSAC also reminds us all that we can help with offender reentry by providing substance abuse and mental health treatment (co-occurring disorders) to offenders as part of their reentry.

HSAC advocates that as part of programming while still incarceration, includes that screening and assessments are provided.

HSAC commends the legislature for language to further expand rehabilitation services by DCR to help offenders recidivate less, and

- **Comments that this programming could include assessments for substance use and mental health disorders, since these disorders are common for offenders and are needed to help orient them for community-based treatment as part of their reentry into their communities.**

We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony.

HB-1735-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2024 8:50:21 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/27/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andrew Crossland	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I **support** this Bill.

HB-1735-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/24/2024 6:30:15 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/27/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Chanara Casey Richmond	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

My name is Chanara Richmond and I support HB1735

HB-1735-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 12:48:21 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/27/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rhonda Burk	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Dear Senators,

I support this bill because at this point in time, it seems like there are no real programs - especially in Halawa Correctional Facility to move the prisoners forward. Many of them want to get a form of education in order to assist them for when they are released.

As a small business owner and as a family member of an inmate, I know how difficult it is to find trained and educated workers. I feel that if the inmate has the integrity to want to improve his/her life, they will take the action of participating in a program, and that is what this state is lacking severely.

Without the ability to rehabilitate them and give them the skills that they need as soon as they get out, we will constantly have the recidivism rates that we have. They need the tools to move forward.

The atmosphere right now in the prisons are more that they just want to contain them and do nothing else. The administration doesn't seem to be looking into these things and there are no legitimate reasons as to why they refuse to have these programs.

In order for our economy to move forward well, Hawai'i needs to train and educate workers. Take CDL drivers, as an example. Hawai'i is severely short yet this is a great opportunity for an ex-inmate to become a productive member of society. They get trained and they get a good paying job that requires - and regulates - good behavior, drug and alcohol-free work duties, etc.

Mahalo for allowing me to submit my testimony,

Rhonda Burk

HB-1735-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 2:00:44 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/27/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Robert I Nehmad	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a resident of the City & County of Honolulu and support this Bill

HB-1735-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 2:03:46 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/27/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Rita Kama-Kimura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I just became aware of this bill and strongly support.

HB-1735-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 3:16:11 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/27/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Loree Jean Searcy	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB1735

I believe that providing education and rehabilitation to inmates is a positive improvement to assist them with entering back into the job market and society as a whole.

I support HB1735

HB-1735-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 3:23:09 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/27/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
TERI SAVAIINAEA	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support HB1735

Thank you,

Teri Kia Savaiinaea

HB-1735-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 3:25:53 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/27/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Terri Yoshinaga	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill!

HB-1735-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 3:32:50 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/27/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Andres Mateo	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I testify in support of bill HB1735. Having the opportunity or access to mental health, counseling, education program will be a great tool for the inmates. Not only they learn a new trade job, but they also keep their mind and souls engaged in productive thinking. Include also ways to bring pastors and ministries. The inmates also need Christian counseling that will be very beneficial to them. Enable The People to bring Jesus to all member of our society including the ones who have limited freedom. Thank you for the support. Jesus is coming soon!

HB-1735-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 4:54:31 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/27/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Joe Edwards	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Aloha,

I am in favor of House Bill 1735.

All of the points made in the bill are pertinent. Most important are the need for drug treatment and the building of marketable skills.

I would guess that the majority of offenders are there because drug use, either from a drug-related offense such as possession or distribution, or because of actions taken while under the influence of drugs, the seeking out of drugs or the long-term effects of drug use. This treatment should begin the first day that someone enters a country correctional center or a state prison and should continue until his or her release. Drug addiction needs constant and ongoing treatment in order to be successful. It is a rare person who can go to drug treatment, deem himself cured and then carry on with life with no further incidents of relapse. Medicated assisted treatment should be a big part of this program. Heroin abuse is rampant in Hawaii and is not possible to treat without the assistance of medication, most effectively daily buprenorphine or Suboxone.

Learning trades and other skills is equally important. An apprenticeship program where inmates can obtain skills and possible licensure is a great idea. Otherwise, the inmate goes back on the street with not even the hope of a job or a way to house and feed himself and/or his family. The program must further work with possible employers to ensure that jobs are available to inmates upon completion of these programs and release.

The state chooses to incarcerate. Therefore, the state is responsible for those in its care. A failure by the state to encourage and help facilitate inmates to live a lawful, productive, useful life is akin to abuse and should not be tolerated.

In encourage passage of this bill in the House and Senate and for Governor Green's signature.

Thank you,

Joe Edwards

Makaha, HI

HB-1735-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 5:22:26 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/27/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Ellen Tanoura	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

Please approve of HB 1735 to make Hawaii safer.

HB-1735-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 6:40:55 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/27/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Jeffrey Lum	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I fully support bill HB1735. Much of the prison population is a reflection of our society. Offer them an education and a better life. Offer them the chance to be productive within society.

Thanks very much.

aloha, Jeff Lum

HB-1735-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 7:36:35 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/27/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Peggy Regentine	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I am a retired Professor at Windward Community College. I taught computer skills to women at the Women's Prison in Kaneohe. This was such an uplifting experience for inmates. The women loved the class. A funny joke in the class was that the escape key on the keyboard would get you out of trouble. I believe learning is an uplifting part of a person's day, especially one in prison. I definitely support this bill.

HB-1735-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/25/2024 10:35:30 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/27/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Clifton Otto	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

SUPPORT.

This bill aligns very nicely with the mission of the recently formed Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

Please pass through your committee.

HB-1735-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 12:39:46 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/27/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Scott Shedko	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I strongly support this bill!

Many inmates have turned to crime because of a lack of education, in many cases because of learning disabilities, such as dyslexia, which can be remedied with proper understanding, time and attention . Inmates motivated to improve basic skills, complete and continue their education, and learn new life and career skills, should be given opportunities to do so!

Please provide a second chance to prisoners who may not have had any real opportunities to break out of cycles of crime.

Mahalo!

HB-1735-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 5:22:00 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/27/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Elisabeth Browning	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support hb1735. Providing inmates with practical , marketable life skills will help them succeed after their time in prison.

HB-1735-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 5:36:29 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/27/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Michael A Lilly	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

As a former prosecutor and Attorney General, I support the purpose of this legislation. Most incarcerated persons will eventually attempt reintegration into society. Unfortunately, recidivism is too high and is caused in part because prisoners lack the skills and work ethic to become productive citizens. Some prisons in the mainland, including the private prisons holding Hawaii inmates, offer greater reorientation programs such as high school and college degrees and trade school programs than does Hawaii. This needs to be changed. I support the intent of this bill.

HB-1735-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 7:49:20 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/27/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Kim Cordery	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill as it will help to support those who have been incarcerated upon reentry into society...This is a means to give practical skills and stop the revolving door.

HB-1735-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 8:32:18 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/27/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
tony frascarelli	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I support this bill as well as any other measure that will aid in reducing the recidivism rate.

HB-1735-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 8:49:58 AM

Testimony for FIN on 2/27/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Margaret Wise	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I agree that we need to reduce recidivism and this bill may help in that regard. Prisoners need programs that will give them skills to use and be a part of society once released.

HB-1735-HD-1

Submitted on: 2/26/2024 7:15:51 PM

Testimony for FIN on 2/27/2024 10:00:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Testify
Cindy R Ajimine	Individual	Support	Written Testimony Only

Comments:

I SUPPORT this bill and am so pleased to finally have a bill to SUPPORT. Whatever we can do to rehabilitate offenders would be good for everyone. Prevention focus ALWAYS best but this will help. Mahalo!